



Question-3

Give reasons to explain why the Maasai community lost their grazing lands.

Solution:

1. The Maasais were a community of cattle herders. They lived primarily in East Africa. There were 300, 000 Maasais in Southern Kenya and 150,000 in Tanzania. The Maasais occupied a vast stretch of land from North Kenya to the steppes of Northern Tanzania. The lush green grass of the steppes provided ample fodder for their herds.
2. In the nineteenth century, European imperial powers captured Africa and scrambled for territorial possessions. They drew up boundaries and took over the land that was hitherto occupied by the Maasais.
3. The Maasai lost about 60 per cent of their pre-colonial lands. They were restricted to a dry zone with uncertain rainfall and poor pastures. The Maasais faced continuous loss of their grazing lands and this affected their lives in times of drought and even reshaped their social relationships.
4. The British colonial government in East Africa encouraged the local peasant communities to expand cultivation. Soon pasturelands were turned into cultivated fields and the Maasai community yet again lost its grazing fields.
5. The colonist also converted grazing land into Game Reserves. The pastoralists were not allowed to enter these reserves. Thus the grazing grounds of the Maasais was once again confiscated. The Maasais were soon restricted to small areas. They could not hunt or graze their animals in the reserved areas. Due to the restriction to small areas, fodder became scarce. Large numbers of Maasai cattle died of starvation and disease.
6. The loss of the finest grazing lands and water resources created a lot of hardship for the Maasais.

Question-4

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.

Solution:

The problems faced by the Indian pastoralist due to the enforcement of the Wasteland Rules was similar to the problem faced by the Maasai community in Africa. The British Colonial government in East Africa encouraged the local peasant communities to expand cultivation. Pasturelands were turned into cultivated fields and the Maasai community lost its grazing fields. Similarly, under the Wasteland Rules, pastoral land was taken from the pastoralists and given to local individual who in turn brought the land under cultivation. The Maasais and the Indian pastoralists lost their grazing grounds.

Yet another problem faced by the Maasais and the Indian pastoralists was the restriction that was imposed on them by the colonist. The Indian Forest Acts, restricted the Indian pastoralist from entering the reserved forests which were rich in pasture.

Similarly the colonist in East Africa converted grazing land into Game Reserves. The pastoralists were not allowed to enter these Reserves.

The pastoral communities in India and East Africa had to endure many hardships as the demands of the modern world grew increasingly.

***** END *****