

## History

Kachchh is an Ancient land; its main history is historical period. It is known as Kachchh due to its Geographical Characteristics and due to its turtle-like shape. This name is in existence in ancient history. Millionths in his Bhashya Sanjivani on Amarkosh has referred to it as moistures land in lower allow or wasteland. This name is found in various water taken by foreign visitors about this region or in stone carvings, bronze carving, old writing or hand written manuscripts. Before rise at Christian era this region situated between Saurashtra and Sindh was described as Abhari, and this name is form in Mohabhaeor also. The Greek visitor and military captain also spoiled the original name of Abhir during second century B.C. and referred it to as Abiriya or Abhir up to third or fourth century A. C. and thereafter also both in names of Abhir and are used. Earlier the Abhir people settled here and hence the region was known as Abhir in earlier period. Because of unique geographical situation with water and wetland around it.

The administrative background of Kachchh seems little confused. The Land is occupied by different people since Ancient period who came from north and east. During he known period of History, it has remained under control of various dynasties ruling over Sindh and Gujarat. It was also a part of Maurya Dynasty, There after; it was under control of Teshak, Kshatrap, Gupta, Haiych etc. Thereafter, the Maitrak, Gurjar, Chalukya, Chowda, Solanki, Kathi and other rulers of Gujarat ruled over it. Thus, Kachchh had very close relations with Gujarat and the stream of its history has offered on this region.

The history of Kachchh can be divided into two periods the ancient and modern or the period starting from 14th Century of Jadeja dynasty, and the period thereafter. When the sama Rajput rulers of Sindh won the Kachchh region, a separate state of Kachchh came into existence during 14th century. In ancient Hindu writings, this region is referred as land on sea-shore or desert area. The earlier history of Kachchh is formed in Greek literature.

During 142 – 124 B.C., Kachchh was a part of Mahendra state which covered the area from Yamuna Saurashtra. Immediately hereafter, (120 B.C.) the Greeks were thrown away from Backtriyen Empire. The Shakar or many people settled in Kachchh and North Gujarat during 56 B.C. Vikramaditya defeated them. They returned between 20 to 30 years and Choketstin established his empire. The Partisan had there power between Sindh to South Bharuch. They were defeated in first century. During 1st century A.C. Plins (77 A.C.) refered to about Odambary. They belong to Kachchh. The Amardas described by Pitilemi (150 A.C.) must be their head quarter. Another reference about Kachchh indicates that Kachchh was given to Charan people during. Telugu's publicity, (IC 714D Chasdan were another main population of Kachchh, During this period Arabs had started their attacks on Kathiawad and Gujarat border. They had captured Sindh. They stated to stay an sea shore of Kachchh during 9th century. There is reference about Kachchh in Albirni (970-1034) and as described in it one branch of river Sindhu meets the Sindh sea an Kachchh border. Bhimdev 1st of Anhilwad had run away before mohmad Gazani came to Kachchh (1022-1072D By he end of the century, the forth prime Sumara Sindhar had Manikbai in his possession

The modern history of Kachchh can be considered from the date was the Sama Rajputs of Sindh won the land of Kachchh. This happened in 14th century or at least it ended by this time. In the beginning of 15th century (1410), muzfar shah, the he pioneer of Ahmadabad empire defeated captain of Kanthkot (1390 – 1411). Though the rulers belonged to Ahmadabad empire, practically Kachchh was independent 1472. It seems that the Sgadars of Kachchh did not have friendly relations with Ardhun dynasty; who had won over Sama of Total. (1519-1543). According to historians of Sindh, Shahusain (1522-1544) had entered Kachchh is 1530 and had strongly defeated Rao of Kachchh. The there bramin of Jadeja dynasty well represented by Jam Dadarji, Jam Hamiuji and Jam Rawal. Bharmal had gone to Ahmadabad during the rule of Mogal emperor Jahangir; and had offered good gift. Jahangir was very pleased on him. He gave him gifts in return and had waived the Khandani an condition that the pilgrims of Macca will be allowed to pass through Kachchh. In 1741 Lakhaji Rao had imprisoned his father and took over the region of Kachchh. Rao Deshji had ruled up to 1860. There was an unfortunate conflict between Rao Deshalji and his eldest son, but later on, he relations had improved. As he had several incidents of serious illness, Rao had requested to appoint a person vice him for running the administration and to relieve him of burden of ruling over the state.

His request was accepted and on 12th July, he Rao of Kachchh had appointed the eldest son (Yuvraj) as Minister and two other Jadeja Nayaks as member in advisory Board under president ship of political agent. Next year, on 21st of June, the Advisory Board was dissolved due to urgent request by Rao and the control as state was vested in his obvious heir Pragmalji second. He ruled from 1866 to 1875. After Rao Pragmalji, came Rao Khengar third. He was only 10 years old at the time of his taking over and the administration was carried out under supervision of political agent. This dynasty ruled over Kachchh till independence of India.

The present district of Kachchh made of various states of region and 10 villages of Morbi state after 1947, it was class-'C' state and it was ruled by Government of India through Chief Commissioner.

In November 1956, the states were re-organised and greater Bombay state was constituted with Vidarbha, Marathwada, Saurashtra and Kachchh region. Thus, Kachchh district became a part of bi-lingual Bombay state. Thereafter as 1st May, 1960 the state as Bombay was bifurcated and two independent states of Gujarat and State of Maharashtra.

And Maharashtra came into existence. From that day, the district of Kachchh became a part of Gujarat state.



## Location

The district lies between the parallels of latitude 22°44'11 to 24°42'25 and the Meridians of longitude 68°09'46 to 71°55'47. It is bounded on north and northwest by Pakistan, on the north-east by Rajasthan state, on the east by Banas Kantha and Patan districts, on the south-east by Surendranagar district, on the south by the gulf of Kachchh and Rajkot district and on the south-west by the Arabian Sea. It is largest district in terms of area and consist longest coast line of about 406 km., in the state. The total area of the district is 45,674 sq.km i.e. it covers 23.27 % of total geographical area of Gujarat. 51 percent area of Kachchh is occupied by high saline unproductive desert (Greater Rann of Kachchh-GRK and Little Rann of Kachchh-LRK) and 34.73% of the area is under agriculture. The coverage of forest area is 15.67%. The district has 17.31% of their cultivable land as unutilized land, 21.07% land is waste land. Pasture land forms 3.58% of geographical area. The lengths from north to south of this territory is about 220.32 km and from east to west is about 376.80 km by area.

The coastal area of Kachchh district consisting of Lakhpatt, Abdasas, Mandvi, Mundra, Anjar and Bhachau lies in the southern coast area. They share a common boundary on the south and face Gulf of Kachchh.

The headquarters of the district is Bhuj. The district is divided into 6 Revenue Subjuridictions, and 10 Talukas. There are two police Jurisdiction in the District. The District has a population of 20,92,2371 as per Census 2011. Out of this 13,63,836 resides in the rural areas of and 7,28,535 resides in the urban area. There are 877 habituated villages and 47 un-habituated villages in the district. There are 14 cities in the district. According to the 2011 census, the schedule caste population in the district is 2,58,859 and and schedule tribe population is 24,228.

## **Geography:**

The Kachchh district is surrounded by desert in the North and East. Kachchh is a dry region situated at a height over Sea Level. Despite the whole region being desert and rocky, it is spreader into the geographical conditions between the chains of the hills and the sprawling hillocks. And the uneven terrestrial rivers have the viability of their valleys and fertile soil.

The livelihood of the people are mostly depended on Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry. Due to diverse climatic conditions the People migrate to different parts of the country during scarcity. The people of Kachchh district origin resides more in other parts of the country and abroad. As per the census 2011 the Male Population is more than female population in the district

There is no In perennial river in the district. Due to Small Hills and Hillocks, these rivers flow from north to south. These rivers flow towards the Rann of Kachchh in the North and towards the Gulf of Kachchh in the south.

## **Climate and Rainfall**

The climate is overall hot in the district. The season can be divided into three parts during the year

1. Hot and moist season from July to September.
2. Cool and dry season from October to February.
3. Hot and dry season from March to June

Due to High Hills and Lack of Forest, the seasonal winds are not governed and the monsoon seasons last for a very short span only. In every ten years, Scarcity is faced for 2-3 years, 4-5 years are weak monsoon or semi-scarcity years, Only 2 3 years are good monsoon years. There is almost no pre or post monsoon rains in the district. Average rainfall for the District During the year 2016, the maximum temperature recorded 45.60 degree Centigrade at Bhuj, whereas the minimum temperature recorded was 11.50 Degree centigrade.

## **Land**

The type of land pervading in the district can be divided into four zones:

- (a) Coastal fertile land, (b). Sandy, (c) Black soil,(d) Muddy grounds

The Vagad region land is more fertile as compared to other parts of the district, The moisture conservation capacity of the land is very low in the district. Various time Scarcity or Semi-Scarcity has hindered the growth of trees in the district. The land is mostly useful for kharif season crops only.

## **Physical and Natural Resources**

Though the small hills of Kachchh district are not very high, it is one of its main natural compositions. They can be divided into three groups (a) Small Hills of Kachchh, (b) Vagad Hills of East and (c) Desert area Hills in the north. Most of the hills are straight climb hills. Banni is a Lowland of 804 sq.km. in the west and plenty of good quality grass is naturally grown in the region, due to which most of the people are engaged in Animal Husbandry and dairy activities in the region. There are no perennial rivers in the district and they flow only during the monsoon times.

Kachchh is a mineral rich region with a very large reserve of Lignite, Bauxite, Gypsum, limestone, and betonies, Kachchh district is one of the preferred destinations for most of the mineral based industries and other minerals. Lignite is mined only by Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation (GMDC) at its two mines in Panandhro and Mata no Madh.

Kachchh is rich in non metallic minerals. As a mineral rich district of Gujarat, It has biggest reserves of limestone, china clay, lignite, and bauxite and silica sand in the country. The district has the highest production of Lignite and China clay in Gujarat. Because of its soaring calorific value and low moisture content, Kachchh's lignite is favourable for power generation. Welspun, Adani Groups, and Sanghi Groups, are the key industry players present in the district. Adani Group owns a fully functional multi-purpose port at Mundra in the Gulf of Kachchh and has established an edible oil refinery in the district. Presence of more than 6,128 Small Scale Industry units in the district has shown a considerable progress in the district's economy.

## Forest

Kachchh district has a scanty forest cover. providing Throny Bushess lke Kao-Babul, Babuls grows in Kachchh in the Grassy Bid named which is spreaded over 200 Sq Miles. This trees are found at many other places in the district. The forest area of they district is 3067 sq.km (8% of the District area)

## Area and Population

According to the census of 2011, there are 877 Habitated villages and 14 cities in the district. The taluka level information is follows.

### a) Villages & Towns

No.	Name of Taluka	No. of villages			Number of towns
		Habitated	Inhabited	Total	
1	Abdasa	133	3	136	0
2	Anjar	66	2	68	1
3	Bhachau	69	1	70	1
4	Bhuj	149	10	159	5
5	Gandhidham	6	0	6	4
6	Lakhpat	86	14	100	0
7	Mandvi	92	2	94	1
8	Mundra	59	3	62	1
9	Nakhatrana	120	12	132	0
10	Rapar	97	0	97	1
Total		877	47	924	14

(Source – Census 2011)

### b) Area & Household

No.	Name of Taluka	Area of Taluka in Sq. K.M.	Households		
			Rural	Urban	Total
1	Abdasa	2,534.84	24070	0	24070
2	Anjar	1,303.64	33032	18906	51938
3	Bhachau	1,990.37	32746	8647	41393
4	Bhuj	5,936.11	48568	48078	96646
5	Gandhidham	216.88	8230	63217	71447
6	Lakhpat	2,190.49	12155	0	12155
7	Mandvi	1,573.26	31508	10346	41854
8	Mundra	1,098.11	30454	4738	35192
9	Nakhatrana	2,135.14	28608	0	28608
10	Rapar	3,217.81	36630	5739	42369
11	Desert Area	23,477.34			
Total		45,673.99	286001	159671	445672

(Source – Census 2011)

### c) Population

No.	Name of Taluka	Rural Population			Urban Population			Total Population		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	Abdasa	61387	56151	117538	0	0	0	61387	56151	117538
2	Anjar	78229	70125	148354	45172	42011	87183	123401	112136	235537
3	Bhachau	76236	70267	146503	21661	17871	39532	97897	88138	186035
4	Bhuj	116990	112765	229755	111146	102368	213514	228136	215133	443269
5	Gandhidham	20457	18524	38981	153886	134299	288185	174343	152823	327166
6	Lakhpat	32274	30278	62552	0	0	0	32274	30278	62552
7	Mandvi	77908	74089	151997	26075	25301	51376	103983	99390	203373
8	Mundra	78986	53895	132881	10885	9453	20338	89871	63348	153219
9	Nakhatrana	74380	71987	146367	0	0	0	74380	71987	146367
10	Rapar	96677	92231	188908	14388	14019	28407	111065	106250	217315
Total		713524	650312	1363836	383213	345322	728535	1096737	995634	2092371

(Source – Census 2011)

### d) Sex Ratio, Population Density and Literacy

No.	Name of Taluka	Sex Ratio			Population Density	Literacy Rate		
		Rural	Urban	Total		Rural	Urban	Total
1	Abdasa	915	0	915	49	67.27	0.00	67.27
2	Anjar	896	930	909	201	67.91	80.49	72.65
3	Bhachau	922	825	900	94	56.86	71.94	60.10
4	Bhuj	964	921	943	98	61.01	85.43	73.18
5	Gandhidham	906	873	877	1876	63.10	79.83	77.92
6	Lakhpat	938	0	938	32	62.09	0.00	62.09
7	Mandvi	951	970	956	145	73.28	80.38	75.11
8	Mundra	682	868	705	173	76.52	82.78	77.35
9	Nakhatrana	968	0	968	74	71.12	0.00	71.12
10	Rapar	954	974	957	72	52.71	67.95	54.76
District Total		911	901	908	46	70.59	79.40	60.87

(Source – Census 2011)

### e) Schedule Caste (SC) Population

No.	Name of Taluka	Rural SC Population			Urban SC Population			Total SC Population		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	Abdasa	6982	6707	13689	0	0	0	6982	6707	13689
2	Anjar	7588	7049	14637	2908	2711	5619	10496	9760	20256
3	Bhachau	7464	6970	14434	1953	1826	3779	9417	8796	18213
4	Bhuj	14815	14331	29146	7426	6979	14405	22241	21310	43551
5	Gandhidham	2864	2712	5576	27675	25532	53207	30539	28244	58783
6	Lakhpat	3305	3074	6379	0	0	0	3305	3074	6379
7	Mandvi	11231	11065	22296	2464	2302	4766	13695	13367	27062
8	Mundra	9277	8546	17823	1339	1149	2488	10616	9695	20311
9	Nakhatrana	12887	12432	25319	0	0	0	12887	12432	25319
10	Rapar	10834	10171	21005	2212	2079	4291	13046	12250	25296
Total		87247	83057	170304	45977	42578	88555	133224	125635	258859

(Source – Census 2011)

**f) Schedule Tribe (ST) Population**

No.	Name of Taluka	Rural ST Population			Urban ST Population			Total ST Population		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1	Abdasa	299	235	534	0	0	0	299	235	534
2	Anjar	1143	949	2092	227	238	465	1370	1187	2557
3	Bhachau	836	765	1601	265	256	521	1101	1021	2122
4	Bhuj	712	605	1317	1604	1492	3096	2316	2097	4413
5	Gandhidham	316	230	546	2866	2551	5417	3182	2781	5963
6	Lakhpat	260	248	508	0	0	0	260	248	508
7	Mandvi	2095	1888	3983	31	34	65	2126	1922	4048
8	Mundra	989	878	1867	67	45	112	1056	923	1979
9	Nakhatrana	751	671	1422	0	0	0	751	671	1422
10	Rapar	228	189	417	136	129	265	364	318	682
Total		7629	6658	14287	5196	4745	9941	12825	11403	24228

(Source – Census 2011)

**g) Land Classification Rural Area**

(in hectares)

Sr.	Classification	Area	% of Coverage
1	Forests	80919.62	4.75
2	Area Under Non Agriculture Uses	46338.66	2.72
3	Barren and Un-cultivable Land	534090.43	31.32
4	Permanent pastures and Other Grazing Lands	99355.90	5.83
5	Land Under Miscellaneous Tree Crops etc.	5489.85	0.32
6	Cultivable Waste Land	127734.53	7.49
7	Fallow Lands other than Current Fallows	32983.93	1.93
8	Current Fallows	52729.33	3.09
9	Net Area Shown	725382.80	42.54
Total Area		1705025.05	100.00
Total Irrigated Land Area		135222.82	7.93
Total Un-Irrigated Land Area		590159.98	34.61

(Source – Census 2011)

**h) Transport & Communications**

1	National highway	442.055 Km
2	State Highway	1555.65 Km
3	District Main Roads	941.50 Km
4	Other Roads	1380.400 Km
5	Rural Roads	2434.15 Km
6	No. of Railway Stations	32
7	No. of Post offices	494
8	No. of Villages having Bus Route	703
9	No. of Electrified Villages	890

(Source – District Panchayat Statistical Handbook 2016-17)

**i) Educational facilities**

1	Primary Schools	1705
2	Secondary Schools	176
3	Higher Secondary Schools	184
4	Colleges	34
5	Others	0

(Source – District Panchayat Statistical Handbook 2016-17)

#### j) Health facilities

1	Primary Health Sub Centres	435
2	Primary Health Centres	64
3	Community Health Centres	17
4	Mobile Dispensary	18
5	Ayurvedic Dispensary	20
6	Allopathic Dispensary	30

(Source – District Panchayat Statistical Handbook 2016-17)

#### i) Veterinary Health Facilities

1	Veterinary Dispensary	32
2	Primary Animal Treatment Centre	29
3	Mobile Veterinary Dispensary	3
4	Artificial Insemination Centre	11

(Source – District Panchayat Statistical Handbook 2016-17)

### **Agriculture –Horticulture-Animal Husbandry-Fishing**

Kachchh falls in the arid tract of Gujarat and has a tropical monsoon semi-arid climate and is not favourable for agricultural practices. It experiences extremes of weather conditions. The district observes three distinct seasons, winter, summer and monsoon. The winter season lasts usually from the middle of November to the end of February with January being the coldest month having an average minimum temperature of 4.6 Degree Centigrade with mercury occasionally dropping below the freezing point. Winter is followed by summer from March onwards and continues till late June with the maximum temperature ranging from 39 to 45 Degree Centigrade. The hot wet monsoon season commences in the last week of June or beginning of July with the onset of South-West Monsoon and continues till September. The annual average precipitation of Kachchh is a scanty 340 mm and about 95 per cent of occurs during June-September. Number of rainy days is very few; annual average is only 13 days. The variations in the timing and quantity of rainfall are very high having co-efficient of variability of about 60 per cent. This unreliability and uncertainty of rainfall has made Kachchh susceptible to droughts.

Over the years, horticulture has emerged as one of the potential agricultural enterprise in accelerating the growth of economy. Its role in the country's nutritional security, poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes are becoming increasingly important. It offers not only a wide range of options to the farmers for crop diversification, but also provides ample scope for sustaining large number of agro-industries which generate huge employment opportunities on account of significant increase in production in horticultural crops across the country, a golden revolution is in the offing and India has emerged as a leading player in the global scenario. It has now emerged as the world's the largest producer of and exporter of tea, coffee, cashew nut, spices exports of fresh and processed fruits, vegetables, cut flowers, dried flowers have also been picking up. As a result of a number of thoughtful research, technological and policy initiatives and inputs, horticulture in India, today, has become a sustainable and viable venture for the small, marginal and big farmers. It is a matter of satisfaction that their food consumption levels and household income have increased. Animal husbandry is the second largest employment providing activities in Kachchh after agriculture. Animal husbandry is a supplementary activity with agriculture as well as it is adopted as sole activity by many castes and communities in Kachchh.

Animal husbandry is the main source of livelihood for Shepherds and many nomadic tribes in Kachchh. Cows and Buffaloes are reared as mulch cattle in all Talukas of Kachchh, mainly by farming communities as a supplementary income source from milk. Sheep, Goat, Camel, Horse and Donkey are reared mainly by nomadic tribes and shepherds and this lot keeps on moving from one place to another, even outside Kachchh regularly. Sheep and Goat are reared for wool and meat purpose, Camel, Horse and Donkey are reared for breeding purpose and selling them as load carrying animals.

The Gulf of Kachchh surrounds the district providing it with some of the richest fishing ground, containing such important species as pomfrets, prawns, Bombay Ducks etc. Simultaneously it presents optimum conditions for the growth and sustenance of some of the most valuable species of fish like pearl oysters, window pane oysters, chanks and other shell fish. The district has the advantage of possessing a vast sea coast extending over nearly 406 km; which is 25.37% of total 1600 km costal line of Gujarat and also having one major port, 2 intermediate ports and three minor ports. Seven out of ten Talukas in Kachchh are having coastal line. The fisheries of Kachchh can be broadly divided into three categories viz. (1) Marine (2) Inland and (3) Back water fisheries. Fish culture activities in the district have been under taken in the coastal as well as inland waters.

## **Industry and Tourism**

Kachchh has re-emerged from the ruins of one of the most disastrous earthquakes in the history that took place in January 2001 and today has become a major industrial hub. It contributes to significant share of salt production in the country. With large reserves of limestone, bauxite, lignite and bentonite, Kachchh district is one of the preferred destinations for most of the mineral based industries. It boasts of being the world's largest manufacturer of Submerged Arc Welded (SAW) pipes. A good number of medium /large scale industries are supported by a sizeable number of small scale industries. Due to presence of two important ports, Kandla and Mundra, Kachchh district accounts for a very high cargo movement. Analysis of regional distribution of investments in Kachchh district indicates that industrial development is concentrated in Anjar, Gandhidham, Mundra, Bhachau and Lakhpatt Talukas while other regions like Mandvi and Nakhatrana still remain backward. Over the recent years the state Government has initiated some measures to enhance the industrial growth in backward Talukas of Mandvi and Abdasa through suitable incentives leading to an increased investment potential of these regions over the next decade. Amongst the service sub-sectors, the tourism sector has been major driver of Kachchh economy.

A good number of medium /large scale industries are supported by a sizeable number of small scale industries. Due to presence of two important ports, Kandla and Mundra, Kachchh district accounts for a very high cargo movement. Kachchh is also known for handicrafts. Out of total 136 industrial cooperative societies, 71 belong to handicrafts. In Kachchh there are 13 industrial estates and 3 industrial parks in Mundra, Gandhidham and Samakhiali respectively. Gujarat has the distinction of being the first state to enact the Special Economic Zone Act-2004. SEZs are growth engines that can boost manufacturing, augment exports and generate employment. There are 12 Special Economic Zones functioning in the District.

## **Handicraft Industry**

Kachchh is famous for its handicrafts. Kachchh is one of the most prolific regions in India in the area of textile art. Kachchh embroidery is dense with motifs and is one of the most beautiful forms of textile art. A variation with mirrors sewn into the embroidery is one of the signature arts of this region. Within the category of Kachchh embroidery there are several sub-categories as each tribe and sub-tribe produces a unique signature form of art. The handicrafts mainly textile related crafts done by Kachchhi women has given a unique identity to Kachchh. Quality handicrafts produced in Kachchh is not only symbol of their colourful way of life as well as it has been a source of livelihood for people. There is a wide range of Kachchhi handicraft varying from textile-based handicrafts like hand embroidery, tie-dye (Bandhani), weaving, block printing to pottery with lime paste and mirror work decoration. Some of the villages and communities have specialized for generations in certain crafts and thereby create masterpieces. Few examples are Sodha embroidery of Loria village, patch work of Bhirandiyara, the Rabari embroidery of nana Nakhatrana, the leather work of Meghwal artisans, silver work on precious metal of Bhuj and Anjar, lacquer work on cloth of Chobari and Nirana villages. Kachchh contributes significantly in Handicraft export from Gujarat. Handicraft industry in Kachchh is unorganised and therefore it very difficult to estimate value of production. Gujarat State Handlooms and Handicrafts Development Corporation Ltd regularly purchases handicraft items through their office in Bhuj.

## **Mineral**

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Kachchh is rich in non metallic minerals. As a mineral rich district of Gujarat, It has biggest reserves of limestone, china clay, lignite, and bauxite and silica sand in the country. The district has the highest production of Lignite and China clay in Gujarat. Because of its soaring calorific value and low moisture content, Kachchh's lignite is favourable for power generation. Welspun, Adani Groups, and Sanghi Groups, are the key industry players present in the district. Adani Group owns a fully functional multi-purpose port at Mundra in the Gulf of Kachchh and has established an edible oil refinery in the district. Presence of more than 6,128 Small Scale Industry units in the district has shown a considerable progress in the district's economy.

The Little Rann of Kachchh is known for its traditional salt production and various references mention this to be a 600-year-old activity. Out of the estimated total annual production of India of about 180 lakh tonnes, Gujarat contributes 75% - mainly from Kachchh and other parts of Saurashtra. Kachchh contributes to over 60% of Gujarat's Salt production which is largely exported to countries like Bangladesh and Korea

Kachchh is emerging strongly with the experiences of palaces, wildlife, fairs and festivals. The district accounted for 2.39 % of total tourist inflow in Gujarat during 2006-07. The key tourist attractions include Aina Mahal (Old Palace), Prag Mahal (New Palace), Indus Valley Civilization site, Swaminarayan Temple, Lakhpat, Wildlife Sanctuary, Chinkara Sanctuary and Mandvi Beach. Apart from the above, there are several festivals like the Kachchh Desert Festival and the Navratri Fair. The Tourist Places like (a) Dholavira, the Planned Harappan Urban Settlement, (b) The Great and Little Rann of Kachchh, Banni Grass Lands, Flamingo City and Mangroves, (c) Bhuj, a Historic City and the District Headquarter (d) Mandvi, Its Beaches and Palaces, (e) Lakhpat, Koteshwer and Narayan Sarovar,(f) Kachchh as a Jurassic Park,(g) Dhordo – White Desert are the tourist attractions in the District

## **Flora & Fauna**

Kachchh has no forest or jungles in the ordinary sense but can respond well to a managed forestry and ecosystem. Technically, however the forest in Kachchh can be broadly classified in many types like the Southern dry mixed deciduous forest, Dry deciduous forest, Dry Savannah forest, Dry grassland, Southern thorn forest, Southern forest scrub, Mangrove forest, Mangrove scrub & Euphorbia scrub. The erstwhile rulers of Kachchh marked certain forest as "Rakhais" which are now known as Protected and Reserve forests. There are fifty six rakhais in Kachchh. The forest department has drawn and demarcated certain areas in north and west of Kachchh and termed them as wild life sanctuaries. The total area covered under forestry is about 286,774 hectares. The Kachchh forests are characterised by thorny and non thorny tree growth. Locally, the names given to the thorny varieties are Bawal, Kher, Kando, Angario, Guggal etc, while the non thorny scrub and trees constitute Jal, Akdo, Gangi, Gundi, Neem, Siras, Lai etc.

## **FLORA OF KACHCHH**

Kachchh has semi desert type of hardy vegetation. There are varieties of Acacia trees like Acacia Senegal, Acacia Leucophloea, Acacia nilotica etc. The mesquite is an exotic leguminous plant which grows in the wild regions. The wild exotic plants are considered a menace. These are alien in origin and were brought from South America and were initially grown to prevent soil erosion and the spread of desert. These are known as "Gando Bawal" locally. The prosopis Julifora was considered to be more of nuisance value but some entrepreneurs in Kachchh have found immense use of pods as cattle feed. The coastal saline belt has some halophytes species like Suaeda, Sporobolus etc, whereas the muddy creek areas are full of mangroves like Avicinnia Marina, Avicinnia Officinal and Rhizophra Mukronata. One of the best fodder providing trees called Kao-Babul is grown in Kachchh has better nutritional value compared to Barseen the green fodder. The pods of Kao-Babul contain rich amounts of protein. Several other types of fodder are grown separately for camels, buffaloes, cows, sheep goats etc. It is possible to plant a variety of trees, shrubs, creepers and bushes in Kachchh which can meet the requirement of human beings and animals. The Bougenwilla grows freely and with very less water and provides everlasting beauty

## **DISTRIBUTION OF FLORA**

Kachchh flora can be roughly divided into four types:

- a) The coastal area vegetation
- b) Central hilly and Dry deciduous zone vegetation
- c) The Banni Zone
- d) Grass

### **Coastal Zone:**

There are many varieties in this area, locally called as Danya. The main flora is as follows:

Khajur/Kharek - *Phoenix sylvestris*

Daryayi Khip - *Leptadenia Sparitium* (wild, not cultivated)

Saru - *Cassuarina Equisetifolia*

Daryayi kans - *Halopyrum mucronatum* (wild)

Neem or limdo - *Melia Azadirachta*

Aval, Bor, Coconut, etc.

### **Hilly Zone;**

The varieties included are:

Gando Bawal - *Prosopis Julifora*

Desi Bawal - *Accacia Nilotica*

Khijdo/Kando - *Prosopis Cineraria*

Khakhro - *Buteq Frondosa*

Jar or pilu, Thor, Neem, Aual, Ambli, Aritha, Jambu/Jamun, Gugal, Piplo, Lai, Vad, Bor or Ber.

### **Banni Zone:**

Gando Bawal, Desi bawal, Kerdo Keri etc.

### **Banni Grass:**

Several varieties of grass called 'Gha' in local language grow in Banni. There are about varieties of grass in Banni, some of the varieties of grass are called Valp, Baru, Phulio, Khari, Kanj, Vans etc

## **MEDICINAL PLANTS**

Kachchh is a store house of medicinal plants. They are found in the hilly areas, deciduous forest area, riverbeds etc. One palace in Bhuj and Vijal Vilas palace in Mandvi is maintained as botanical gardens. Spices available are Dudhal (*Euphorbia*), Hanj (*Buettneria Herbacea*), Gugal (*Balsamorendrum*), Akdo Somvel (*Brahmi*, *Neuri*, *Kadwa Turia*, *Tulsi*, *Bangro*, *Sannepat*, *Fox glove* etc.)

## **FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**

The local fruits grown in Kachchh are the Dates (*Kharek*), mango, coconut, guava, chikoo, pomengrate, citrus Fruits, mosambi, papaya, banana, bor or ber (*Zyzyphus*), mostly in wadis of Mandvi and Mundra. The grapes are grown on experimental basis, but not on commercial basis. Vegetables which are grown are carrot (*Daucas Carota*), dhana or dhaniya (*Corrindrum savitum*), bhajmo or lehsun, reengna or baigan (*Salanum melogana*), bhindi or bhinda (*Hibiscus*), jayphal (*Sida Humilis*), kakdi (*Cucumis Sativa*), tinda, tarbuj (*Citrullus*), turia, onion, sarson, karela etc.

## **FAUNA**

There are two important wildlife sanctuaries in Kachchh notified by the Government of Gujarat. One is the Kachchh desert wildlife sanctuary in 1986 spread over an area of 750,622 hectares of land, which falls in Rapar, Bhachau, Anjar and Bhuj taluka. The above sanctuary includes the Great Rann of Kachchh besides the part of wild ass sanctuary of Dharghandhra which is in Little Rann of Kachchh. The other notified sanctuary is the Narayan Sarovar Sanctuary in Lakhpat taluka. In 1981 an area of 765 square kilometre was notified as sanctuary, which was reduced to 442 square kilometre. The arid land, vast saline deserts, creeks and the long coastline provides for a wide variety of its own wild life besides attracting a number of migratory Avi-Fauna. Some of the distinguish wild life found in Kachchh is as follows

**Mammals:**

The Chinkara deer (Gazella Gazella or local name chinkaru), the wild ass found near the little Rann, Neelgai or Blue Bull, wild Boar or jungli budhar, Indian Wolf, Jackal (Canis Auresug) or Bhiyad, striped Hyaena (Hyaena Lyonna) or Jharak, Desert Hare or Salsa, Indian fox vulpes or Lonkadi, Mongoose or Nolia, besides some jungle cat, Pangolin, Indian Porcupine and long eared Ledgehog are also found. The Indian Hare is very commonly seen in open fields, but the rarest animal is the Caracal.

**Reptiles:**

Many species of reptiles including snakes are found in Kachchh. Some of these are common Crocodile Muger, Monitor lizard, Spiny tailed lizard or Sanda, matt-tailed lizard known as Khann, Starred, Tortoise, Fresh water Turtle etc.

**Snakes:**

Amongst the common species of non-poisonous snakes which are seen are Python, Sand Boa, Rat snake, Royal snake, while the poisonous snakes are the Black Krait, Black Cobra, Russels Wiper, Saw Scales Viper, Sea Snake etc.

**Amphibians:**

Many species of frogs and toads are found in Kachchh.

**Birds:**

This district is known as Bird watcher's paradise. Besides the migratory birds flocking in thousands, there are many varieties of resident birds which include the doves, storks, koyal, bulbul, herons, eagles, desert lark, weaver birds, crow, sparrow, Ibis, white nipped tits, flamingoes, peacock, sand grouse, egrets, Robin, owls, vultures and a host of other birds including the Great Indian Bustard. Many migratory birds like the sea gulls and white storks visit Kachchh, the ducks come from Siberia. The flooded wetlands of Banni provide a congenial habitat for the avifauna and other wild life. The most famous bird of course, is the greater flamingo and the lesser flamingo, a resident bird seen throughout the year. The water birds are seen in plenty belonging to family Analidae, mainly the Goose, teal, ducks etc. The great Indian Bustard is one of the rarest birds in India, known as GIB or tiller, belonging to family of Otidae. Kachchh is the only district in Gujarat where a few of species still survive; hardly any birds now remain in Saurashtra. However, there is uncontrolled growth of Gando Bawal, and the Rann is slowly invading the grassland of Banni, increasing the salinity towards the southern fringes of Rann.