

ABOUT
GUJARAT
STATE

Chapter- 02

ABOUT GUJARAT STATE

Gujarat – *The Land of the Legends*, is one of the most diverse states in India. Gujarat derives its name from the word 'Gujaratta'. Gujaratta means the land of gurjars. The gurjars were a sub-tribe of the Huns who ruled the area during the 8th and 9th centuries AD. They passed through Punjab and settled in some parts of western India, which came to be known as Gujarat. Stone Age settlements around Sabarmati and Mahi rivers indicate the same time as that of the Indus Valley Civilization while Harappan centres are also found at Lothal, Rampur, Amri and other places. Rock Inscriptions in the Girnar Hills show that the Maurya Emperor Ashoka, extended his domain into Gujarat in about 250 BC. With it's fall, the control of the region came under the Sakas or Scythians. During the 900's the Solanki Dynasty came to power and Gujarat reached it's greatest extent.^{82,89,90,189}

Then followed a long period of Muslim rule Ahmed I, the first independent Muslim ruler of Gujarat, found Ahmedabad in 1411. The Mughal Emperor Akbar conquered Malwa and Gujarat in 1570s. The British East India Company set its first footsteps in Surat in 1818 and the State came in control of their rule. Gujarat was divided into princely states.⁸⁶

After the Indian Independence in 1947, all of Gujarat except Saurashtra and Kutchh became part of Bombay State until May 1, 1960, when the Government split Bombay state into the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat. Ahmedabad became the chief city of the new State and housed the State Government Offices. They remained there until they were transferred to Gandhinagar in 1970.^{86,87,90}

Gujarat is situated on the west coast of India. Gujarat is bounded by the Arabian Sea in the west, by Rajasthan in the north and northeast, by Madhya Pradesh in the east and by Maharashtra in the south and south east. The state has an international border and has a common frontier with Pakistan at the north-western fringe. It covers an area of 196,024 square km. It has the longest coast line of 1290 kms. Gandhinagar, located near Ahmedabad is the state capital of Gujarat. The people of Gujarat are also known to be a successful business community. At present, Gujarat comprises of 26 districts. The official and primary language spoken is Gujarati. The state of Gujarat is known all over the world for its holy temples, historic

capitals, wildlife sanctuaries, beaches, hill resorts, fascinating handicrafts, mouth watering cuisine and



colourful lifestyle of the people of Gujarat.^{86,166}

The state of Gujarat is an industrially advanced state and holds an important place in India. The state comprises of three geographical regions. The peninsula, traditionally known as Saurashtra, is essentially a hilly tract sprinkled with low mountains. Kutch on the north-east is barren and rocky and contains the famous Rann (desert) of Kutch, the big Rann in the north and the little Rann in the east. The mainland extending from the Rann of Kutch and the Aravalli Hills to the river Damanganga is on the whole a level plain of alluvial soil.^{86,89,118}

Districts in Gujarat-

- 1. Ahmedabad**
- 2. Amreli District**
- 3. Anand**
- 4. Banaskantha**
- 5. Bharuch**
- 6. Bhavnagar**
- 7. Dahod**
- 8. The Dangs**
- 9. Gandhinagar**
- 10. Jamnagar**
- 11. Junagadh**
- 12. Kutch**
- 13. Kheda**
- 14. Mehsana**

15.Narmada

16.Navsari

17.Patan

18.Panchmahal

19.Porbandar

20.Rajkot

21.Sabarkantha

22.Surendranagar

23.Surat

24.Tapi

25.Vadodara

26.Valsad

The North part of Gujarat is called North Gujarat. It includes Gandhinagar, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Mehsana and Patan districts. The South Gujarat region includes Surat, Navsari , Dang , Valsad and the newly formed Tapi District. The East Gujarat region includes Panchmahal and Dahod districts.¹⁰⁵