PREFACE

The culture is dynamic and not static. The human culture is subject to a constant change in accordance with time and space. The transformation of the Dangi tribal economy is a process of evolutionary change. The Dangs is such tribal area which remain unknown to outside world for many years. Until early 18th century, the Dangs district remained most backward and impoverished owing to its rugged topography and poor soil with traditional methods of agriculture. The Dangi Chiefs and Naiks ruled for many years.

People of the Dangs rely upon primitive agricultural practice and selling of precious timber of all kinds. Thus the deforestation by the tribals was the important degrading factors that were prevailing in the tribal district of south Gujarat.

The process of the transformation actual begun following the arrival of the British East India Company in the Dangs. The Britishers took over the Dangs Forest on 'lease' from the local Chiefs. With this, the rule of the local Dangi Chiefs ended in the tribal district. The Britishers started awakening the tribals through the education and improving agricultural practices in the district. They even stopped or reduced the felling of trees in the Dangs. The British government use to fulfill their timber requirement from this forest to be utilized for the making of the ships at Bombay port. The Dangs remained with Bombay Presidency until the bifurcation of Gujarat from the Maharashtra state in 1960.

The Government of Gujarat has done excellent work for the development of the Dangs district. The introduction of the Dangs Reserve Fund, Various welfare schemes, good infrastructure for the primary, secondary and higher secondary schools and the commencement of the Arts and Commerce college in the district has brought many changes in the tribal society in the district. The two tribal graduates from Ahwa have passed the NET / SLET tests who are now working
as a lecturer in the South Gujarat University, Surat. The training centre for the job oriented courses has educated over 2000 tribal youngsters who are today working in the various industries in the Daman, Dahanu, Valsad, Navsari, Bilimora and Surat.

The change in the agriculture sector has been brought with the help of 362 check dams, over 1000 wells for the lift irrigation, introduction of the watershed management for the water scarcity areas of the Dangs. The drip irrigation and the use of sprinkles have made possible for floriculture and horticulture development in the district.

The Forest Corporation of the Gujarat state in the Dangs has been working excellently despite of the lack of modern techniques in the preservation of the forest. The Dangs forests and its ecosystem is the greatest boon for the entire south Gujarat that balance the environment degradation through its huge oxygen bank. The vegetation absorbs the carbon dioxide and generate oxygen for all living beings. The department of the forest has implemented afforestation and reforestation programme on a very large scale in the entire Dangs. We should not ignore or forget the invaluable services of all the employees of the forest department who are involved in the conservation and preservation of our prestigious forest resources. I specially praise and salute to the efforts of the staff who are working deep in the forest with their family where there are no social amenities for them and for their children.

The entire tribal economy has been changed through various processes and have passed through different stages.

The District Collector, the Chief Conservetor of the Forests, the District Development Officer, the Department of Irrigation, the Road and Building Construction Department, Agriculture, Tourism and Education Department are all forces behind the transformation of the Dangs economy.