## CHAPTER – I
### INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER - I
INTRODUCTION

The change of State is the law of nature. The gist of Gita says, “Change is the law of Universe or World”. The evolution of mankind had passed through various changes. The change in human life style is also takes place regularly. Changes may be very slow but can see as well as feel in particular society in particular period. Traditions, Customs and Costumes pass through the modification, acceptance or change due to various reasons in lifestyle of human being. The study of Traditions, Customs And Costumes of Tribes of Dahod District of Gujarat State was an effort to revive, preserve and popularize these lesser known Traditions, Customs And Costumes of Tribes of Dahod District.

This Planet on which man lives is made up of people in social relationship with each other. It breaks down into specific societies where people with a common culture carry on a shared life based on their interdependence. The type of society has not been the same everywhere on this planet nor has it been similar throughout the course of human history. Three main types of society – Tribal, Agrarian and Industrial have been marked out on this globe (Bhushan 2003)(21).

In the Imperical Gazette of India, “A tribe is a collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is usually not endogamous, though originally it might have been also.”

According to George Peter Murdock, “Tribe is a social group in which there are many clans, nomadic bands, villages or other sub-groups which usually have a definite geographical area, a separate language, a singular and distinct culture, and either common determination against the strangers.” The word ‘tribe’ generally optimizes poverty, malnutrition, neglect, ill-treatment and over exploitation. (Sandhwar 1981-Pandey 2002)(120)

The primitive tribes of India have adopted to natural environments. Their habitats differ widely as hills, forests, plains, deserts, sea or their combinations, beliefs and practices, and in fact their entire life style is an adaptation to their environment and their culture can be better understood in terms of their intricately inter-related Nature-Man-Spirit-Complex (Vidyarthi 1973-74)(196)
According to Oxford Reference Dictionary (2001) Tribe is a Social Group in a traditional society consisting of linked families or communities sharing customs and beliefs. Tribe is racial group especially one united by language and customs living as a community under one or more chiefs. (Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 1963)

The main characteristics of tribe are:

- Common Territory – The tribe lives on a common territory.
- Sense of Unity – The members of a tribe are possessed of a sense of unity.
- Common Language – The members of a tribe speak a common language.
- Endogamous – A tribe is an endogamous group.
- Blood relationship – The members of a tribe are related by blood.
- Political Organisation – Each tribe has its own political organisation. There is a chief of the tribe who exercises authority over the members of the tribe.
- Importance of Religion – Play an important part in the tribal organisation. The members of a tribe worship a common ancestor.
- Common Name – The tribe has a common name. A tribe differs from clan. The clan has no definite territory and no common language and is an exogamous group. (Bhushan V.2003 : 103)(21)

In India even today there are tribal people in various stages of development from most primitive man living by hunting, gathering of roots to the nomadic cultivator who practices jhooming, and the pastoral Gujars who wander with their cattle from place to place.

Tribal people have many good qualities as well as many superstitious beliefs, harmful customs, usages and taboos. The good ones need to be encouraged and preserved and the harmful ones to be eliminated. (Chatterjee S. - 1987)(38)

Tribal of country still like to live in their original natural abode consisting of hills, forests, rivers, fresh air, soil and practice their traditional way of living rituals, customs, dance, music, and traditional belief, system of health care within their self sustained forest ecosystem. Their traditional beliefs practices have helped them in the preservation of their age old culture along with it in the conservation of the physical environment, biological and ecological legacies which have come to present day as a great heritage from these primitive people.
with the outset of industrialization, urbanisation, the age old culture of these primitive people is being threatened. Since their way of life is fostered in the lap of nature and forest which is changing rapidly due to deforestation. (Sarkar-2000: 133)

The tribal scenario in India is full of varieties. Some of them live in forest environment, some in desert, in hilly terrain, in plains, while others in coastal belt or in island. The tribes in India live in different ecological settings to their distribution. India is divided into three tribal zones, namely the North-East, Central and Southern. Due to this variation in their habitation, cultural variations are also found. Their life and culture is constructed to suit their local environment. Various types of cultures have emerged in the Indian Cultural Scenario.

Singh (1996: 28) had divided their habitation into Hilly Terrain, Plain, Coast, Desert-arid, Semi-arid, high altitudes valley, Plateau, Island and Dense Forest.

India is a vast country with religions differing in customs and climates in 'Fauna' and 'Flora' and in languages. Many tribes are known to have wandered from place to place, the same tribes have taken different names in different areas, their languages changed and many tribes have taken to particular occupation, as e.g. Rabaris living on cattle in Gujarat.

The tribal people of interior and frontier India are either Indo-Austroaloid or 'Mongoloid'. The foreign elements that have entered Gujarat both in prehistoric and proto-historic periods are represented in by the Mehr, the Kathi, the Bhadala and the Miana have presented their identity even today.

The migratory tribes of India have had no small share in contributing to the growth and expansion of the art and craft.

Certain tribal peoples of India were the rulers till alien hordes conquered and wrested their Kingdoms and drove them to seek refuge in isolated pockets of hill country and forests. Having remained for centuries out of the mainstream of life, their culture was arrested and their people – forgotten. They had deep sense of nationhood and had highly evolved social and political systems and stern moral codes, which laid great stress on personal integrity and social responsibility. With their inmate artistic sense they have enriched their world and ours.
1.1 Well-known Tribes : (Kalapesi R. 1976)  

(1) **Ao Naga Warrior – Nagaland:**

In Pre-Aryan times the fierce of Nagas held away over our land from North to South. A few thousand of the many tribes- one being the Ao- have survived and live around the Naga Hills.

This seldom worn Warrior’s outfit is made from wood, leather and cane, and decorated with animal teeth, red goat and black human hair. He wears cane leggings but no footwear.

Cotton loincloth, and the woolen shawl are woven by the womenfolk. The shawl has a hand painted central panel illustrating some of the Warrior’s exploits.

(2) **Bondo Women – Orissa:**

The language and culture of the wild and rugged Bondo links them to that large group of Austro-Asiatic peoples, who have had an advanced culture even in Neolithic times.

The briefest in women’s wear, her striped hip cloth is 25 cms. wide and woven from Kerang fiber. Barely covering hips, it is secured at the waist with a brass or alloy metal belt. There is no upper garment but a deep cascade of metal and bead necklaces, covers the bosom. Her clean-shaven head is bound with soft fiber strips and beaded headband. The ears are pierced at three points for the different types of earrings. Brass or alloy –metal bangles cover the fore-arms, but neither rings nor anklets are worn.

(3) **Bhil Hunter – Madhya Pradesh:**

‘Bhil’ is the Dravidian word for ‘Bow’, the characteristic weapon of one of our oldest tribal groups – possibly Pre-Dravidian. According to legend, Valmiki was himself a Bhil. With their vast properties lost to the Aryan invaders, they retreated to the mountains and forest of Central and Western India. Centuries later some of them returned to live in the plains.

The peasant Bhil wears a loincloth with a shirt, often a waistcoat and a turban. But their forest Bhil, except for the several rows of colourful bead necklaces, wears only a brief loincloth and a ‘feta’ – a head-cloth. Always bare foot; he uses cotton “Chaddar Sheet” to warm his bare body in winter. His metal ornaments are a thick bangle, earrings, a ring and at times anklet.
(4) **Son Koli Fisherman – Maharashtra:**

The ancestry of the Kolis, especially the sea-faring. Son Kolis is hard to trace but they may be Bhils. In ancient books they are described as “bloody and untameable plunderers pirates of the sea”. Mooring their boats in every inlet and buy along the West - Coast right down to Goa – they are known to have lived in Bombay, when the city was still a group of seven marshy islands. A Temple they built to their Goddess ‘Mumba’ it is said, gave the city its name ‘Mumbai’.

He wears a square loincloth, folded diagonally and tied with a string to the waist. One corner falls in front, like an apron and the other, drawn between the legs, is tucked at the back waist. The jacket as well as the red cap is made of wool.

(5) **Maria Gond Drummer – Madhya Pradesh and Muria Gond Girl**

**Madhya Pradesh:**

The Gonds are a major tribe of the Dravidian family, and perhaps the most important historically, of the Non-Aryan forest dwellers. They ruled the entire belt the Central India from Orissa to Rajasthan, until the rise of the Marathas.

The Murias are hill people. All the men wear white cotton loincloths, and use beads and ‘cowries’ shells to make the necklaces, belts and hand-bands. For the dance, he wears a larger turban decorated with bison-horns, tiger-claws and cowries and also hollow metal anklets. The drum is a hollowed-out section of a tree trunk.

The Murias are the milder people who live in the plains of Bastar. The unmarried young among them stay in ‘Ghotuls’ - the mixed dormitories, common in their tribal society. Every young woman wears several small wooden combs in her hair. These have been carved and gifted to her by her lovers. But once the decision is made, as to whom she will marry, she returns all the combs except the one given to her by her a husband-to-be.

She wears a knee-high ‘Sari’ one end of the material is wrapped around the hips and the rest is drawn over the bare upper torso, over the shoulder, across the back to be secured at the waist. She wears few ornaments but flowers are often tucked behind the ears.

(6) **Riang Woman – Tripura:**

Fiercely independent in spirit, the people of Tripura are descendents of people of Mongolian origin. From the days of the Aryans they have withstood several invasions, and now only five major tribes survive. One of them being the
Riang — skilled weavers, every woman owns and works daily at her own ‘loin-loom’, to keep her family well clad. They are also known to weave excellent baskets.

Wearing the half metre wide ‘Paehara’ hip wrap, she covers the bosom with the narrower riha-breast-band. The very first riha is said to have been made in the 13th century by their queen, Jayanta-Raja-Kumari, and used only by Royal Women. Today, every woman under her well arranged rows of beads and silver coin necklace wears the riha.

Other ornaments are the finely shaped earrings, a nose stud, bangles of silver and glass and anklets.

The tribal system plays a minor but still an important part in the social organisation of India. Tribes numbering nearly 25 millions are found in the Himalayas, the country adjoining them and the hilly tracts of the interior. They fall into three main groups according to their geographical distribution in the North-West, North-East and the Interior and they belong to different racial stocks viz. Indo-Afghan, or Indo-Iranian, Mongoloid or Tibeto Burman and Dravidian or Pre-Dravidian. Three religions Islam, Hinduism and Animism are represented among them, and they are in different stages of civilization, for some are nomads, others are still semi-nomadic, while others have become organised communities of settled agriculturists, but all alike have certain features characteristics of communities which are still in the tribal stage. (O’Malley 1976)(96)

For thousands of years, primitive tribes persisted in forest and hills without having more than casual contacts with populations of the open plains and the centres of civilization. (Thapar 1977)(184)

According to Andre Betellie the primitives live in backward areas, and did not know the use of writing and is in an ideal State, a self-contained unit. It constitutes a society in itself, have boundaries, sharing common culture, and also have linguistic boundaries as well as political boundary.

Our Honourable Prime Minister Late Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his liking for tribal folk in one of the conference. He said “In the tribal people I have found many qualities which I miss in the people of the plains, cities and other parts of India. It was these very qualities attracted me.”

The tribal people of India are a virile people who naturally went astray sometimes. They quarrelled and occasionally cut off each other’s heads. These
were deplorable occurrences and should have been checked. Even so, it is struck me that some of their practices were perhaps less evil than those prevail in our cities.

Tribal folk are the people of the frontiers or those who live away from the interior of this country. Just as the hills breed a somewhat different type of people from those who inhabit the plains, so also the frontier breeds a different type of people from those who live away from the frontier.

They are an extremely disciplined people. Often a great deal more democratic than most others in India. They have no constitution still they are able to function democratically and carry out the decisions made by elders or representatives. They are the people who sing and dance and try to enjoy life, not people who sit in stock exchanges, shout at each other and think themselves civilised.

He said that we must approach them with affection and friendliness, and come to them as a liberating force. We must let them feel that we come to give and not to take something away from them. That is the kind of psychological integration India needs.

He also expressed his opinion for approaching tribals for education, lifestyle, language, roads and communication, cottage industries etc. (Nehru J. 1973:141)(118)

Varrier Elwin (1989: 156-159)(187) had expressed about Tribal Art. He says that the Tribal Art is almost entirely ‘functional’. There is very little art for art’s sake in a tribal village. Much of the art has a religious or magical purpose; much again has social importance; there is very little that is simply decorative or the creation of beauty and nothing else.

The tribes of Gonds, the Santals, the Bhils, the Naga groups represent their deities, if they make them at all by stones, lumps of earth, bits of unshaped wood; their shrines are nearly always empty. Tribal Gods are imagined as we in mythologies. Images are made not to represent the Gods but as offerings to the Gods e.g. in Bastar, Muarias offer at their shrines little brass images of horses, elephants, human figures or magicians offerings birds, horses and elephants of clay.

Among the Gonds of Mandla, author discovered a number of remarkable lampstands, which were placed in the centre of the marriage booth. Some of these
were made of iron by the very primitive blacksmith tribe of Agarias and showed beautifully made heads of deer, others were of wood - a human head and arms grew out of a tree trunk in a singularly striking manner.

Phoms & Konyaks of the North-East Frontier Agency in Assam excel in making grave effigies. The figures are carved realistically with the usual tattoo marks and ornaments of the dead man or woman, and are placed in little shrines, which are decorated with spears & other weapons.

The Santals bury or cremate any fine piece of carving, a favourite decorated flute, or a splendidly ornamented fiddle with the dead. On bamboo platforms upon which the corpse is exposed are hung a great variety of ornaments, pieces of cloth, baskets, weapons, traps.

The Saoras of Koraput and Ganjam has a custom of making paintings on the walls of houses in honour of the dead, to drive away diseases, to promote the fertility of the crops and on the occasion of certain festivals. Paintings are for the eyes of spirits and are painted in the darkest corner of the house or may be hidden behind grounds and pots because it is desirable that human beings should not look at them, still less photograph them as Gods are not interested in beauty, they want flattery.

A number of border tribes-head hunting was the main source of decorative and ornamental work. Only a man who had taken a head could carve a human figure in the morung, only could wear the more splendid type of cloth and ornament. Only he had a magnificent tomb erected in his honour. Now that head hunting was come to an end.

Kapanee J.S. (1989:179, 180)\(^{81}\) in his article has described the situation of tribes. He says that at present most of the tribal people are poor or below poverty line and literacy is poorest in Madhya Pradesh as well as in India. Many of them are lacking Iron, Iodine and other Vitamins in their daily food. Due to destruction of forest areas especially Jhabua, Dhar & Khagone Districts the tribal villagers are becoming poorer and in some areas they are not having even areas for grazing their cattle.

By history of the ancestors of the tribal people of India we find many interesting facts. The terracotta figures, ornaments and other remain found in the ruined cities of Mohenjo daro, Harappa and other places of the Indus Valley Civilisation show that they belonged to the ancestors of the Dravidian and
Kolarian tribes. It is not known whether the ancestors of the Dravidians and Kolarians left their cities in the Indus Valley before the ancestors of the Aryans migrated to this area or after that. It is also not known whether the better-equipped Aryans drove them away from their cities and they compelled them to move to the forest areas of Central and Southern India or whether they voluntarily moved to the forest covered hilly tracts.

Some tribal communities in Bihar and Maharashtra claim that their ancestors helped Shri Rama in his attempt to invade Lanka and defeat Ravana.

A study of the Mahabharata shows that many tribal chiefs took part in the battles of Kurukshetra either on the side of the Pandavas or the Kaurawas. One of the Dravidian tribal chiefs called Bhagadatta from Pragjyotishpur of Pragjyotisha of Assam brought the biggest elephant developed in the battles of Kurukshetra. We find that the ancient Dravidian and Kolarian tribal chiefs were of great help to the Aryan Kings or Chiefs. Which reflects that they were not beggars in ancient time.

1.2 Tribes of India:

The tribes of India have got a heterogeneous cultural pattern largely depending on ecological settings and ethnic environment. Different scholars have suggested a three fold to eight fold classification of tribal economy. (Chaudhary, B. 1982: 21)

Broadly the basic economic activities of the tribal may be classified under the following needs:

- Food-gathering including hunting and fishing.
- Pastoral.
- Shifting hill cultivation.
- Cultivation.
- Handicrafts.
- Trade and Commerce.
- Labour-work including agricultural and industrial labour.

Ahuja Ram (1999:18) has mentioned that India is the 7th largest and the second most popular nation of the world occupying 2.4% of the total world areas. It contains about 15% of the world’s population living in a variety of Social,
Economic, Geographical and Ecological conditions. India has a long history spanning over five thousand years of human habitation – 3000 years before Christ and 2000 years after Christ. It has cultural heritage handed down by the immigrant Aryans from across the Himalayas, the native Dravidians, and the invading civilizations. Its Social, Economic and Cultural diversities are also reflected in inhabitant conditions in rural, urban and semi-urban areas.

The total population in India is 52.03 million (1991 Census), which comes to 7.8% of the country’s total population. The important tribes are Santhals, Bhils, Meenas, Gonds, Mundas, Nagas, Khasis, Oraons, Garos and Hos. About two-thirds of the total tribal population of the country is found in the five States of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra. There are three States Rajasthan, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh where tribes with more than 20 lacs population are found. There are five States and Union Territories where tribes constitute 70% to 95% of the total Population of the State or Territory. They are Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura.

Singh Awadesh Kumar: (2003:1)(165) has stated that India has the largest concentration of tribal in the world except in Africa 90% of the communities that live in and around, India’s forest areas of 63.3 million hectares, occupying 19.3% of the landmass of the country are mainly tribals. Though tribals constitute 8.08% of the population they are playing a vital role in shaping the destiny of the country. Most of them live in concentrations, clusters and large pockets. A large number of them are economically and socially backward and their life a beset with problems.

Tribal are specially located across the country. A unique feature of the geographical distribution of tribals in India is simultaneous occurrence of high density and their existence as a numerical minority of the region’s population. More than 90% of the over 8 crore tribals live in States where they form less than 25% of the population. As per 1991 Census, 6776 million of India’s total population are Scheduled Tribes. About 71% of India’s total tribal population stood concentrated in six major States, namely Madhya Pradesh (15.4 million), Maharashtra (7.3 million), Orissa (7.0 million), Bihar (6.6 million), Gujarat (6.2 million), and Rajasthan (5.5 million). The nine States take care about 87% (58.9 million) of India’s total tribal population.
Map - 1: TRIBAL MAP OF INDIA
Table 1.1: State wise Location of the Tribal Groups in India:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Tribal Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>Bhil, Chenchu, Gond, Kondas, Lambadas, Sugarils etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>Bari, Kachari, Mikir (Karbi), Lalung, Rubha, Dimasa, Hmar, Haong etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bihar and Jharkhand</td>
<td>Asur, Banjara, Birhor, Kerwa, Mando, Oraon, Santhal etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>Bhil, Dhodia, Gond, Siddi, Bordia etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>Gaddi, Gujjar, Lahaula, Swangla etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>Bhil, Chenchu, Gond, Kurbu, Kammara, Kolis, Koya, Mayaka, Toda etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>Adiyam, Kammara, Kondkappus, Malais, Polliyar etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh</td>
<td>Bhil, Birhor, Damar, Gond, Kharia, Majhi, Munda, Oraon, Parani etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>Bhil, Bhunjia, Chodhara, Dhodia, Gond, Kharia, Naiyka, Oraon, Pardhi, Rathawa etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>Garo, Khasi, Jayaunia etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>Bihor, Gond, Jung, Khond, Korua, Mundoari, Oraon, Santhal, Tharua etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>Bhil, Damor, Gorasta, Meena, Salagari etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Tamilnadu</td>
<td>Irular, Kammara, Kondakappus, Kota, Mahawmalasar, Polleyan, Toda etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>Chakma, Garo, Khaki, Kuki, Lusai Liang, Santhal etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>Asur, Buhor, Korwa, Lepcha, Munda, Santhal etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>Dafia, Khampiti, Singpho etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>Lusai, Kuki, Garo, Khasi, Jayantia, Mikir etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>Dhodi, Siddi (Nayaka)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Daman and Div</td>
<td>Dhodi, Mikkada, Varli etc.</td>
</tr>
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<td>20</td>
<td>Andaman and Nikobar Islands</td>
<td>Jasawa, Nicobarese, Onges, Sentinelese, Shompers, Great Andamanese</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Darad &amp; Nagar Haveli</td>
<td>Dhodi, Mikkada, Varli etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Uttar Pradesh &amp; Uttaranchal</td>
<td>Bhotia, Buxa, Jaunsari, Tharu, Raji</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>Naga, Kuki, Mikir, Garo etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Sikkim</td>
<td>Bhutia, Lepcha</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Jammu and Kashmir</td>
<td>Chaddangpa, Garra, Gujjar, Gaddi etc.</td>
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Source: Annual Report 2000-2001, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India.

Table 1.2: Population of India and Gujarat State

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sr No</th>
<th>Census</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>% of total population</th>
<th>Gujarat</th>
<th>% of total population</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>1,91,47,054</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>2064,522</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3,01,30,184</td>
<td>6.86</td>
<td>27,54,446</td>
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<td>1971</td>
<td>3,80,15,162</td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>37,34,222</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>5,16,28,638</td>
<td>7.76</td>
<td>48,48,586</td>
<td>14.92</td>
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<td>1991</td>
<td>6,77,58,380</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>61,61,775</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>8,43,26,000</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>74,81,000</td>
<td>14.76</td>
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### Table 1.3: Population of Dahod District

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name of the Project with Head Quarter</th>
<th>Name of the District</th>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>No. of total Villages</th>
<th>Area covered in sq. km.</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Scheduled Tribe</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dahod Dahod Dahod</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>291505</td>
<td>368484</td>
<td>273469</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>74.21</td>
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<td>Garbada</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>109884</td>
<td>142448</td>
<td>134378</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jhalod</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>257817</td>
<td>360553</td>
<td>319443</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fatepura</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>302</td>
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<td>170982</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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Gujarat possesses natural beauty in great bounty. The East is covered by Sahyadri and Satpuda mountain range. In the West is the desert of Kachchha and Arabian Sea (Ratnakar Sagar). In the North area the hills of Mount Abu and Aravalli and in the South the river Daman Ganga flows through all the times.

The history of Gujarat is 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. Later, it saw various kingdoms: Mauryans, Gupta, Pratiharas and others. It was with Chalukyas (Solankis) that Gujarat witnessed progress of prosperity. In spite of the plunderings of Mahmud Ghazni, the Chalukya Kings were able to maintain general prosperity and well being of the State. After this glorious respite, Gujarat faced troubled times under the Muslims, Marathas and British Rule.

Gujarat one of the most important States of India lies on the Western extremities of the Country between 20.1° and 24.7° latitude and 68.4° and 74.4° longitude. It is situated on the West Coast of India. The State is bounded by the Arabian Sea on the West, Pakistan and Rajasthan in the North and North-East respectively, Madhya Pradesh in the South-East and Maharashtra in the South.

Before Independence, the present territories of Gujarat used to be in two parts – the British and the Princely Territories. With the reorganization of the State, the Union of the State of Saurashtra and the Union Territory of Kachchh along with the former British. Gujarat became a part of the biggest bilingual State
of Bombay. The present State of Gujarat was separated from Bombay State on First May, 1960 and formed new State.

The State occupies an area of 1,96,024 sq. kilometers of which the Tribal sub-plan covers 28,194 sq. kilometers. It thus constitutes 14.39% of the total geographic area of the State.

Tribals constitute an important segment of the population of India, representing 7.6% of the total population of the country. They are distributed in three principal territorial zones namely, North Eastern Zone, Central Zone and Southern Zone. They live in certain definite areas, with different dialects, cultural homogeneity and unifying social organisation. Because of the secluded living of the groups, their pattern of living, food and dietary practices and their attitudes to various aspects in general may sometimes be different from nontribal population. (Rajyalakshmi 1991)

The State of Gujarat ranks fourth amongst all the States in India in respect of size of the Scheduled Tribes population. (Shelat K., 1988: 81)

The total population of Gujarat State according to 2001 Census 480 Lakh, literacy rate 69.97%, having 225 Talukas and 25 Districts. The Gujarat State has larger concentration of the tribal population than the National Average. The tribal people are spreaded over eleven districts namely Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Panchmahal, Dahod, Vadodara, Bharuch, Narmada, Surat, Navsari, Valsad & Dangs. The percentage of Schedule Tribe population to the total population is highest in the Dangs and Valsad districts. The main tribal communities are (a) In North Gujarat Bhils. They have more contacts with Rajasthan tribals. (b) In Central Gujarat – Bhil, Rathawa, Dhanka, Patelia and Naik-Naikda. They have more contacts with tribes of Madhya Pradesh. (c) In South Gujarat Bhils, Gamit, Ghodia, Chaudhary, Varli, Konkana, Dubala, Kotvaliya, Naik, Naika. These tribal groups are more in contacts with tribes of Maharashtra.

The tribal society continues to be lagging behind the neighbouring non-tribal society in almost all walks of life.

“Eastern Gateway of Gujarat – The Dahod District”: (Kakadia and Bamania 2005: 13, 14)

The great Gujarati Poet Nhanalal Dalpatram called “Dahod – The Eastern Gateway of Gujarat” (Gujaratnu Ugamanu Dwar : Dahod Jhillo) as the rays of the sun fall on Gujarat through its Eastern Gate.
Brief History of District: (Census 2001)

Dahod forms boundary of Gujarat with Malva region of Madhya Pradesh. Surrounding area of Dahod was considered as ‘Hidambavana’ in virtue of Hidamba, the wife of Bhima. At the time of the war between Goddess and Demons, Dadhichi Sage had sacrificed his body to make weapon ‘The Vajra’ for Goddess, who had penance on the bank of river Dudhimati, which is in Dahod. There is one of the mythologies that because of the great sacrifice of the Sage, Bhil tribe called it as ‘Dehodh’ and as per another belief the town is named as ‘Dehavrita’ and river as ‘Delvati’. The famous King Sidhharaj Jaysinh attacked Gujarat in year 1093 and lived for twelve years in Dahod. At that time the army was so big that the pond was constructed within a night and every soldier had thrown only one container of soil, which was the share for each. So the pond was named ‘Chhab Pond’. In 1618 when Mogal Emperor Jahangir came to Ahmedabad while visiting Gujarat in April, it was very hot & too much dust was in the air. So he went away to Mahadevgadh, while tiring and hating Ahmedabad he called it “Gordabad”. Jahangir came to Dahod. He stayed one month there with his son Khuram who was later known as Shahjahan in history. In 1658 his fourth son put him in jail and killed his brother. After twenty years, 1678 Aurangzeb built a Caravanseri at Arai in memory of his birth place, which was captured by Marathas afterwards and changed into fort, which was known as Gadhi. As it was small place when British rule existed they established Magistrate and other government offices. During revolution in 1857 Tatyasaheb Tope stayed in village Nani Kharaj and tried to win the small Gadhi.

In 1898 B.B. Railway (Bombay-Baroda Railway) was existed towards Delhi, meanwhile in Dahod road from Nehru Garden to Station was prepared. So the Pond areas become smaller. In 1900 (Samvat 1956) due to severe draught some tribal Bhils died due to hunger near Pond of Mahadev temple in Dahod. One priest took photograph of the dead bodies and published it in the English Newspaper. At that time Viceroy Lord Courtezen made official visit to Aurangzeb’s birth place Dahod in 1901-02. In his memory he laid a foundation of Muvalia Bhill School and Pond of Muvalia. The great Gujarati poet Nhanalal Dalpatram called Dahod the “Sungate of Gujarat” as the rays of the Sun fall on Gujarat through its Eastern Gate “Dahod”. In revolution of 1857 Tatyasaheb Tope
tried to win the Gadh, so the British eyes were on Dhad surrounded by other States like an island. British Government took from the Scindia in the first year and later in 1990 took the surrounding areas permanently. In Panchmahal all senior British officers were always appointed who held camps on every Christmas and called other European officers from Gujarat to go for hunting.

In 1924 general strike caused by Mumbai Mill workers union due to which G.I.P. and B.B.C. both Gujarat railways were separated Mumbai from the country. British Government realised the major damage, which can occur and immediately decided to shift B.B. and C.I. Railway engine workshop and shed out of Mumbai. In 1925 B.B. and C.I. workshop and shed is shifted to Dhad and that is way it is called Parel. Dhad was transformed by the Freeland Gunj Factory. Dhad District was created from Panchmahal District by separating Devgadhbaria, Dhad, Jhalod and Limkheda Talukas while Devgadhbaria, Dhad and Limkheda Talukas were reconstituted new three Talukas namely Fatepura, Garbada and Dhanpur were created. On 24-09-1997 Dhad District received its own identity as it had separated from Panchmahal. On East of Dhad District is Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, West and South Panchmahal, North Sabarkantha District. This District is the 14th District in terms of population in the State. In terms of population per sq. Kilometer is 448. The Dhad District is the 9th dense District in the State. This new District has seven Talukas viz. Fatehpura, Jhalod, Limkheda, Dohad, Garbada, Devgadhbaria and Dhanpur and 699 villages.

Physical Features:

Dhad District is situated in the East part of the Gujarat State. It lies between the parallels of latitude 22°-30° and 23°-19° and the meridians of longitude 73°-47° and 79°-29°. The length from North to South of this territory is about 91.47 km. and from East to West about 71.90 km. It is bounded on the North by the Rajasthan State, On North-East by Madhya Pradesh State, On the South-West by Panchmahals District, On the South and South-West by Vadodara District and Madhya Pradesh State. The area covered by this District is 3655.0 Sq. Km. and the rank of this District is 18th in comparison to other Districts of the State.
Physiography:

The Dahod District is a part of Eastern Hilly Region and sub-divided into two submicro regions, namely Dahod Upland and Forested and Scrub Zone on the basis of topography, climate, geology, soil and natural vegetation.

Dahod Upland:

The region forms a part of the Eastern Hilly tract covering parts of Jhalod, Dahod and Limkheda Talukas. It makes its limits with Forested and Scrub Zone in the West and North and Madhya Pradesh State in the South and East.

Topographically, this region is the highest part of the District and its average elevation is 300 meters above M.S.L. and in some areas it goes up to 400 meters. The geological structure of this region belongs to Aravalli and associated rocks and Deccan Trap formations. The region has thick cover of forests.

Forest and Scrub Zone:

The region spread over Devgadhbaria, Jhalod, Dahod and Limkheda Talukas of the District. It makes its boundaries with Rajasthan State in the North and North-East. Dahod Upland in the East, Panchmahals District in the South and Mahi Plain in the West.

Topographically, this region is relatively higher in elevation than Mahi Plain. The general elevation of this region is 150 meters above M.S.L. During monsoon season it receives good amount of rainfall while summers are generally hot and dry. The higher areas of this region are covered with forests. Geologically, this region consists mainly of Aravalli and associated rocks and Deccan Traps formations. Devgadhbaria a Taluka of the District is situated in the Mahi Plain. It is thick forest area.

Hills:

In Dahod District there are several low steep ridges. Among them Ratanmal hills situated in the Dhanpur Taluka is important in the District. The Hill is well wooded and commands a good view.

Dahod District:

Dahod District is newly created District. Most of the tribal population is in this District. So that whole District is included in Tribal Area Sub Plan. The main crops of this District are Paddy, Maize, Jowar and Fodder crops. There is a wide forest area so the tribal people are living on forest products. The Bhils are the oldest community living in forests. The Bhils are living a life with bows and
arrows. The Dahod District has large population of the Bhils. The Bhils are basically a gentle community. The Bhils use roots, maize and other similar type of corns in their food.

**Jhalod Taluka:**

Jhalod is situated 35 kms from Dahod. It is headquarters of the Jhalod Taluka. Originally the town was established round about Jhalai Mata at a distance of one and half km. from the present township of Jhalod. The town is called Jhalod after the Jhalai Mata. About 5 kms. to the East of Jhalod on the Bank of River Machhan, there was an old Ashram of Suvrat Rishi. It is believed that the Pandavas had stayed there during their exile. This place is known as ‘Panch Krishna Mandir’ the construction of these temples indicates that they were probably built during the 12th or 13th Century. There are two old idols of Lord Vishnu and a big idol of Lord Vasudev, the 14th incarnation in line. In the old Vishnu temple there are two newly constructed idols of Lord Ganesh. In another temple there is a beautiful idol of Lord Shiva with Goddess Uma. Near these temples there is a stone inscription-bearing year of A.D. 1355 as the year of construction.

**Devgadhbaria Taluka:**

Devgadh Baria means the city of Barias (a Koli Tribe) situated at the foot of the Devgadh Hill. When the descendants of legendary Pava Pati Jaisingh Deo were looking for a place to establish their Kingdom after the fall of Pavagadh they came to know that there was a hill on which when a tribal struck a stone with an axe, blood had gushed out. The tribals believed that this Hill was the abode of the God. This Hill was hence called ‘Devgadh’ i.e. the ‘Fortress of God’. At the foot of the Hill there was a place inhabited by the Baria Kolis. Dungersingh decided to establish the capital of his Kingdom here. Thus the place came to be known as Devgadhbaria. It is situated just 14 kms. off Piplod on the Godhra-Dahod highway, is situated in the very lap of nature surrounded by Hills. A combination of Royal Heritage and Natural Heritage are bound to mesmerize people. Its proximity to the Ratanmahal, Wild life Sanctuary and Champaner (Pavagadh) a UNESCO World Heritage Site make it a place much suited to be developed as site for Eco Tourism and Heritage Tourism.

Devgadhbaria town is situated about 104 mts. above mean sea level. The Hills enveloping the town are about 288 to 283 meters in height above mean sea
level. It is well connected with cities like Godhra about 38 kms and Vadodara 110 kms. and Ahmedabad 170 kms. *(Singh J.K. 2006: 3, 4)*

**Limkheda Taluka:**

Limkheda is known for an ancient temple of Mahadev, the sculpture of which is notable. The temple has a clear indication belonging to the Solanki period of architecture i.e. not later than 12th Century A.D. The broken image of Bhairava lying on the debris of the temple is decidedly post Gupta. It can be dated as not later than 9th Century A.D. A big fair is held here every year on Amali Agyarash, Falgun Sudi 11.

**Ratanmahal:**

About 55.7 square kms. area of the Sanctuary is a triangular landmass, which covers reserve forests of 11 villages. Forest originally belonged to ex-ruler of Devgadhbaria State Jhabua District of Madhya Pradesh constitutes boundary in South and East of the Sanctuary whereas forests in West and revenue areas in North surround the Sanctuary. In Ratanmahal Wildlife Sanctuary apart from sloth bear, leopard, hyena, jackel, four horned antelope, mongoose, porcupine, civet cat, jungle cat and fox are also found in the Sanctuary. Cobra, common Indian monitor, python and rat snake are common reptiles. 125 species of birds are also recorded in this area. This is the only large pocket of the dense forests preserved in this District. The entire area of the forest not only has high aesthetic, educational and scientific research values, but also maintains climatic and environmental stability of the region. The area is known for typical culture of tribal inhabiting in and around the sanctuary.

A snake ride on ever twisting roads through the Hills leads to Kanjeta, the village where the Sanctuary begins. It was once the hunting reserve of the Royal family. 35 kms. South East of Devgadhbaria, close to Madhya Pradesh border Ratanmahal is 675 meters above M.S.L. *(Singh J.K. 2006: 57)*

Now Dahod District is not only the first sunrise of Gujarat but is the sunrise of development and will be ever lasting.

**1.4 Origin Of Tribes – Field of the Research:**

**Bhils:**

There are several legends as well as references regarding origin of tribes. The earliest settlers from all evidence appear to be Bhils. According to some early
literature and mythological traditions the term ‘Bhil’ is derived from the Dravidian equivalent of the word ‘Bow’ a characteristic weapon of the tribe.

In ancient Sanskrit literature, "the Bhil has been used almost synonymously with other forest tribes like Nishada and Shabar and consequently it would not be safe to generalize from such references.” Manu traces the origin of Nishada as an offspring of a Brahmin father and a Sudra mother. (Manu Sanskrit Texts, Vol.1, p.481)

According to a Puranic version the Bhils have descended from the thighs of Vena, the son of Anga who had no child. The Sage rubbed his thigh and produced “a man, like a charred log with a flat face who was extremely short”. “He was told to sit down (Nishid) and was so known as Nishida “from whom sprang the Nishidas dwelling on the Vindhya Mountains distinguished by their wicked deeds.”

References to the origin of Bhils are also found in the Bhagwata Purana, Agni Purana, Mahabharata and other Sanskrit Literature. (Doshi S. 1971 : 4)(53)

Another reference is in the Shivpurana, Mahadeo, sick and unhappy, was reclining in a shady forest where there appeared before him a beautiful woman. Her first sight curved him of all sickness and led to sexual intercourse between the two. Thus of them were born: several children, one of whom was ugly and vicious. He killed the favourite bull of his father for which he was expelled to the woods and mountains. His descendents have been called Bhils and Nishadas.

In Mahabharata their origin ascribe to the famous archers Eklavya, who was a Bhil. Dronacharya did not accept him when he approached to learn the art of archery. Eklavya made an idol of Dronacharya as his Guru, practised the art. Knowing this Dronacharya came and asked for thumb of his right hand as Guru Dakshina, which he gladly offered.

Krishna was reclining at the foot of a tree under the shade, after the destruction of Yadavas, when a Bhil archer, shot an arrow which took him away from this world. It was on this sinful act that the Bhils have been cursed not to handle the bow with the forefinger of the right hand.

In Ramayana Valmiki, the celebrated author of the epic, was himself a Bhil named Valia. He was dacoit who robbed and killed travelers. God revealed himself before him and admonishing him told him to live a life of meditation.
"Since than he became a great Sage whose sorrow turned afterward into poetry on seeing a ‘Crouch’ couple being shot by a fowler.”

Bhils are referred to in ancient Sanskrit literature by such terms Nishada, Guha and Shabaras. The origin of the Bhils from references seems that “Bhil” is a generic term and the ancient writers have used it for” including all those people who live by the chase i.e. those who use the bow and arrow – the “Bhil” being derived from the Tamil word “Bhillwar” or a bow of man.”

According to their own lore’s the Bhils of Rajasthan trace their origin to a Rajput tribe. Kavi Shamaldas, the author of the Veer Vinod, narrates some legends of the Mewar Bhils, who trace their descent from the Rajputs.

**Naiyka:**

The word Naiyka or Nayak is derived from the Sanskrit word to lead, to protect and means a leader or a protector. The Naick kings of Madura well known also in Tamil Nadu. Naik also is a sub-officer in the Army since ancient times and is a term of respect. The Naikas represent a people with qualities of leadership, who carved out an independent position of prominence also among the tribes, which has been maintained ever since. The term ‘Naikda’ with the diminutive suffix ‘da’ is used as a term of contempt for those members of the tribes who while living a nomadic life in hilly or forest areas were forced to live a life of poverty and laziness with occasional bouts of robbery and raids in search of cattle and food.

The Naiykas had previously some sort of a class organisation but at present they are divided into three main groups, Uncha, Nicha and Choliwala, which are further divided into several endogamous subgroups. These subgroups are further divided into several exogamous patrilineages trading their descent from not more than four to five generations. *(Shah P.G., 1964: 18-19)*

**Patelia:**

According to Dr. Solanki S. *(1997)* Patelia consider themselves to be descendents of Rajput and “Pavagadh” as their place of origin. According to their legend when Hindu Rajput King “Patai Raval” lost his Kingdom at the hands of Muslim invader Mohammad Begda. King ordered massacre of Rajputs to save themselves from being killed they had taken refuge in the thick forest of Limkheda and Dahod in the Eastern Belt where Bhils were living. Gradually they adopted Bhil surnames, dress, language and as they multiplied over vast areas, not
only of Gujarat but of even Madhya Pradesh, Jhabua, Meghnagar, Udaigadh, Alirajpur and Dhar.

In these tribal belts they emerged as a leading agricultural tribal community. Some of them also worked as ‘Patel’ or ‘village headmen’ in these tribal villages. In some cases it became a family name. Gradually this prestigious name was adopted by the whole community from the Patel agriculturists Hindu Caste adergatory. ‘Patelia’ name was used by the neighbouring Castes and today the whole tribe is known as Patelia in this region. Like the Bhil, Patelia also is a blanket term and is identified by the research team. It covers at least four endogamous groups residing in different regions of the State.

1. Patelia group living in Dahod and Limkheda area, which is numerically largest group.

2. Patelia group living in Eastern belt of the Mahi river in Santrampur Taluka of Panchmahal district in Gujarat, who do not have marriage relations either with the Patelia group of Dahod-Limkheda area or Patelias in Western belt of the Mahi river in Santrampur and Lunawada Talukas.

3. The Patelia group residing in Western Belt of the Mahi river in Santrampur and Lunawada Taluka of Panchmahal District alongwith the Damors with whom some cases of marriage alliances have been observed.

4. The Dangi Patels of Kodiavada village in Vijaynagar Taluka of Sabarkantha District in Gujarat who now, in order to enjoy advantages, privileges and concessions given to Schedule tribes, identify themselves “Patelias”. Since 1961 Census, they are getting themselves enumerate as Patelias but do not have any matrimonial relationship with any of the former three groups.

Among all these four Patelias’ groups the Patelias of Dahod and Limkheda areas are numerically predominant group. It is also a group residing in Dhanpur, Dhar Patelia belt that is considered to be an area of real Patelias.
**Dhankas:**

The word Dhanka is derived from Sanskrit Dhanushyakas, meaning holders of bows; the group of Dhanushyakas as a fighting clan has been mentioned in the Mahabharata war as going to Kurukshetra from Western India. They were evidently clever at the use of bow and arrow, which seems to be the common weapon of the tribal people.

In the opinion of Dube (1977:25) a number of tribes have legends and traditions to explain their origin. These legends and traditions either attribute their origin to some supernatural circumstances or derive it from supernatural or mythological characters. Some of them refer to the tribes affiliation or association with royal personages and speak of its glorious past.

Shah (1964:22) narrates a legend about the origin of the Dhankas tribe of Gujarat. According to popular belief the Tadvi were the original inhabitant of Pavagarh and they were Chohan Rajputs. At the time of Patai Raja of Pavagarh they were living in the Pavagarh area. Patai Raja was a devotee of Goddess Amba. When the Goddess was pleased by his deep devotion, she offered to grant his wish. The king asked her to become his wife. The Goddess was so enraged with this demand that cursed him. He, his kingdom and his relatives were to perish when Mahammad Begda, the emperor of Ahmedabad, invaded Pavagarh, the Patai Raja fought bravely, but he was killed on the battlefield. His soldiers fled and took shelter in the jungle. The city of Champaner and the neighbouring areas lost their prosperity, the population fled to the neighbouring fields and forests. Those who took shelter in the fields and fed themselves on dhan (uncooked grain) were called Dhanka. Some of them came and settled on the banks of the Narmada. The Gujarati and Sanskrit word for river bank is tat; those living on riverbanks or in villages near the river were called Tatvis, a word which came to be softened into Tadvi.