

Pastoral Communities in India

Chapter 5: Pastoralists in the Modern World · Topic 1

Key Concept

Pastoral communities like the Gujjars, Bakarwals, and Raikas move their herds between different regions seasonally, a practice called transhumance, following favourable grazing conditions.

These communities have deep traditional knowledge of terrain, weather patterns, and animal care, developed over generations of practising pastoralism.

Pastoral life involves close community bonds, unique cultural practices, and a strong relationship with nature, as their livelihood depends directly on natural resources.

Pastoral communities contribute significantly to the economy through dairy products, wool, and meat production, despite often facing challenges from changing land-use policies.

Quick Revision Notes

- Pastoral communities raise livestock like sheep, goats and cattle.
- Gujjars, Bakarwals and Raikas are examples of pastoral communities.
- Transhumance means seasonal movement in search of pasture.
- Pastoral communities have deep traditional knowledge.
- This knowledge covers terrain, weather and animal care.
- Pastoral life involves close community bonds.
- Their livelihood depends on natural resources.
- They contribute dairy, wool and meat to the economy.

Practice Questions

- 1 Research one pastoral community in India, like the Gujjars.
- 2 Discuss what transhumance means.
- 3 Explain why pastoral communities move seasonally.
- 4 Research a product that comes from pastoral communities.
- 5 Discuss a challenge pastoral communities might face today.
- 6 Compare pastoral and farming lifestyles.