

History of Gujarat

The **history of Gujarat** began with Stone Age settlements followed by Chalcolithic and Bronze Age settlements like Indus Valley Civilisation. Gujarat's coastal cities, chiefly Bharuch, served as ports and trading centers in the Nanda, Maurya, Satavahana and Gupta empires as well as Western Kshatrapas period. After the fall of the Gupta empire in the 6th century, Gujarat flourished as an independent Hindu/Buddhist states. The Maitraka dynasty, descended from a Gupta general, ruled from the 6th to the 8th centuries from their capital at Vallabhi, although they were ruled briefly by Harsha during the 7th century. The Arab rulers of Sindh sacked Vallabhi in 770, bringing the Maitraka dynasty to an end. The Gurjara-Pratihara Empire ruled Gujarat after from the 8th to 10th centuries. As well as, for some periods the region came under the control of Rashtrakuta Empire and Pala Empire. In 775 the first Parsi (Zoroastrian) refugees arrived in Gujarat from Greater Iran.^[1]

During the 10th century, the native Chaulukya dynasty came to power. Under the Chaulukya dynasty, Gujarat reached to its greatest extent. From 1297 to 1300, Alauddin Khalji, the Turkic Sultan of Delhi, destroyed Anhilwara and incorporated Gujarat into the Delhi Sultanate. After Timur's sacking of Delhi at the end of the 14th century weakened the Sultanate, Gujarat's governor Zafar Khan Muzaffar asserted his independence, and his son, Sultan Ahmad Shah I (ruled 1411 to 1442), restructured Ahmedabad as the capital. Cambay eclipsed Bharuch as Gujarat's most important trade port. The Sultanate of Gujarat remained independent until 1576, when the Mughal emperor Akbar conquered it and annexed it to the Mughal Empire as province. The port of Surat become the prominent and main port of India during Mughal rule. Gujarat remained a province of the Mughal empire until the Marathas occupied eastern and central Gujarat in the 18th century; Western Gujarat (Kathiawar and Kutch) were divided among numerous local rulers.

Later in the 18th century, Gujarat came under control of the Maratha Empire who dominated the politics of India. Pilaji Gaekwad, first ruler of Gaekwad dynasty, established the control over Baroda and much of Gujarat. After the Battle of Panipat in 1761, all Maratha generals established themselves as an autonomous government while keeping the nominal authority of the Peshwas of Pune and the Chhatrapati in Satara. The British East India Company wrested control of much of Gujarat from the Marathas during the Second Anglo-Maratha War. Many local rulers, notably the Maratha Gaekwads of Baroda (Vadodara), made a separate peace with the British and acknowledged British sovereignty in return for retaining local self-rule. Gujarat was placed under the political authority of the Bombay Presidency, with the exception of Baroda state, which had a direct relationship with the Governor-General of India. From 1818 to 1947, most of present-day Gujarat, including Kathiawar, Kutch, and northern and eastern Gujarat were divided into hundreds of princely states, but several districts in central and southern Gujarat, namely Ahmedabad, Broach (Bharuch), Kaira (Kheda), Panchmahal, and Surat, were ruled directly by British officials. Mohandas Gandhi, considered India's "father of the nation", was a Gujarati who led the Indian Independence Movement against the British colonial rule.^[2] Gujarat was formed by splitting Bombay state in 1960 on linguistic lines. From 1960 to 1995, Indian National Congress retained power in Gujarat Legislative Assembly while other political parties ruled for incomplete terms in the 1970s and 1990. Bharatiya Janata Party has been in the power since 1998.

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Stone Age (before 4000 BC)

The cultural history of Gujarat begins from the Middle Pleistocene. The lands of Gujarat has been continuously inhabited from the Lower Palaeolithic (c.200,000 BP) period. Several sites of stone age are discovered in riverbeds of Sabarmati, Mahi river and lower Narmada rivers of Gujarat.^{[3][4]}

The Middle Palaeolithic sites are found from Kutch, Jamnagar, Panchmahals, Hiran valley in Saurashtra and Vapi and Lavacha of Valsad district. The Upper Palaeolithic period sites from Visadi, Panchmahals, Bhamaria, Kantali, Palanpur and Vavri are also explored.^[3] The Middle (c.45,000–25,000 BP) and Late Palaeolithic artifacts include hand-axes, cleavers, chopping tools, borers, points, and scrapers.^[5] The sites in Kutch and Bhadar riverbeds in Saurashtra has also yielded stone age tools. Bhandarpur near Orsang valley is rich in Palaeolithic tools. Some of other such sites are Hirpura, Dero, Kapadvanj, Langhnaj and Shamlaji.^[6]

More than 700 sites are located in Gujarat which indicate Mesolithic/Microlithic using communities dated to 7000 BC to 2000 BC divided in Pre-Chalcolithic and Chalcolithic period.^[7] Some Mesolithic sites include Langhnaj, Kanewal, Tarsang, Dhansura, Loteswar, Santhli, Datrana, Moti Pipli and Ambakut. The people of Mesolithic period were nomadic hunter-gathers with some managing the herds of sheep-goat and cattle.^[3] Neolithic tools are found at Langhnaj in north Gujarat.^[8]

Chalcolithic to Bronze Age (4000 BC–1300 BC)

Total 755 chalcolithic settlements are discovered in Gujarat belonging to various traditions and cultures which ranged from 3700 BCE to 900 BCE. Total 59 of these sites are excavated while others are studied from artifacts. These traditions are closely associated with Harappan civilization and difference between them is identified by difference in ceramics and findings of microliths. These traditions and cultures include Anarta Tradition (c. 3950–1900 BC), Padri Ware (3600–2000 BC), Pre-Prabhas Assemblage (3200–2600 BC), Pre Urban Harappan Sindh Type Pottery (Burial Pottery) (3000–2600 BC), Black and Red Ware (3950–900 BC), Reserved Slip Ware (3950–1900 BC), Micaceous Red Ware (2600–1600 BC). Prabhas Assemblage (2200–1700 BC) and Lustrous Red Ware (1900–1300 BC) are some late material cultures. The few sites associated with Malwa Ware and Jorwe Ware are also found.^[7]



An ancient well at Lothal, and the city drainage canals.

Gujarat has large number of the archaeological sites associated with Indus Valley Civilization. Total 561 Classical Harappan (2600–1900 BC) and Sorath Harappan (2600–1700 BC) sites are reported in Gujarat.^[7] The sites in Kutch, namely, Surkotada, Desalpur, Pabumath and Dholavira are some major sites of Urban period. The sites of the post-Urban period include Lothal B, Rangpur IIC and III, Rojdi C, Kuntasi, Vagad I B, Surkotada 1C, Dholavira VI & VII.^[3]

Iron Age (1500 BC-300 BC)

At several sites the post-Harappan culture continued. Pastoralism was also widespread and served as trade-links between sites.^{[9][10]} These cultures are associated with rise of Mahajanapadas

There is an insufficient archeological data for transition to the Early Historic period. This Vedic period is referenced with Vedic and Puranic sources. According to both legends and tradition, the Yadavas under Krishna inhabited of the Saurashtra peninsula of Gujarat before it came under the Mauryas. But there is no archaeological and historical evidences to prove this. There are some evidences of occupation prior to 400 BC from Dwarka, Nagara and Prabhas Patan.^[3]

Bharuch was the major port town of Iron Age.^[11]

Early classical period (380 BC-800)

Early Historic

The Early Historic material culture of Gujarat include the presence of Northern Black Polished Ware, continued dominance of Black-and-Red Ware, slow introduction and later domination of Red Polished Ware, occurrence of Roman Amphorae, Rangmahal Ware (100–300), introduction of glass and lead, followed by gradual conquest of Iron, an agriculture based economy, shell industry, development of script, rise of the urban settlements, brick structural remains, monumental buildings, international trade and development of Jainism, Buddhism, and Vaishnavism.^[3]

The excavated sites of the Early Historic period include Dhatva, Jokha, Kamrej, Karvan, Bharuch, Nagal, Timbarva, Akota from South Gujarat; Nagara from central Gujarat; Vadnagar, Shamlaji, Devnimori from north Gujarat and Amreli, Vallabhi, Prabhas Patan, Padri and Dwarka from Saurashtra.^[3]

Mauryas

Chandragupta Maurya of Maurya dynasty conquered a number of earlier states of Gujarat circa 300 BC. Pushyagupta, a Vaishya, was appointed Governor of Saurashtra by the Mauryan regime. He ruled (322 BC to 294 BC) Girinagar (present Junagadh) and built a dam on the Sudarshan lake. Emperor Ashoka, the grandson of Chandragupta Maurya, not only ordered engraving of his famous edicts on the rock at Junagadh, but asked his Governor Tusherpha to take out canals from the lake where an earlier Mauryan Governor had built a dam. Between the decline of the Mauryan power and Saurashtra coming under the sway of Samprati Mauryas of Ujjain, there was a Greek incursion into Gujarat led by Demetrius. In the first half of the first century A.D. there is the story of a merchant of King Gondaphares landing in Gujarat with Apostle Thomas. The incident of the cup-bearer killed by a lion might indicate that the port city described is in Gujarat.^{[13][14]}



Gop Temple, Maitraka period.

Indo-scythians

For nearly 300 years from the start of the 1st century AD, Saka rulers played prominent part in Gujarat's history. Weather beaten rock at Junagadh gives a glimpse of the Ruler Rudradaman I (100 AD) of the Saka satraps known as Western Satraps, or Kshatrapas. Mahakshatrap Rudradaman I founded the Kardamaka dynasty which ruled from Anupa on the banks of the Narmada up to Aparanta

region which bordered Punjab. In Gujarat several battles were fought between the south Indian Satavahana dynasty and the Western Satraps. The greatest ruler of the Satavahana Dynasty was Gautamiputra Satakarni who defeated the Western Satraps and conquered some parts of Gujarat in the 2nd century CE^[5]

Guptas and Maitrakas

The Kshatrapa dynasty was replaced by the Gupta reign with the conquest of Gujarat by Chandragupta Vikramaditya. Vikramaditya's successor Skandagupta has left an inscription (450 AD) on a rock at Junagadh which gives details of the repairs of the embankment, damaged by floods, of Sudarshan lake by his Governor. Anarta and Saurashtra regions were both part of the Gupta empire. Towards the middle of the 5th century the Gupta empire started to decline. Senapati Bhatarka, the Maitraka general of the Guptas, took advantage of the situation and in 470 AD he set up what came to be known as the Maitraka state. He shifted his capital from Giringer to Valabhipur, near Bhavnagar, on Saurashtra's east coast. Maitrakas of Vallabhi became very powerful and their rule prevailed over large parts of Gujarat and even over adjoining Malwa. Maitrakas set up a university which came to be known far and wide for its scholastic pursuits and was compared with the famous Nalanda university. It was during the rule of Dhruvasena Maitrak that Chinese philosopher-traveler Xuanzang visited in 640 AD.



Early Gujarat (BC 250 to 1300 AD)



Coin of the Gujuras of Sindh, Chavda dynasty, circa 570–712 CE. Crowned Sasanian-style bust right / Fire altar with ribbons and attendants; star and crescent flanking flames^[12]

Late classical period (c. 800 – 1298)

In the early 8th century some parts of Gujarat was ruled by the south Indian Chalukya dynasty. In the early 8th century the Arabs of the Umayyad Caliphate established an Empire which stretched from Spain in the west to Afghanistan and Pakistan in the east. The Arab rulers tried to expand their Empire in the 8th century and invaded Gujarat but the Arab invaders were defeated by the south Indian general Pulakesi who was sent by the south Indian Emperor Vikramaditya II of the Chalukya Dynasty. After this victory the Arab invaders were driven out of Gujarat. Pulakesi received the title Avanijanashraya (refuge of the people of the earth) by Vikramaditya II for the protection of Gujarat. In the late 8th century the Kannauj Triangle period started. The 3 major Indian Dynasties the northwest Indian Gurjara-Pratihara Dynasty, the south Indian Rashtrakuta Dynasty and the east Indian Pala Empire dominated India from the 8th to 10th century. During this period the northern part of Gujarat was ruled by the north Indian Gurjara-Pratihara Dynasty and the southern part of Gujarat was ruled by the south Indian Rashtrakuta Dynasty.^[16] Southern Gujarat was ruled by the south Indian Rashtrakuta dynasty until it was captured by the south Indian ruler Tailapa II of the Western Chalukya Empire.^[17]

The Chalukya dynasty^[18] ruled Gujarat from c. 960 to 1243. Gujarat was a major center of Indian Ocean trade, and their capital at Anhilwara (Patan) was one of the largest cities in India, with population estimated at 100,000 in the year 1000. In 1026, the famous Somnath temple in Gujarat was destroyed by Mahmud of Ghazni. After 1243, the Chalukyas lost control of Gujarat to their feudatories, of whom the Vaghela chiefs of Dholka came to dominate Gujarat. In 1292 the Vaghelas became



Rani ki vav 11th century.



Taranga Jain Temple constructed by Kumarapala (1143 – 1172 CE)

tributaries of the Yadava dynasty of Devagiri in the Deccan. Karna of the Vaghela dynasty was the last Hindu ruler of Gujarat. He was defeated and overthrown by the superior forces of Allauddin Khalji from Delhi in 1297. With his defeat Gujarat not only became part of the Muslim empire but the Rajput hold over Gujarat lost for ever

Medieval period (1298–1756)

Delhi Sultanate (1298–1407)

Before 1300, Muslims had little presence in Gujarat. The occasional was mainly either as sea-farers or traders coming from Arabian Sea. They were allowed to establish two small settlements in Cambay (now Khambhat) and Bharuch. Gujarat finally fell under Delhi Sultanate following repeated expeditions under Alauddin Khalji around the end of the 13th century. He ended the rule of Vaghela dynasty under Karna II and established Muslim rule in Gujarat. Soon the Tughluq dynasty came to power in Delhi whose emperor carried out expeditions to quell rebellion in Gujarat and established their firm control over the region by the end of the century^[19]

Gujarat Sultanate (1407–1573)

Following Timur's invasion of Delhi, the Delhi Sultanate weakened considerably so the last Tughluq governor Zafar Khan declared himself independent in 1407 and formally established Gujarat Sultanate. The next sultan, his grandson Ahmad Shah I founded the new capital Ahmedabad in 1411. The prosperity of the sultanate reached its zenith during the rule of Mahmud Begada. He subdued most of the Rajput chieftains and built navy off the coast of Diu. In 1509, the Portuguese wrested Diu from Gujarat sultanate following the Battle of Diu (1509). Mughal emperor Humayun attacked Gujarat in 1535 and thereafter Bahadur Shah was killed by the Portuguese while making a deal in 1537. The decline of the Sultanate started with the assassination of Sikandar Shah in 1526. The end of the sultanate came in 1573, when Akbar annexed Gujarat in his empire. The last ruler Muzaffar Shah III was taken prisoner to Agra. In 1583, he escaped from the prison and with the help of the nobles succeeded to regain the throne for a short period before being defeated by Akbar's general Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana^[20]

Mughal Empire (1573–1756)

Under Akbar (1573–1605), Gujarat became the province (*subah*) of the Mughal Empire governed by the viceroys and officers appointed by the Mughal emperors from Delhi. Akbar's foster brother Mirza Aziz Kokaltash was appointed as the viceroy who strengthened Mughal hold over the region. The nobles of former Sultanate continued to resist and rebel during the reign of the next emperor Jehangir (1605–1627) but Kokaltash and his successor viceroys subdued them. Jehangir also permitted the British East India Company to establish factories in Surat and elsewhere in Gujarat. The next emperor Shah Jahan (1627–1658) expanded his territories in south and his viceroys made hold over Kathiawar peninsula including Nawanagar. Shah Jahan had also appointed his prince Aurangzeb, who was involved in religious disputes, prince Dara Shikoh and later prince Murad Bakhsh as viceroys. Following battle of succession, Aurangzeb (1658–1707) came to the Mughal throne and his policies resulted in revolts and discontent. His prince Muhammad Azam Shah also served as a viceroy. During his reign, the Marathas under Shivaji raided Surat (1666) and their incursions in Gujarat started. Till then Gujarat prospered due to political stability peace and growing international trade.^[21]



Flight of Sultan Bahadur during Humayun's campaign in Gujarat, 1535. Folio from an *Akbarnama* (*History of Akbar*), c. 1590. Los Angeles County Museum of Art M.78.9.6.

During the next three emperors (1707–1719) who had brief reigns, the nobles became more and more powerful due to instability in the Delhi. The royals of Marwar were appointed viceroys frequently. During the reign of the emperor Muhammad Shah (1719–1748), the struggle between the Mughal and Maratha nobles were heightened with frequent battles and incursions. The south Gujarat was lost to the Marathas and the towns in north and central Gujarat was attacked on several occasions with frequent demand of tributes. The Marathas continued to grow their hold and the frequent change of viceroys did not reverse the trend. The competing houses of Marathas, Gaikwars and Peshwas engaged between themselves which slow down their progress for a while. They later made peace between themselves. During the reign of the next emperor Ahmad Shah Bahadur (1748–1754), there was nominal control over the nobles who acted on their own. There were frequent fights between themselves and with Marathas. Ahmedabad, the capital of province, finally fell to the Marathas in 1752. It was regained by noble Momin Khan for a short time but again lost to the Marathas in 1756 after a long siege. Finding opportunity, the British captured Surat in 1759. After a setback at Panipat in 1761, the Marathas strengthened their hold on Gujarat. During this fifty years, the power struggle between the Mughal nobles and Marathas caused disorder and the decline in prosperity^[21]

Early Modern Period (1756–1819)

Maratha Empire (1756–1819)

When the cracks had started to develop in the edifice of the Mughal empire in the mid-17th century, the Marathas were consolidating their power in the west, Chatrapati Shivaji, the great Maratha ruler, attacked Surat twice first in 1664 and again in 1672. These attacks marked the entry of the Marathas into Gujarat. However, before the Maratha inroads into Gujarat, the Europeans had made their presence felt, with the Portuguese leading them, followed by the Dutch and the English.



Province of Guzerat, 1896

The Peshwas had established their sovereignty over Gujarat including Saurashtra, and collected taxes and tributes through their representatives. Damaji Gaekwad and Kadam Bande divided the Peshwa's territory between them, with Damaji establishing the sway of Gaekwad over Gujarat and made Baroda (present day Vadodara) his capital. The ensuing internecine war among the Marathas were fully exploited by the British, who interfered in the affairs of both Gaekwads and the Peshwas.

The British also embarked upon their policy of Subsidiary Alliance. With this policy they established their paramountcy over one princely state after another. Anandrao Gaekwad joined the Alliance in 1802 and surrendered Surat and adjoining territories to the British. In the garb of helping the Marathas, the British helped themselves, and gradually the Marathas' power came to an end, in 1819 in Gujarat. Gaekwad and other big and small rulers accepted the British Paramountcy^[22]

Colonial period (1819–1947)

European Colonialism 1614–1947 AD

In the 1600s, the Dutch, French, English and Portuguese all established bases along the western coast of the region. Portugal was the first European power to arrive in Gujarat, and after the Battle of Diu and Treaty of Bassein, acquired several enclaves along the Gujarati coast, including Daman and Diu as well as Dadra and Nagar Haveli. These enclaves were administered by Portuguese India under a single union territory for over 450 years, only to be later incorporated into the Republic of India on 19 December 1961 by military conquest.

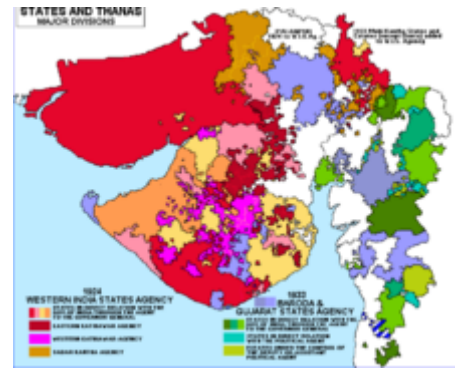
The British East India Company established a factory in Surat in 1614 following the commercial treaty made with Mughal Emperor Nuruddin Salim Jahangir, which formed their first base in India, but it was eclipsed by Bombay after the English received it from Portugal in 1668 as part of the marriage treaty of Charles II of England and Catherine of Braganza, daughter of King John IV of Portugal. The state was an early point of contact with the west, and the first British commercial outpost in India was in Gujarat.^[23]



Map of Gujarat, 1866

17th-century French explorer François Pyrard de Laval, who is remembered for his 10-year sojourn in South Asia, bears witness accounts that the Gujaratis were always prepared to learn workmanship from the Portuguese, also in turn imparting skills to the Portuguese.^[24]

I have never seen men of wit so fine and polished as are these Indians: they have nothing barbarous or savage about them, as we are apt to suppose. They are unwilling indeed to adopt the manners and customs of the *Portuguese*, yet do they regularly learn their manufactures and workmanship, being all very curious and desirous of learning. In fact the *Portuguese* take and learn more from them than they from the *Portuguese*.



Princely states of Gujarat in 1924

Later in the 17th century, Gujarat came under control of the Hindu Maratha Empire that rose defeating the Muslim Mughals and who dominated the politics of India. Most notably, from 1705 to 1716, Senapati Khanderao Dabhade led the Maratha Empire forces in Baroda. Pilaji Gaekwad, first ruler of Gaekwad dynasty, established the control over Baroda and other parts of Gujarat.

The British East India Company wrested control of much of Gujarat from the Marathas during the Second Anglo-Maratha War in 1802–1803. Many local rulers, notably the Rajput Maratha Gaekwad Maharajas of Baroda (Vadodara), made a separate peace with the British and acknowledged British sovereignty in return for retaining local self-rule.

Gujarat was placed under the political authority of the Bombay Presidency, with the exception of Baroda state, which had a direct relationship with the Governor-General of India. From 1818 to 1947, most of present-day Gujarat, including Kathiawar, Kutch and northern and eastern Gujarat were divided into hundreds of princely states, but several districts in central and southern Gujarat, namely Ahmedabad, Broach (Bharuch), Kaira (Kheda), Panchmahal and Surat, were governed directly by British officials.



Bombay Presidency in 1909, northern portion

In 1812, an epidemic outbreak killed and wiped out half the population of Gujarat.^[25]

Indian Independence Movement

The people of Gujarat were the most enthusiastic participants in India's struggle for freedom. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Morarji Desai, K.M. Munshi, Narhari Parikh, Mahadev Desai, Mohanlal Pandya and Ravi Shankar Vyas all hailed from Gujarat. It was also the site of the most popular revolts, including the Satyagrahas in Kheda, Bardoli, Borsad and the Salt Satyagraha.

See Also: Freedom fighters from Gujarat



Succession of British Agencies in Gujarat

Post-independence

1947–1960

After Indian independence and the Partition of India in 1947, the new Indian government grouped the former princely states of Gujarat into three larger units; Saurashtra, which included the former princely states on the Kathiawar peninsula, Kutch, and Bombay state, which included the former British districts of Bombay Presidency together with most of Baroda state and the other former princely states of eastern Gujarat. In 1956, Bombay state was enlarged to include Kutch, Saurashtra, and parts of Hyderabad state and Madhya Pradesh in central India. The new state had a mostly Gujarati-speaking north and a Marathi-speaking south. Mahagujarat Movement led by Indulal Yagnik demanded splitting of Bombay state on linguistic lines. On 1 May 1960, Bombay state bifurcated into Gujarat and Maharashtra. The capital of Gujarat was Ahmedabad.^[26]

Kutch was hit by the earthquake in 1956 which destroyed major parts of Anjar town. Gandhidham, Sardarnagar and Kubernagar were refugee settlements established for the resettlement of Sindhi Hindu refugees arriving from Pakistan after partition.



Mahatma Gandhipicking salt at Dandi beach, South Gujarat ending the Salt satyagraha on 5 April 1930

1960–1973

Members of legislative assembly were elected from 132 constituencies of newly formed Gujarat state. Indian National Congress (INC) won the majority and Jivraj Narayan Mehta became the first chief minister of Gujarat. He served until 1963. Balwantrai Mehta succeed him. During Indo-Pakistani War of 1965, Mehta flew on aircraft to inspect Kutch border between India and Pakistan. The aircraft was shot down by Pakistan Air Force. Mehta was killed in the crash.^{[27][28]} Hitendra Kanaiyalal Desai succeeded him and won assembly elections. In 1969, Indian National Congress split into Congress (O) headed by Morarji Desai and Congress (I) headed by Indira Gandhi.^[29] At the same time, the Hindu nationalist organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) had established itself deeply in Gujarat around this period. The riots broke out across Gujarat in September to October 1969, resulting in large number of casualties and damage to properties. Desai resigned in 1971 due to split of INC and President's rule was imposed in Gujarat. Later Ghanshyam Oza became chief minister when Indira Gandhi led Congress (I) won majority in parliament after 1971 Indo-Pakistani war. Chimanbhai Patel opposed Oza and became chief minister in 1972. The capital of Gujarat moved from Ahmedabad to Gandhinagar in 1971 but legislative assembly building was completed in 1982.^[30]



Gandhi at a public rally during the Salt Satyagraha.



Bombay State (1956–1960) and its reorganisation.

1974–2000

Navnirman movement started in December 1973 due to price rise and corruption in public life. People demanded resignation of Patel.^{[31][32][33][34]} Due to pressure of protests, Indira Gandhi asked Patel to step down. He resigned on February 9, 1974 and President's rule imposed.^{[31][33]} The governor suspended the state assembly and President's rule was imposed. Opposition parties led stepped in with demand for dissolution of state assembly.^[32] Congress had 140 out of 167 MLAs in state assembly. 15 Congress (O) and three Jan Sangh MLAs also resigned. By March, protesters had got 95 of 167 to resign. Morarji Desai, leader of Congress (O), went on an indefinite fast in March and the assembly was dissolved bringing end to agitation.^{[31][32][33]} No fresh election held until Morarji Desai went on indefinite hunger strike in April 1975.^[32] The fresh elections were held in June 1975. Chimanbhai Patel formed new party named Kisan Mazdoor Lok Paksh and contested on his own. Congress lost elections which won only 75 seats. Coalition of Congress (O), Jan Sangh, PSP and Lok Dal known as Janata Morcha won 88 seats and Babubhai J. Patel became Chief Minister. Indira Gandhi imposed the emergency in 1975.^[32] Janata Morcha government lasted nine months and president's rule imposed in March, 1976 following failure of passage of budget in assembly to opposition of coalition partners.^[33] Later Congress won elections in December 1976 and Madhav Singh Solanki became Chief Minister.^{[32][33]} A year later Madhav Singh Solanki resigned and again Babubhai Patel led Janata Party formed the government. He shifted his cabinet to Morbi for six months during 1979 Machchhu dam failure disaster which resulted in large casualties.^[35]

Janata Morcha government was dismissed and president's rule was imposed in 1980 even though it had majority. Later Madhav Singh Solanki led INC won the election in 1980 and formed the government which completed five years in office. Amarsinh Chaudhary succeeded him in 1985 and headed government till 1989. Solanki again became chief minister until INC lost in 1990 election following Mandal commission protests. Chimanbhai Patel came back to power in March 1990 as the head of a Janata Dal -Bharatiya Janata Party coalition government. Coalition broke just few months after in October 1990 but Chimanbhai Patel managed to retain majority with support of 34 INC legislatures. Later Patel joined the INC and continued till his death in February 1994. Chhabildas Mehta succeeded him and continued till March 1995. In 1994 plague endemic broke out in Surat resulting in 52 deaths.^[36]

Following the rise of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at centre, Keshubhai Patel led BJP won in 1995 assembly election. Keshubhai Patel became the chief minister of Gujarat in March but resigned eight months later as his colleague Shankersinh Vaghela revolted against him. BJP was split as Rashtriya Janata Party was formed by Vaghela who became the Chief Minister by support of INC. Assembly was dissolved in 1998 as INC withdrew its support. BJP returned to power led by Patel in 1998 assembly elections and he became the chief minister again.^[37] In 1998, a severe tropical cyclone hit Kandla port and Saurashtra and Kutch regions.^[38]

2000–present

Gujarat was hit with a devastating earthquake on 26 January 2001 which claimed a staggering 20,000 lives, injured another 200,000 people and severely affected the lives of 40 million of the population. Patel resigned as chief minister in October 2001 due to his failing health. Allegations of abuse of power, corruption and poor administration; as well as a loss of BJP seats in by-elections and mismanagement of relief works during the aftermath of the 2001 Bhuj earthquake, prompted the BJP's national leadership to seek a new candidate for the office of chief minister. He was replaced by Narendra Modi.^{[39][40][41]} In February 2002, Godhra train burning triggered statewide riots which resulted in large number of casualties and economic loss.^[42] In September 2002, there was a terrorist attack on Akshardham temple complex at Gandhinagar.^[43] Modi led BJP won December 2002 election with majority.



Aftershocks, 2001 Gujarat earthquake – yellow star marks epicentre

In 2005 and 2006, Gujarat was affected by floods. In July 2008, a series of 21 bomb blasts hit Ahmedabad, within a span of 70 minutes. 56 people were killed and over 200 people were injured in the attack.^{[44][45][46]} 2009 Gujarat hepatitis outbreak resulted in 49 deaths. In July 2009, more than 130 people died in mooch tragedy.^[47]

Narendra Modi led BJP retained power in 2007 and 2012 assembly elections. Anandiben Patel became the first women Chief Minister of Gujarat on May 22, 2014 as Narendra Modi left the position following win in Indian general election, 2014.^[48] He was sworn in as the second Prime Minister of Gujarati origin after Morarji Desai in May 2014. Heavy rain in June and July 2015 resulted

in widespread flooding in Saurashtra and north Gujarat resulting in more than 150 deaths. The wild life of Gir Forest National Park and adjoining area was also affected.^{[49][50][51]} Starting July 2015, the people of Patidar community carried out demonstrations across the state seeking Other Backward Class status which turned violent on 25 August and 19 September 2015 for brief period.^[52] The agitation continued and again turned violent in April 2016.^[53] In late 2016, Dalits protested across Gujarat in response to an assault on Dalit men in Una.^{[54][55]} Following heavy rain in July 2017, the state, especially north Gujarat, was affected by the severe flood resulting in more than 200 deaths.^[56]

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