

◆ 1. Pastoral Nomads and Their Movements

- Pastoral Nomads: Communities that move with their herds (sheep, goats, cattle, camels) from one region to another in search of fresh pastures and water.

1.1 In the Mountains (India)

- Gujjar Bakarwals (Jammu & Kashmir): Move between Siwalik hills (winter) and Kashmir valleys (summer). Travel in groups (kafila).



Fig.1 – Sheep grazing and Gujjar Mandap.

- Gaddi shepherds (Himachal Pradesh): Move from Siwalik hills (winter) to Lahul and Spiti (summer). They shear sheep on the way down.

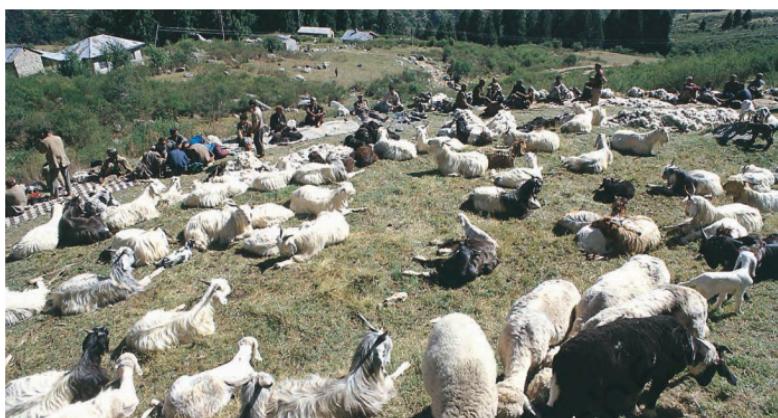


Fig.3 – Gaddis waiting for shearing. Uhl valley near Palampur in Himachal Pradesh.

Fig.3– Gaddis waiting for shearing.

- Bhotiyas, Sherpas, Kinnauris (Uttarakhand): Practice similar seasonal movement between bhabar (dry forest) and bugyals (high meadows).

1.2 On Plateaus, Plains and Deserts

- Dhangars (Maharashtra): Stay on dry plateau during monsoon (bajra farming). Migrate to Konkan coast after harvest to manure fields.



Fig.5 – Raika camels grazing in Rajasthan.

- Gollas, Kurumas, Kurubas (Karnataka/Andhra): Move between dry plateau and coastal tracts based on season.
- Banjaras (UP, MP, Rajasthan): Travel long distances to trade cattle and goods.
- Raikas (Thar Desert): Practice both cultivation and camel herding. Maru Raikas rear camels and migrate based on pasture availability.



Fig.6 – A camel herder in his settlement.
This is on the Thar desert near Jaisalmer in Rajasthan.
The camel herders of the region are Maru (desert) Raikas, and their settlement is called a dhandi.

Fig.6 – Camel herder in settlement

1.3 Pastoral Life

- Their lives depend on knowledge of seasonal patterns, water and pasture availability.
- Combine cultivation, trade, herding for survival.
- Mutual relationships with farmers – manure exchange, grain-for-pasture deals.

◆ 2. Colonial Rule and Pastoral Life

Under colonialism, pastoral life changed due to restrictions, laws, and taxes.

2.1 Key Changes Imposed by the British

1. Waste Land Rules

- Uncultivated grazing lands were taken over and given to individuals for cultivation.
- Reduced pasture land for pastoralists.

2. Forest Acts

- Forests classified as Reserved and Protected.
- Grazing banned or highly restricted.
- Permits introduced to control movement.

3. Criminal Tribes Act (1871)

- Mobile communities labeled as ‘criminal by birth’.
- Confined to fixed villages; movement restricted.

4. Grazing Tax

- Tax on every animal grazing.
- Initially collected by contractors, later directly by the government.
- Pastoralists issued passes and taxed per animal.



 Fig.9 – Raika genealogist



 Fig.10 – Maldhari herders

2.2 Effects on Pastoralists

- Loss of grazing land → pressure on remaining land
- Overgrazing → pasture degradation
- Drought/famines became more dangerous → cattle died



Fig.11 – Map of pastoral groups in India

2.3 Coping Mechanisms

- Some reduced herd size or found new pastures (e.g., Haryana after 1947)
- Rich pastoralists bought land or started trade
- Poorer ones lost animals → became labourers or charcoal sellers
- Yet many communities survived and adapted to new situations.



Fig.18 – A Raika shepherd on Jaipur highway.
Heavy traffic on highways has made migration of shepherds a new experience.

◆ 3. Pastoralism in Africa (Focus: Maasai)

■ Maasai: Traditional cattle herders of Kenya & Tanzania. Over 450,000 today.

3.1 Loss of Grazing Land

- Before 1885: Maasailand spread across Kenya–Tanzania.
- After colonial division: Lost 60% land to white settlers and game reserves (e.g., Maasai Mara, Serengeti)



Fig.13 – Pastoral communities in Africa.
The inset shows the location of the Maasais in Kenya and Tanzania.

Fig.13 – Pastoral communities in Africa.

3.2 Colonial Restrictions

- Forced into reserves; movement restricted by permits
- Banned from white markets and trade
- White colonists saw them as uncivilized



Fig.15 – Maasai men in traditional dress

█ Similar problem faced by Kaokoland herders in Namibia

█ Source E, Source F – Complaints about closed borders

3.3 Drought and Crises

- Without freedom to migrate, they couldn't escape droughts.
 - 1933–34: Half the Maasai cattle died.
 - Shrinking grazing area worsened situation.
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3.4 Social Changes

- Pre-colonial: Elders ruled, warriors defended and raided cattle.
- British appointed chiefs → weakened traditional leadership
- Chiefs gained wealth, traded, lived in towns
- Poor Maasai became labourers during famine and war



Fig.16– Maasai warrior traditions and transitions

Conclusion

- Pastoralists globally faced loss of land, legal restrictions, and exploitation.
- But they adapted: changed routes, reduced herds, took up new trades, fought for rights.
- Today, many survive and thrive – especially in dry, mountainous regions where pastoralism remains viable.