

# 05. Pastoralists in the Modern World

## 01. What are Nomads?

Nomads are people who do not live in one place but move from one area to another to earn their living.

## 02. Explain the seasonal movement or cyclic movement of the Gujjar Bakarwals in Jammu & Kashmir.

OR

## Describe the seasonal movement of pastoral or mountain communities. regions. living in the hilly

- The Gujjar Bakarwals of Jammu and Kashmir are great herders of goat and sheep.
- They moved annually between their summer and winter grazing grounds. In winter, when the high mountains were covered with snow, they lived with their herds in the low hills of the Siwalik range. By the end of April, they began their northern march for their summer grazing grounds.
- With the onset of summer, the snow melted and the mountainsides were lush green. The variety of grasses that sprouted provided rich nutritious forage for the animal herds.
- By the end of September, the Bakarwals were on the move again, this time on their downward journey, back to their winter base. When the high mountains were covered with snow, the herds were grazed in the low hills.

## 03. Explain the seasonal movement of the Gaddi Shepherds of Himachal Pradesh.

- In a different area of the mountains, the Gaddi shepherds of Himachal Pradesh had a similar cycle of seasonal movement. They too spent their winter in the low hills of Siwalik range, grazing their flocks in scrub forests.
- By April they moved north and spent the summer in Lahul and Spiti. When the snow melted and the high passes were clear, many of them moved on to higher mountain meadows.

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- By September they began their return movement. On the way they stopped once again in the villages of Lahul and Spiti, reaping their summer harvest and sowing their winter crop. Then they descended with their flock to their winter grazing ground on the Siwalik hills. Next April, once again, they began their march with their goats and sheep, to the summer meadows.

### **04. What is Bhabar and Bugyal?**

Bhabar- A dry forested area below the foothills of Garhwal and Kumaun.

Bugyal - Vast meadows in the high mountains

### **05. Name some pastoral communities found in the Himalayas:**

The pattern of cyclic movement between summer and winter pastures was typical of many pastoral communities of the Himalayas, including the Bhotiyas, Sherpas and Kinnauris.

### **06. Explain the seasonal movement Dhangars of Maharashtra.**

**OR**

### **Describe the season movements of pastoralist living in the plateaus, plains and deserts of India.**

- Dhangars were an important pastoral community of Maharashtra. Most of them were shepherd, some were blanket weavers, and still others were buffalo herders.
- The Dhangar shepherds stayed in the central plateau of Maharashtra during the monsoon. This was a semi-arid region with low rainfall and poor soil. It was covered with thorny Scrub. Nothing but dry crops like bajra could be sown here.

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- In the monsoon this tract became a vast grazing ground for the Dhangar flocks. By October the Dhangars harvested their bajra and started on their move west. After a march of about a month they reached the Konkan.
- This was a flourishing agricultural tract with high rainfall and rich soil. Here the shepherds were welcomed by Konkani peasants. After kharif harvest was cut at this time, the fields had to be fertilised and made ready for the rabi harvest.
- Dhangar flocks manured the fields and fed on the stubble. With the onset of the monsoon the Dhangars left the Konkan and the coastal areas with their flocks and returned to their settlements on the dry plateau.

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**Note\*** - These are not the complete notes for the chapter. Some are yet to be taught.

**Sources:** Binita Jain Ma'am – History teacher at BMSSS

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