TOPOGRAPHY

The state of Gujarat is situated on the west coast of peninsular India between 20° and 25° North latitudes and 68° and 75° East longitudes. Its boundaries are delimited by Arabian sea on the West, the state of Rajasthan on the North-east, Madhya Pradesh on the East, and Maharashtra on the South and South East. On North Western side it has a common border with Pakistan.

The state of Gujarat has a total area of 1.96 lakh Sq.Kms. and can be divided into three distinct geomorphological divisions as follow.
a) Gujarat main land
b) Saurashtra Peninsula
c) Kutch Peninsula

The wide variations in climate and topography of the state have resulted in various types of forest, ranging from moist deciduous to pure desert conditions. The forest of the state can be grouped into the following types.
a) Tropical moist deciduous forest, occurs in the Bulsar, Dangs, and Surat District.
b) Dry deciduous forest occur in Rajpipla, Chhotaudepur, Panchmahals, Sabarkantha, Junagarh, Amreli, Banaskantha and Rajkot district.
c) Serub forest occurs in plains of Bulsar, Saurashtra and Kutch.
d) Mangroove forests are found in the coastal muddy creeks.
THE REGION OF DANG

Dangs means a place of Bamboos. The name is also associated with mythology, as Dandakaranya of Ramayana, believed to be the forested area between Godavari and Narmada rivers. There are certain places in Dangs which are believed to be associated with Ramayana such as Sita-ran forest near Garkhadi and Subir, and with Mahabharata such as Pandav caves of pandava village.

Dang district is located between the parallels of latitude 20° 33' 40'' and 21° 5' 10'' North and meridians of longitude 73° 27' 58'' and 73° 56' 36'' East. Total area of the district is 1778 Sq.kms. District Head-quarter of the area is Ahwa.

PEOPLE AND THEIR CULTURE

Dang is mainly a tribal District and the population is entirely rural. The main tribes are Bhils, i.e. Varalis, Kokanis, Gamit, Mavchis, Padvis, Vasavas, Valvis, Kathodia, Vitalia, Naik, Dubala and Choudhari. The language of the region is 'Dangi' which is very primitive and it has no script.

For Dangis music and dance are indispensable for celebration of any festival or ceremony. "Thali", "Pavari", "Kahali", "Sur", "Tadapu" are blow instruments and "Dholak", "Madal", "Dhank" are drums of Dangi music. The dances are of three types, i.e. Solo, Duets and Group dance. Holi is the main festival and Dang Darbar fair during the Holi festival is the important fair for Dangis.

The source of income for Dangis are forest product and agriculture. The area available for cultivation consists of
small patches in the protected forest completely depending on natural rain. All these local factors allow only one crop a year. The main crops are Nagli, Wari, Wheat, Maize, Jawar and Bajra.

HILLS AND RIVERS:

Dang forms the North Western ranges of Western Ghat and most of its area has rugged hilly terrain. The tract varies in elevation from 150 M. near Bheskatri to 1317 M. above M.S.L. on the crest of Gaolan hills on the Khandesh border in Pipalaidevi Ranges. Most of the areas in Dangs lie between elevation of 300 to 700 mtr, above M.S.L. The area is divided into 4 valleys.

1) The Gira river
2) The Purna river
3) The Khapri river
4) The Ambika river.

The Gira river is towards North of Dang. It is the smallest river. To the south there is Ambika river. The middle of the Dang is occupied by two larger rivers. The Purna towards North and the Khapri toward South. All these rivers flow from East to West.

SOIL

In Dang the soil varies from red, through gray to nearly black. The black cotton soil is clay to loamy and fertile. The red soil is light and porous and contains no soluble salts. The red soil is typical of deep accumulation of detritus found in the shallow plateau of valleys, and in some parts it is rich in ferruginous salts.
CLIMATE AND HUMIDITY:

The region has tropical monsoon climate with four distinct seasons.
1) Cold season from December to February
2) Hot season from March to May
3) South West monsoon from June to September
4) Season of retreating monsoon i.e Post monsoon from October to November

The month of May is the hottest month with maximum temperature of about 40°C and minimum temperature of about 26°C. The month of December is the coldest with maximum and minimum temperature of 30°C and 16°C respectively.

Humidity is highest in monsoon, crossing above 70% and falling to about 30% in dry summer.

WATER AND RAINFALL

The ground water table is found to vary in depth from 6 to 12 mtrs. The average depth of ground water table during summer is about 4 mtrs. and in monsoon season about 3 mtrs.

The average rainfall is about 2000 mm. Maximum rainfall is about 2063 mm. and minimum rainfall is about 1667 mm.

FOREST

The total forest area in the Dang region is 1708 Sq.kms. out of total area of 1778 Sq.kms. i.e about 95% of the area is forest. The Dang forest belongs to the type "Tropical moist deciduous forest". In this forest most of the trees begin to shed their leaves by about December. And between February and May the forests look very open. The forest composition shows
dominant community of following plants. Tectona grandis L.f.,
Anogeissus latifolia (Roxb.) Wall. ex Bedd., Butea monosperma (Lam.) Taub., Dendrocalamus strictus Nees, Diospyros melanoxylon
Roxb., Mitragyna parvifolia (Roxb.) Korth., Schleichera oleosa (Lour.) Oken, Bambusa bambus (L.) Vass., Cassia fistula
L., Aegle marmelos (L.) Corr., Madhuca indica Gmel., Bauhinia racemosa Lam., Terminalia tomentosa Wight and Arn., Dalbergia
latifolia Roxb., Ougeinia ololeinensis (Roxb.) Hochest.

REFERENCES

Sardar Patel University Publication, Vallabhr Vidyanagar,
Gujarat.

2> Trivedi R.K.-1989 : The greening of Gujarat, Director of

3> A notes on Dans and it's Tribal culture, Forest Deptt.
Gujarat State.

4> Dang : "Eak samyak darshan", Govt. of Gujarat Publication
Department.

5> A Dangi Tribal dance.........A medicine to fatigueness,
Govt. of Gujarat Publication Department.
MAP NO.1: INDIA: GUJARAT AND MAHARASHTRA
SHOWING THE REGION OF EXPLORATION.
Map 1 showing the localities of Exploration

1. Subir 18. Garkhadi
2. Lavayali 19. Kudkas
3. Kotala 20. Tekpada
5. Ahwa 22. Jamb
6. Takalipada 23. Borkhal
10. Mulchond 27. Koyalipada
12. Shamghan 29. Amthawa
15. Galkund 32. Songarh
16. Meheskatri 33. Charanmal
17. Gondalvihir 34. Umarpada
MAP NO. 2: DANG FOREST: SHOWING LOCALITIES OF VISITS.