

Explain why nomadic tribes need to move from one place to another? What are the advantages to the environment of this continuous movement?

1. Nomadic tribes need to move from one place to another to save their animals from adverse climatic conditions and to provide meadows or pastures regularly.
2. Some of the pastoral nomads move to combine a range of different activities- cultivation, trade and herding- to make their living.

Advantage to the environment: The continuous movement of nomadic tribes is useful for environment. **Firstly**, the variety of grasses that sprouted provide rich nutritious forage for the animals herd. **Secondly**, Banjaras played very important role as moving traders. In search of good pasture land for their cattle, they moved over long distances, selling plough cattle and other goods to villagers in exchange for grain and fodder. **Thirdly**, the nomadic tribes had to set up relationship with farmers on their way, so that the herd could graze in harvested fields and manure the soil. **Fourthly**, environmentalists and economists have increasingly come to recognize that postal nomadism is a form of life that is perfectly suited to many hilly and dry regions of the world. **Fifthly**, pastoral movements allowed time for the natural restoration of vegetation growth

Discuss why the colonial government in India brought in the following laws. In each case, explain how the law changed the lives of pastoralist:

- Waste Land rules
- Forest Acts
- Criminal Tribes Act
- Grazing Tax

Waste Land rules: The British government wanted more land to be brought under cultivation of such commercial crops as were needed by the British.

Meadows and pastures were seen as a wasteful use of land. It was thought that such lands could be better utilized if brought under cultivation. These would bring in both, agriculture and revenue produce, for the state. In view of these considerations, from the mid-nineteenth century, Waste Land rules were enacted in many countries. Under these rules, uncultivated lands were taken over and given to individuals. These individuals were granted concessions and encouraged to settle on these lands.

Very often, the lands taken over by the government and handed over to the individuals were grazing tracks that were used regularly by the nomadic tribes. Expansion of cultivation inevitably meant the decline of pastures and a problem for the pastoralists.

Forest Acts: The government officials believed that grazing destroyed the saplings and youth shoots of the trees that germinated on the forest floor. The herds trampled over the saplings and munched away the shoots. This prevented new trees from growing.

By mid-nineteenth century, various Forest Acts were enacted in different provinces. Under these acts, no grazing was allowed in the 'reserved' forests. In the 'protected' forests, some customary grazing rights were granted to the pastoralists. But their movements inside the forests were severely restricted.

The forest acts changed the lives of pastoralists in the following ways:

- They were now prevented from entering many forests that had earlier provided valuable forage to their cattle.
- Even in the areas they were allowed to enter, their movements were regulated. They needed a permit for entry.
- The time for their entry and departure was specified, and the number of days they could spend in the forest was limited.
- Pastoralists could no longer remain in an area even if forage was available, the grass was abundant and the undergrowth in the forest was ample. They had to move out of it because the forest was that were issued to them now ruled their lives. The permit specified the periods in which they could legally be inside a forest. If they overstayed, they were liable to fines.

Criminal Tribes Act: The British officials were suspicious of the nomadic people. They distrusted mobile craftsmen and traders who hawked their goods in villages, and pastoralists who changed their places of residence every season, moving in search of goods pastures for their herds.

The colonial government wanted to rule over a settled population, They wanted the rural people to live in villages, in fixed places, with fixed rights on particular fields. Such a population was easy to identify and control. Those who were settled were seen as peaceable and laws abiding; those who were nomadic were considered to be criminals. In 1871, the colonial government in India passed the Criminal Tribes Acts Under this Act, many communities of craftsmen, traders and pastoralists were classified as criminal tribes. They were started to be criminal by nature and birth. Once this Act came into force, these communities were expected to live only in the notified village settlements. They were not allowed to move out without a permit. The village police kept a continuous watch on them.

Grazing Tax: In order to expand its revenue income, the British government introduced the grazing tax in the mid-nineteenth century. Pastoralists had to pay a tax on every animal that grazed on the pastures. Each of them was given a pass. The number of cattle he had and the amount of tax he paid were entered in the pass. Grazing tax was an extra burden on the poor pastoral communities; they had no choice but to groan under its weight.

Give reason to explain why the Maasai community lost their grazing lands?

The Maasailand spread over a vast area from north Kenya to the steppes of northern Tanzania. This gradually shrank due to the following reasons:

- The colonial powers were hungry for colonial possessions in Africa. Once they reached Africa, they began to cut it down into different colonies. Maasailand was cut into two with an international boundary between British Kenya and German Tanganyika.
- The best grazing lands were gradually taken over for the settlement of white people. Maasis were pushed into small area in south Kenya and north Tanzania.
- The colonial governments promoted cultivation. Local peasant communities began to take control over the pastoral lands.
- Large areas of land were also turned into game reserves. Very often these reserves were in areas that had traditionally been regular grazing grounds for Massais.

There are many similarities in the way in which the modern world forced changes in the lives of pastoral communities in India and East Africa. Write about any two examples of changes which were similar for Indian pastoralists and the Maasai herders:

It is correct to say that there are similarities in the way in which the modern world forced changes in the lives of pastoral communities in India and East Africa. We can give the following example:

1. One of the problems the Maasai and the Indian pastoralists faced was the continuous loss of their grazing lands. In both areas it was the result of the laws, steps and policies adopted by the European colonial governments.
2. In east Africa as well as in India in late nineteenth century, the British colonial government encouraged local peasant communities to expand cultivation. As cultivation expanded, pasturelands were turned into cultivated fields. In India as well as in east Africa, pastoralists were not allowed to enter in reserved areas or forests. They lost their traditionally grazing areas, which had been, regular grazing grounds for the pastoralists of India as well as of the East Africa.

Give a brief description of the living of the nomadic people:

The nomadic tribes have mobile habitats. Each of them owns a herd of cattle; cattle are the primary source of livelihood for them. The nomadic tribes, therefore, have to look not only for their own subsistence but also for the subsistence of their cattle. More generally, each of the tribes has developed its own pattern of cyclical movement. They move from one place to another well-

defined place at a pre- determined and well-defined time. They move almost with clock-like precision.

All of them have to adjust to the seasonal changes and make effective use of the available pastures at different places. When the pasture is exhausted or unusable at one place, they move along with their hard to the new areas.

What were the steps taken by the British government with regard to the Nomads and Pastoralists?

The colonial government enacted different laws that adversely affected the living conditions of the nomadic tribes and the pastoral communities. The colonial government was driven by the following motives:

- The government wanted to convert all the grazing lands into cultivated farms. This way, they wanted to raise more revenue in the form of taxes.
- The government wanted to protect the forests, as these were required to meet their own urgent needs of timber for railways and shipbuilding.
- British officials were suspicious of the nomadic people. They were stated to be criminal by nature and birth.
- To expand its revenue income, the government looked for every possible source of taxation. So tax was imposed on land, on canal water, on salt, on traded goods, and even on animals.

