**Indian Supreme Court High Powered Committee on Agrarian Reforms meets with Pastoralist delegation, August 2025**

Note prepared by IYRP RISG-SA

on the Pastoral Representation to High Power Committee on Agrarian Reforms

The Supreme Court High Powered Committee on Agrarian Reforms – called for a meeting to understand the status of Pastoralists in India. The High-Powered Committee is constituted by the Hon’ble Supreme Court of India to recommend comprehensive reforms in the agrarian sector.

The meeting was held on **19th August , 2025** at Panchkula, Chandigarh. The meeting was chaired byJustice Nawab Singh, former Judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and Chairperson of the Supreme Court-appointed High-Powered Committee on Agrarian Reforms. The other eminent members of the committee were Mr. P.S. Sandhu - Retired IPS officer, Mr. Devinder Sharma, noted Agriculture Scientist, Dr. Sukhpal Singh - Agricultural Economist of Panjab Agriculture University, and Prof B.R. Kamboj - Vice Chancellor of Agri University along with several relevant dignitaries.

A five-member team of CSOs representatives namely Mr. Ramesh Bhatti & Dr. Vasant Saberwal from Centre for Pastoralism; Dr. Bhavana Rao from Rainfed-Livestock Network, Ms. Pooja Chandran from the Foundation for Ecological Security and Dr. Sabyasachi Das from Revitalising Rainfed Agricultural Network presented a detailed overview of pastoralism in India to the committee.

The presentation covered multiple dimensions of pastoralism in India, including its socio-cultural significance, population profile, and the economics of pastoral production systems. It emphasized the critical need for continued access to grazing resources, while outlining the key challenges pastoral communities face and the kinds of services they require. Importantly, the presentation highlighted that pastoralism offers a far more sustainable model of livestock production compared to intensive systems. It also stressed the recognition of pastoral mobility as an essential feature of these production systems. Towards the end, it was emphasized that conserving and protecting all types of grazing resources—such as water and land commons and open natural ecosystems—is critical for the functioning of pastoral production systems. Without this, India will face a significant decline in the production of animal-source foods accompanied by more than 12 million pastoralists at risk of being pushed into poverty.

Adding depth to the discussion, Mr. Mashrubhai Rabari and Mr. Shankar Rabari from Rabari Community, of Gujarat, Mr. Gulabnabi and Mr. Ishak Mohamad from the Van Gujjar community of Uttarakhand also attended this meeting. They shared their lived experiences and challenges, providing powerful real-life perspectives that enriched and grounded the presentation and issues that need attention.

Initiating a discussion on understanding pastoralism was indeed a significant step towards recognising the value of Pastoralism and its contribution by the Government of India

In the end some writings by Shri Devinder Sharma on the social media post:

*Pastoralists are not below the poverty line, the High-Powered Committee on Agrarian Reforms, constituted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court, was told today. This was conveyed by a delegation of pastoralists which made an insightful presentation before the committee today, which met at it's office in Panchkula. The visiting delegation, led by Ramesh Bhatti from Sahjeevan Trust in Kucch region. Comprising some 1.5 crore people, the 75 communities that form Pastoralists only need to be allowed to graze in jungles. "Slowly but steadily, pastoralists are being debarred from the common resources that sustain their livelihood," Bhatti said. Sadly pastoralists do not find mention in the official records. Nor do they get rights over the numerous services that are provided to the majority population, like ration, medical and education. There were three members of the pastoral communities in their traditional attire, among the 8-member strong delegation that came to meet the HPC.*