

Gujarat

State (pop., 2008 est.: 56,408,000) and historic region, western India.

Area 1,96,024 sq. km

Population 50,671,017

Capital Gandhinagar

Principal Languages Gujarati

Governor



Dr. Kamla Beniwal
Governor,
Government of Gujarat,
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Smt. Anandiben Mafatbhai Patel Minister, Revenue, Disaster Management,	079 - 23238077 079 - 23250111-15	1 st Block, 6 th Floor, Sachivalay

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23250200
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23250899
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23253154
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Gujarat – *The Land of the Legends*, stands bordered by Pakistan and Rajasthan in the north east, Madhya Pradesh in the east, and Maharashtra and the Union territories of Diu, Daman, Dadra and Nagar Haveli in the south. The Arabian Sea borders the state both to the west and the south west.

The State took its name from the Gujjars, who ruled the area during the 700's and 800's. 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 its 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 its greatest extent.

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. 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.

Lying on the Arabian Sea and with a coastline of 992 mi (1,596 km) that includes the union territory enclaves of Daman and Diu, it is bordered by Pakistan; the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra; and Dadra and Nagar Haveli union territory. It has an area of 75,685 sq mi (196,024 sq km), and the capital is Gandhinagar. During the 4th and 5th centuries ce, it was ruled by the Gupta dynasty; it derived its name from the Gurjaras, who ruled the area in the 8th and 9th centuries. After a period of economic and cultural achievement, it fell successively under Arab Muslim, Mughal, and Maratha rule. In 1818 it came under British control, and after 1857 it was a province of British India. Following Indian independence in 1947, most of Gujarat was included in the state of Bombay, which was divided into Gujarat and Maharashtra in 1960. Gujarat is a leading industrialized state of India and a petroleum producer. It is also famous for its arts and crafts.

Located on the country's western coast, on the Arabian Sea. It encompasses the entire Kathiawar Peninsula (Saurashtra) as well as the surrounding area on the mainland. The state is bounded primarily by Pakistan to the northwest and by the Indian states of Rajasthan to the north, Madhya Pradesh to the east, and Maharashtra to the southeast. Gujarat also shares a small segment of its southeastern border with the Indian union territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and, together with the Arabian Sea, it surrounds the territory of Daman and Diu. The coastline of Gujarat is 992 miles (1,596 km) long, and no part of the state is more than 100 miles (160 km) from the sea. The capital is Gandhinagar, on the outskirts of the north-central city of Ahmadabad (Ahmedabad)—the former capital, the largest city in the state, and one of the greatest cotton-textile centres in India. It was in Ahmadabad that Mahatma Gandhi built his Sabarmati ashram (Sanskrit: *ashrama*, "retreat," or "hermitage") as a headquarters for his campaigns.

Gujarat draws its name from the Gurjara (supposedly a subtribe of the Huns), who ruled the area during the 8th and 9th centuries ce. The state assumed its present form in 1960, when the former Bombay state was divided between Maharashtra and Gujarat on the basis of language. Area 75,685 square miles (196,024 square km). Pop. (2008 est.) 56,408,000.

Land

Gujarat is a land of great contrasts, stretching from the seasonal salt deserts of the Kachchh (Kutch) district in the northwest, across the generally arid and semiarid scrublands of the Kathiawar Peninsula, to the wet, fertile, coastal plains of the southeastern part of the state, north of Mumbai. The Rann of Kachchh—including both the Great Rann and its eastern appendage, the Little Rann—are best described as vast salt marshes, together covering about 9,000 square miles (23,300 square km). The Rann constitutes the Kachchh district on the west, north, and east, while the Gulf of Kachchh forms the district's southern boundary. During the rainy season—slight though the rains may be—the Rann floods, and the Kachchh district is converted into an island; in the dry season it is a sandy, salty plain plagued by dust storms.

To the southeast of Kachchh, lying between the Gulf of Kachchh and the Gulf of Khambhat (Cambay), is the large Kathiawar Peninsula. It is generally arid and rises from the coasts to a low, rolling area of hill land in the centre, where the state reaches its highest elevation, at 3,665 feet (1,117 metres), in the Girnar Hills. Soils in the peninsula are mostly poor, having been derived from a variety of old crystalline rocks. Rivers, except for seasonal streams, are absent from the area.

To the east of the Kathiawar Peninsula, small plains and low hills in the north merge with fertile farmlands in the south. The richness of the southern soils is attributable to their partial derivation from the basalts of the Deccan, the physiographic region that constitutes most of south India. Southeastern Gujarat is crossed from east to west by the Narmada and Tapti (Tapi) rivers, both of which empty into the Gulf of Khambhat. Toward the eastern border with Maharashtra, the terrain becomes mountainous; the region is the northern extension of the Western Ghats, the mountain range that runs parallel to the Arabian Sea on the western edge of southern India.

Climate

Winter (November through February) temperatures in Gujarat usually reach a high in the mid-80s F (about 28 °C), while lows drop into the mid-50s F (about 12 °C). Summers (March through May) are

quite hot, however, with temperatures typically rising well above 100 °F (38 °C) during the day and dropping only into the 90s F (low 30s C) at night.

Gujarat is drier in the north than in the south. Rainfall is lowest in the northwestern part of the state—in the Rann of Kachchh—where it may amount to less than 15 inches (380 mm) annually. In the central portion of the Kathiawar Peninsula as well as in the northeastern region, annual rainfall typically amounts to about 40 inches (1,000 mm). Southeastern Gujarat, where the southwest monsoon brings heavy rains between June and September, is the wettest area; annual rainfall usually approaches 80 inches (2,000 mm) along the coastal plain.

Plant and animal life

Forests cover only a small portion of Gujarat, reflecting human activity as well as meagre rainfall. Scrub forest occurs in the northwestern region and across the Kathiawar Peninsula, the main species being the babul acacia, the caper, the Indian jujube, and the toothbrush bush (*Salvadora persica*). In some parts of the peninsula and northeastern Gujarat, such deciduous species as teak, catechu (cutch), axlewood, and Bengal *kino* (butea gum) are found. Deciduous forests are concentrated in the wetter southern and eastern hills. They produce valuable timbers, such as Vengai padauk (genus *Pterocarpus*; resembling mahogany), Malabar *simal*, and *haldu* (*Adina cordifolia*). The west coast of the peninsula is known for its algae, and the east coast produces the papyrus, or paper plant (*Cyperus papyrus*).

Gir National Park, in the southwestern region of the Kathiawar Peninsula, contains rare Asiatic lions (*Panthera leo persica*), and endangered Indian wild asses (*Equus hemionus khur*) are protected in a sanctuary near the Little Rann of Kachchh. The Nal Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, near Ahmadabad, attracts many species of birds migrating from the Siberian plains and elsewhere in winter. Saras cranes, Brahmini ducks, bustards, pelicans, cormorants, ibises, storks, herons, and egrets are among the most notable species. The Rann of Kachchh is the only nesting ground of the greater flamingo in India. There is excellent offshore and inland fishing in Gujarat. Catches include pomfret, salmon, *hilsa* (a type of shad), jewfish (scianid fish), prawn, Bombay duck (a food fish), and tuna.

Population composition

The diverse peoples constituting the Gujarati population may be categorized broadly as either Indic (northern-derived) or Dravidian (southern-derived). The former include the Nagar Brahman, Bhatia, Bhadela, Rabari, and Mina castes. The Parsis, originally from Persia, represent a much later northern influx. Among the peoples of southern origin are the Bhangi, Koli, Dubla, Naikda, and Macchi-Kharwa. The rest of the population, including the aboriginal Bhil community, is of mixed heritage. Members of the Scheduled (formerly “untouchable”) Castes and Scheduled Tribes (indigenous minority peoples who are not embraced by India’s caste hierarchy) form roughly one-fifth of the state’s population. Portions of the mountainous region of southeastern Gujarat are populated almost entirely by tribal peoples.

Gujarati and Hindi are the state’s official languages. Gujarati, the more widely spoken of the two, is an Indo-European language derived from Sanskrit through Prakrit, ancient Indic languages other than Sanskrit, and Apabhramsha, a language spoken in northern and western India from the 10th to the 14th century. Gujarat’s contact by sea with foreign countries also led to the introduction of Persian, Arabic, Turkish, Portuguese, and English words.

Hinduism is the religion of most of the population. Adherents of Islam constitute the largest minority. However, there are also significant communities of Jains, who are more strongly established in Gujarat than in other parts of India; Zoroastrians, or Parsis, whose ancestors fled Persia sometime after the 7th century; and Christians.

Settlement patterns

Roughly three-fifths of the residents of Gujarat are rural. The main concentration of population is in the eastern part of the state, in the plains surrounding the cities of Ahmadabad, Kheda, Vadodara, Surat, and Valsad; the region is both agriculturally productive and highly industrialized. Other concentrations of population occur on the Kathiawar Peninsula, particularly on the southern coast between the cities of Mangrol and Mahuva, in the interior around Rajkot, and on the Gulf of Kachchh around Jamnagar. The distribution of population gradually decreases toward the Kachchh district in the northwest and toward the hilly regions of eastern Gujarat.

Most of the major cities are found in the more fertile regions, and many of them—such as Rajkot, Junagadh, Porbandar, Bhavnagar (Bhaunagar), and Jamnagar, all on the peninsula—were once the capitals of small states. The most urbanized area of Gujarat is the Ahmadabad-Vadodara (Baroda) industrial belt in the east-central region. Since the late 20th century, this area has become just one segment of an ever-expanding urban agglomeration along the highway that links the northern and southern parts of the state.

Agriculture

Although unfavourable climatic conditions, salinity of soil and water, and rocky terrain have hampered Gujarat's agricultural activities, the sector has remained a major component of the state's economy, employing about half of the workforce. Wheat, millet, rice, and sorghum are the primary food crops, with rice production being concentrated in the wetter areas. Principal cash crops include cotton, oilseeds (especially peanuts [groundnuts]), tobacco, and sugarcane. Commercial dairying is also important.

Resources and power

Gujarat is rich in minerals, including limestone, manganese, gypsum, calcite, and bauxite. The state also has deposits of lignite, quartz sand, agate, and feldspar. The fine building stones of Porbandar, on the Kathiawar Peninsula, are among Gujarat's most valuable products, and the state's output of soda ash and salt amounts to a significant portion of the national yield. In addition, Gujarat produces petroleum and natural gas.

The state draws its electricity from a variety of sources. The bulk of Gujarat's power is supplied by coal- and gas-fueled thermal plants, followed by hydroelectric generators. There also are a number of wind farms scattered across the state.

Manufacturing and labour

Gujarat occupies a leading place in India's manufacturing sector, especially in the production of chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and polyester textiles. The state's major industrial belt exists in its southern

sector. There is a large oil refinery at Koyali (near Vadodara), which supports a nearby petrochemical industry. Pharmaceutical production is concentrated at Vadodara, Ahmadabad, and Valsad. Small-scale, largely agriculture-based manufacturing is located in the Kathiawar Peninsula. Vegetable oil, cotton textiles, and cement are among the products of these industries.

Favourable investments, the availability of resources and power, solid management, and labour efficiency have been the basis of the state's industrial development. Moreover, the Gandhian approach to labour problems—strict reliance on the truth, nonviolence, settlement by arbitration, minimal demands, and the use of the strike only as a last resort—has had a great impact in the field of industrial relations in Gujarat, which has remained relatively free from labour unrest.

Transportation

Gujarat's towns and cities are well connected—to each other and to the rest of India—by road and rail. Coastal shipping routes link the state's many ports. Kandla is a major international shipping terminal. There is air service both within the state and to major Indian cities outside Gujarat.

Constitutional framework

The governmental structure of Gujarat, like that of most Indian states, is defined by the national constitution of 1950. The governor is the chief executive and is appointed by the president of India. The Council of Ministers, led by the chief minister, aids and advises the governor. Gujarat's Legislative Assembly (Vidhan Sabha) is an elected unicameral body. The High Court is the highest judicial authority in the state. Various lower courts—including the city courts, the courts of district and sessions judges, and the courts of civil judges—operate within each administrative district.

The state is divided into more than two dozen administrative districts. The revenue and general administration of each district is overseen by the district collector, who also functions as the district magistrate for the maintenance of law and order. With a view toward involving the people in local government, elected governing councils (*panchayat*) were introduced at the village level in 1963.

Health and welfare

Health and medical services in Gujarat include programs to control malaria, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and other communicable diseases; to prevent blindness; and to eradicate leprosy and polio. Other services focus on reproductive and family health and on health education. Primary health centres offer medical services throughout the state. Public and private hospitals as well as medical colleges offer more-specialized services, primarily in the larger urban areas. Various state institutions address the welfare needs of children, women, people with disabilities, and senior citizens. Special programs also are available to assist those who belong to communities that, by tradition, have been socially, economically, and educationally disadvantaged.

Education

Primary schooling for all children between the ages of 7 and 11 is available in most villages with 500 or more inhabitants. Special schools serve children in the rural tribal regions. Secondary schools are spread throughout the state in larger villages, towns, and urban areas.

Gujarat has a number of important institutions of higher education. Among the state's most notable universities are Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (1949) in Vadodara and Gujarat University (1949) in Ahmadabad. Major research institutions include the Physical Research Laboratory (1947; a unit of the national Department of Space) in Ahmadabad, the Ahmadabad Textile Industry's Research Association (1949), the Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (1959) at Bhavnagar, and the National Institute of Design (1961) and the Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research (1965), both in Ahmadabad. In addition to its universities and research centres, Gujarat has numerous smaller tertiary institutions (e.g., engineering colleges and technical schools) with specialized curricula.

Cultural life

Much of the culture of Gujarat reflects the mythology surrounding the Hindu deity Krishna (an incarnation of the god Vishnu), as transmitted in the Puranas, a class of Hindu sacred literature. The older *rasnritya* and *rasliya* dance traditions honouring Krishna find their contemporary manifestation in the popular dance called *garaba* (also spelled *garba*). This dance is performed primarily at the *navaratra* festival, which honours the goddess Durga; female dancers move in a circle, singing and keeping time by clapping their hands or clashing together sticks called *danda*. Also commonly performed at *navaratra* is *bhavai*, a type of popular, rural, comic drama that depicts various aspects of rural life. All of the roles in *bhavai*—both male and female—are played by men.

Shaivism (Shivaism), the cult of the Hindu god Shiva, has long flourished in Gujarat; so too has Vaishnavism (the worship of the god Vishnu), from which have emerged not only the cult of *bhakti* (devotion) but also a rich repertoire of verse and song. Notable Vaishnava saints, poets, and musicians include Narasimha, who composed *padas* (verses) in the 15th century; Mira Bai, a 16th-century Rajput princess who renounced her royal home and composed *bhajans* (devotional songs); Premanand, an 18th-century poet and writer; and Dayaram, an 18th-century composer of songs who popularized the *bhakti* cult.

In the Jain tradition, writings of the prolific 12th-century author Hemacandra continue to be held in high regard. Hemacandra produced numerous textbooks on various aspects of Indian philosophy, as well as grammatical analyses of Sanskrit and Prakrit. He also wrote an epic history of the world from a Jain perspective as well as a number of poems.

Mahatma Gandhi is also recognized as one of the state's most prodigious authors. Noted for their vigour and simplicity, Gandhi's writings in Gujarati have exerted a strong influence on modern Gujarati prose.

The ancient architectural style of Gujarat, known for its luxuriousness and intricacy, is preserved in monuments and temples such as those in Somnath and Dwarka in the southwestern part of the state; Modhera in the north; and Than, Ghumli (near Porbandar), the Girnar Hills, and Palitana in the Kathiawar Peninsula. Under Muslim rule, a distinctive architectural style that blended Muslim and Hindu elements developed. This style is exemplified by many of the 15th- and 16th-century mosques and tombs of Ahmadabad.

In addition to its architecture, Gujarat is widely recognized for its highly skilled craftwork. Notable products include the *jari* (gold and silver embroidery) of Surat, the *bandhani*-work (using a tie-dyeing technique) fabrics of Jamnagar, and the *patola* silk saris (garments worn by Indian women) of Patan, in northern Gujarat. Also from the northern region, the toys of Idar, the perfumes of Palanpur, and the

hand-loomed products of Kanodar are well known. Ahmadabad and Surat are renowned for their decorative woodwork depicting miniature temples and mythological figures.

Among the most durable and effective of the state's cultural institutions are the trade and craft guilds known as the *mahajans*. Often coterminous with castes—and largely autonomous—the guilds have in the past solved disputes, acted as channels of philanthropy, and encouraged arts and other cultural activities.

History

The history of Gujarat goes back to 2000 B.C. It is believed that Lord Krishna left Mathura to settle on the west coast of Saurashtra, which later came to be known as Dwarka, the gateway.

Early human settlement in Gujarat traces back hundreds of thousands of years—to the Stone Age—in the valleys of the Sabarmati and Mahi rivers in the eastern part of the state. The emergence of a historical record is linked with the spread of the Indus (Harappan) civilization, which flourished in the 3rd and 2nd millennia bce. Centres of this civilization have been found at Lothal, Rangpur, Amri, Lakhabaval, and Rozdi (mostly in the Kathiawar Peninsula).

The known history of Gujarat begins with the Mauryan dynasty, which had extended its rule over the area by the 3rd century bce, as indicated by the edicts of the emperor Ashoka (c. 250 bce), which are carved on a rock in the Girnar Hills of the Kathiawar Peninsula. After the fall of the Mauryan empire, Gujarat came under the rule of the Shakas (Scythians), or western Kshatrapas (130–390 ce). The greatest of the Shaka leaders, Mahakshatrapa Rudradaman, established his sway over Saurashtra (a region roughly corresponding to the Kathiawar Peninsula) and Kachchh, as well as over the neighbouring province of Malwa and other areas in what are now the states of Madhya Pradesh Rajasthan.

From the late 4th to the late 5th century, Gujarat formed a part of the Gupta empire until the Guptas were succeeded by the Maitraka dynasty of the kingdom of Valabhi, which ruled over Gujarat and Malwa for three centuries. The capital, Valabhipura (near the eastern coast of the Kathiawar Peninsula), was a great centre of Buddhist, Vedic, and Jaina learning. The Maitraka dynasty was succeeded by the Gurjara-Pratiharas (the imperial Gurjaras of Kannauj), who ruled during the 8th and 9th centuries; they, in turn, were followed shortly afterward by the Solanki dynasty. The boundaries of Gujarat reached their farthest limits during the reign of the Solankis, when remarkable progress was made in the economic and cultural fields. Siddharaja Jayasimha and Kumarapala are the best-known Solanki kings. Karnadeva Vaghela, of the subsequent Vaghela dynasty, was defeated in about 1299 by 'Alā' al-Dīn Khaljī, sultan of Delhi; Gujarat then came under Muslim rule. It was Aḥmad Shah, the first independent sultan of Gujarat, who founded Ahmadabad (1411). By the end of the 16th century, Gujarat was ruled by the Mughals; this lasted until the mid-18th century, when the Marathas overran the state.

Gujarat came under the administration of the British East India Company in 1818. After the Indian Mutiny of 1857–59, the area became a province of the British crown and was divided into Gujarat province, with an area of about 10,000 square miles (26,000 square km), and numerous native states (including Saurashtra and Kachchh). With Indian independence in 1947, the province of Gujarat was included in Bombay state; in 1956 the province was enlarged to include Kachchh and Saurashtra. On May 1, 1960, India's Bombay state was split into present-day Gujarat and Maharashtra.

In April 1965, fighting broke out between India and Pakistan in the Rann of Kachchh, an area that had long been in dispute between the two countries. A cease-fire came into force on July 1, and the dispute was submitted to arbitration by an international tribunal. The tribunal's award, published in 1968, gave nine-tenths of the territory to India and one-tenth to Pakistan. Gujarat was again gripped by violence in 1985; triggered by proposed changes in the concessions reserved for the Scheduled Castes, the disturbances soon escalated into Muslim-Hindu riots and continued for five months. In January 2001 the state was rocked by a devastating earthquake, which had its epicentre at Bhuj in the Kachchh district. About a year later, in February 2002, Gujarat experienced a resurgence of large-scale rioting and Muslim-Hindu communal violence.

Discover sense of Excellence in Gujarat – where life breathes, Rediscovering life in nation's Heritage - In the beauty and charm of Culture and traditions, In the life and lifestyles of people who made their contribution to Gujarat - Rediscover real meaning of life everywhere.

There is something about the soil, the sun, the moon and the stars – something about the space and the people – Above all, Freedom – freedom of choice, to breathe the air of joy and happiness, peace and tranquility.

Life is a Celebration for those who live in the Land of the Legends – A place where Gods chose to exist!

Gujarat, the Land of the Legends go down in History to leave behind impressions with footprints on the sands of time. Since many years, the land is Inspired by great Legends.

Inspirations: They Hail From Gujarat



Gandhiji

Father of the Nation who made
India Free



Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
Iron man 'Architect of India'



Vikram Sarabhai
Visionary Physicist 'Father of
Indian
Space Program'

**Dhirubhai Ambani**

The Leader with a vision

**Jamshedji Tata**

Father of the Indian Industry

Inspirational Characters from Gujarat:

Literature:

Krishna
Hemchandracharya
Mira
akho
Premanand
Narsinh Mehta

Religion & Meditation:

Swami Sahajanan
Dayanand Saraswati
Shrimad Rajchandra
Pujya Mota
Ahmed Shah

Arts:

Maula Baksh
Ustad Faiz khan
Omkarnath Thakur
Ravishankar Raval
Jayshankar 'Sundri'

Research and Science:

Dr. Homi Bhabha
Dr. Vikram Sarabhai
Rubin David
Tribhovandas Gajjar
Salim Ali

Industries (Mahajans):

Vastupal Tejpal
Premchand Raichand
Jamshedji Tata
Kasturbhai Lalbhai
Gijubhai Badheka

Social and for Country:

Dadabhai Navroji
Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi
Ravishankar Maharaj
Indulal Yagnik
Shyamji Krishna Verma

Sports:

Jam Ranji
General Rajendrasinh
General Manekshaw
