

Want to remain healthy in a diverse atmosphere? Then

FOLLOW THE OLD TRADITIONS OF OUR ELDERS



**A study on food, clothing, shelter, and
climate of various areas of Kutch**



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Welcome initiative...

In Kutch, having a long history of natural calamities, the simple lifestyle developed by our forefathers has largely been forgotten amidst the many scarcities, including water scarcity, on account of drought and semi-famine conditions. However, if we ask truly, in today's climate change era, we can learn and imitate these traditions of the old lifestyle. Thus, this study of adapting lifestyle suitable to changing atmosphere, especially ancient traditions of food, clothing, and shelter, becomes very much praiseworthy and welcoming.

-Kirti Khatri

“Sarvey Santu Niramaya”

Food, clothing and shelter: These are the three basic requirements of human life. Our mother nature has already made arrangements to fulfill each of these requirements. Just as, the nature has made arrangements to meet the needs of the child, even before its birth, from the time the child is in womb; similarly, our nature is capable for making proper arrangements for each living being on the earth. Along with religion, our ancestors were in accordance with nature; which is why they always remained dependent on nature for the satisfaction of any needs and, the nature fulfilled all their needs equally. Our elders ensured that all processes were followed in time - meals, sleep, working hours; everything was followed in routine. Whatever was available naturally in each season was used as food, including forest products in diet, using various grains and pulses. This principle was also applied for clothing and shelter. Natural materials were used in clothing and the construction of buildings. And, on account of this, our ancestors always maintained their health, even in changing climatic conditions. Even, at the age of hundred, they had full teeth and strength in their legs.

But today, the situation is different. Not just the climate and atmosphere, but also the food, man-made clothing and buildings construction has disregarded nature, which have effected the entire lifecycle. Effects are occurring on health of human beings and mother earth. According to the rule, “Yat Pide Tat Brahmande”, the nature is giving us back, what we have given to the nature. We have polluted the nature, and on account of this, our body is being polluted with diseases. It is not that the present generation is not following traditions of our elders; and that is why, there is one such class that calls the natural lifestyle of our elders as “sustainable living”. Today's youth is reverting to nature for food, clothing and shelter. The concept of recycling is being accepted. But, all this is happening on very small scale; it is essential that every human being follows these systems. To cope with changing circumstances and diverse climates, it is better to remain commensurable with the nature. Follow this book - adopt the traditions of our elders in life and remain healthy. “Sarvey Santu Niramaya”.

-Nishtaben Thacker, Bhuj

Introduction

One of the best idiom in Gujarati is that, “pahelu sukh te jate narya”, (first happiness is to remain self healthy) and our elders understood this and also adopted it. As we all face climate change today, our ancestors also faced the same. But, the only difference is that we use sophisticated tools; whereas our ancestors used natural resources and products and showed their foresight sense by acclimatising their food, shelter and clothing with the nature. This report contains extensive information about how our ancestors protected themselves and the environment in extreme climate and how we can keep ourselves and forthcoming generation safe in the changing climate by following these customs, processes and traditions.

This report is prepared keeping the Kutch region as the focus; as the Kutch region is known for its diversity. For preparing this study report, the three areas, i.e., Central Kutch, desert area of Kutch and coastal area of Kutch, have been intensively studied. The report covers the basic human requirements, “roti-kapada-makan” (food-clothing-shelter) and studied various methods for maintaining one's health during the winter, summer and monsoon of earlier times and efforts to show how and in which proportion these can be followed in the present times. The report has received ample support from citizens of various communities of Kutch in its preparation which is acknowledged with due respect.

Identity of any area emerges because of citizens of that area; and this reflects in the lives of the people. The representatives of folk life, social leaders, experts of Kutch culture, historians and leaders of community were met directly or indirectly; all supplementary information for this report has been collected by the researcher. This report is written by covering various social, economic and religious facets of the society, giving priority to the geography of Kutch and covering both the rural and urban areas.



Kutch District

Kutch is an arid or semi-arid region, having vast geographical area, situated on the western border of the Indian state of Gujarat. The total area of Kutch region is 45,612 sq. km. The Arabian sea is situated on the southern and western sides of Kutch, and on the northern and eastern sides lies a vast desert area. Disparities are evident in the climate, such as, the temperature reaches zero degree in winter and opposite to this, 40 to 45 degrees temperature is evident in summer. As Kutch is surrounded by sea and desert, both cold and heat are diverse here. Due to scanty rain, Kutch faces drought frequently; it is jokingly said that, here there are four seasons, instead of three seasons, - winter, summer, monsoon and drought. A general study shows that, on an average, Kutch receives good rain or hundred percent of season's rainfall once in three years.

Taking into consideration the vast geography of Kutch, this study has been carried out by dividing the region into three geographic regions; in which Bhuj, Anjar, Nakhatrana (Central Kutch), Banni, Pachham, Rapar, Khadir, Pranthal, Bhachau (Kutch desert areas) and Lakhpat, Abadasa, Mandvi, Mundra (Coastal areas of Kutch), considering the local religious and social facets.

In the present days, medical services are very expensive, general public cannot afford these. In such circumstances, vigilance is better than sickness and that is why, it is said that *“Pahelu Sukh Te Jate Narya”*, (first happiness is to remain self healthy). Healthy and strong individuals keep the society healthy and strong, and through the society, the nation becomes healthy and strong. Keeping this centralised thought in focus, this study has been undertaken with reference to food, clothing and shelter from the perspective of Kutch.



Practice of consuming seasonal food

- In the earlier times, people were using traditional grains and paddy, which were grown and ripened naturally, according to their own environmental cycle, acclimatising with the local climate. In Kutch, mainly bajra, jowar, ratad, korad, barley were used. Middle class and wealthy people of Kutch were able to use wheat. It is also found that poor people were using ratad and nagli, and in some families, consumption of ragi was also evident.
- Majority of local people were using bajra more; because bajra is such a grain that can be eaten individually, no supplementary item is required along with it. Generally, the consumption of vegetables was negligible. Majority of people were using butter milk and curd along with rotla



(round thick loaf) prepared from various millets. Whenever vegetables and pulses were used at that time, mainly mung (green grams), korad, guar, brinjals, or desi chana were used.

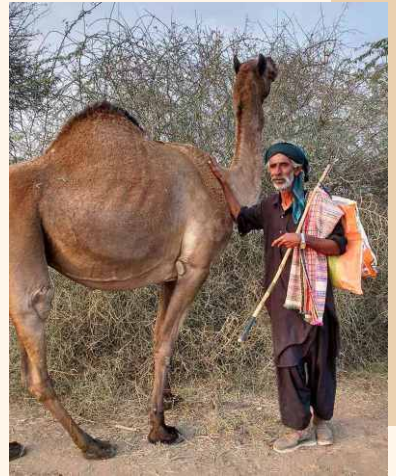
- In evenings, majority of people consumed khichdi with curry, rotla, pickles, butter milk, onions, as per their economic conditions. In morning breakfast, rotla with milk, butter or tea and in noon, rotla or roti, chutney (sauce), pickles were consumed, along with onions, in

summers and jaggery, in winter.

- Main diet of cattle rearers in Banni and Pachham was milk, butter, butter milk, ghee, curd, etc. Along with these, they consumed rotla, roti or other grains; and sometimes they consumed rice also. In case of good monsoon, they consumed vegetables grown naturally in the forests. Approximately, 90 to 100 years earlier, local people cultivated different types of grasses such as Chichni or Chuchni, Mandhanu, Sav or Sau, Dhrabad, Munno or Munnu, Danai or Daanai, Kunnai or Kunni, etc., grown naturally in the region and adapted to the local climate; the seeds were separated and processed in hand mill to prepare roti of its flour. Rice or khichdi was prepared from Sav or Sau; which was eaten with butter, butter milk, ghee, milk and curd. The seeds of these natural grasses were readily available and in abundance, and did not cost a fortune. Since the residential area were far away in the hinterlands, grains sold in market were not easily available. Also, the economic conditions of people was not such that they could purchase all the grains, as per their requirements.
- Cereal or paddy, mainly bajra; thereafter jowar, wheat, ratad, korad were used. Earlier, wheat was expensive, so cheaper grains such as bajra, jowar; also sindhi red rice and mung beans were used. Vegetables were eaten rarely. Guar, potato, onion and vegetables grown in forest during monsoon were used.
- In Vagad area, roti from wheat was prepared in wealthy families of big villages; remaining people hardly used wheat once or twice in a year. Roti, chutney (sauce), butter milk, onion were main diet of poor people. Pulses are hardly used. Vegetables are also rarely used. Bajra was the main diet of people of Rapar-Khadir area. Traders and wealthy class consumed surplus rotla or khichdi of previous night with milk or butter in the morning breakfast. In the afternoon meal, rotla, mung

dal, butter milk; once vegetable was prepared in lieu of dal. Especially, in winter, brinjals and other vegetables of the season were eaten. Except for Jains, vegetables prepared from potato and onion were eaten. Dinners remains fixed; consisted of khichdi, milk, rotla, and sometimes butter milk or curry.

- In the coastal areas such as Lakhpatt and Abadasa, because of cattle rearing, mostly milk was used as main diet. Most of the time, Fakirani Jat roamed with camels in forests or along the coastal areas. When no other grains or paddy were available as such, one had to depend on milk. If fish is available at the sea coast, it would be fried on wood and consumed. Except for Fakirani Jat, Kharva and fishermen, no other people consumed fish. Their main diet was milk, ghee, butter milk with bajra, ratad, and chutney of red chillies. As there was shortage of grains, grains were grinded coarsely and added to buttermilk to prepare daryo (gruel) to be eaten in the night; it was also used as morning breakfast. Daily routine of people was physically exerting; on account of animal husbandry, farming, fetching water and household works, they were facing shortage of time as well as tools, vegetables such guar (vetch) and choli were boiled and eaten with little oil and handy spices.
- People of Chinkara sanctuary of Lakhpatt and some areas of Banni, were consuming jowar, ratad, rice dust (waste) and red chilli chutney and buttermilk in their daily diet. The economic condition of majority of Wagher fishermen was very poor; their old diet was fish with grain or millets, ratad, jowar. In lunch, they consumed rotla prepared from ratad or jowar, chutney, onion or jaggery and buttermilk with fish. In the evening/night, very poor people ate gruel made from ratad and jowar; and other people made gruel of mung.
- During famine, Kutch people faced acute shortage of food grains; they did not get food. But potable water was available. They used to get water by digging pits in the banks of dry river bed or wells. Information available from the elders was that, during the famine of year Samvat 1996, that is, 80 years ago, people survived by cutting date palm and kharek trees in river bed and ate the inside kernel for food.



“Daryo” - 'Emergency window' for the poor

All members of any poor family had to fill their stomachs with the available amount of grains only. As a result, if roti was prepared from the available grains, then only two to three person could eat it. The solution for this problem was preparation of “Daryo”! Whatever grain was available, it was coarsely grinded and the prepared flour was poured in butter milk or milk, whatever was available, and “Daryo” (Gruel-like item) was prepared; from this, six to eight persons could eat full stomach. Therefore, people of that period called Daryo as an emergency window.



Methods for keeping body cool during the summers

- To get relief from heat in summers, maximum use of thick buttermilk and onion was made. Apart from these, date water, jaggery water, tamarind water and water of black grapes soaked in night was consumed in the morning. Moreover, takmariya seeds (similar to chia seeds) and sugarcane were used.
- Poor class consumed rotla made from bajra-jowar with buttermilk, onion



and pickles of mango and bijora in lunch. Middle class and wealthy people consumed onion, butter milk, salad of raw mango and onion, pickles of gunda and bijora with rotla or roti. Eating desi melon with sugar and cardamom was cooling. Consuming curd also provided relief to heat. Gruel prepared by adding buttermilk in jowar also provided protection from heat. As bajra produced heat, jowar and wheat were consumed more. Water stored in an earthen vessel or jug was consumed. Roots of a grass named “Valo” were tied in a piece of cloth and immersed in water kept in the earthen vessel; this made water fragrant and cool.

- Apart from these, small remedies were taken to keep the coolness, such as, napkins or cloth soaked in water were kept on head. Sleeping in the open or under a tree at night. Sleeping on pillows and mattresses sprinkled with water. In the month of Chaitra, juice of

tender leaves of bitter neem tree was drunk. Kajal or surmo was applied in eyes. Mats prepared from khas (one type of fragrant grass) was suspended on windows and water was sprinkled from time to time to allow cool wind to flow inside. Similarly, old bed sheets and clothes soaked in water were suspended on windows.

Methods for keeping body warm during winter season

- During the winter season, mostly, consumption of bajra is started on a daily basis. Bajra is also used in gruel and kuler type of recipes along with bajra rotla. Simultaneously, use of garlic chutney and jaggery is also increased in diet. Various types of decoction (kara) are consumed in cold as they are counted as sure remedies for cough and cold. Use of sugar is reduced and jaggery is used almost in every item, even tea prepared with jaggery was drunk. Middle class and wealthy people used katlu, goond (gum) pak, jaggery cake, asediya pak and gum. Dates soaked in ghee were eaten. Gruel of asediya was very much useful in getting protection from cold. Honey was also used.
- In Muslim community, use of mutton, fish and eggs increased. In winter, water was kept in copper pots, so that water does not get too cold and remains free from insects.
- Other remedies for keeping body warm was to take direct sunshine; take heat from firewood, wrap handmade thick blankets in night and sleep together so as to get the warmth from each other; such efforts were made. Some people took body massage with sesame or rapeseed oil in the morning and bathe with hot water; this saved them from problems of skin drying or tearing.

Special remedy to protect against cold, “RADO”

- The people of Jat community in Banni, used to prepare a special medicine known as “Rado”, to prevent cold and fever during winter and monsoon. Mr. Abdul Gafoor Aamoorbhai Jat of village Mota Sarad informed that 1 kg sugar and 250 grams of local garlic was added to five kg of milk and boiled; and after it becomes cream like mushy and cools, it was filled in a container and eaten in small quantities every morning. In this way, the prepared “Rado” was best medicine for cold.



A Common Matter for Kutch

- One common matter of all villages of Kutch, whether situated in hinterland of desert or villages of coastal area, near to nature, like forest, mountain, desert, residential areas near sea, was that when these areas received good rains, leafy vegetables, such as marilo, mushrooms, lolar (one type of spinach), kotimba, melon, watermelons, muskmelons, kantola, gol or goldo, kera (dora), kundher, gondhiya, dudhiya, gunda, vandela, etc., grew naturally in desolate land, and were used as vegetables. During monsoons, kotimba, guar and khijada seedy beans (fallis) were collected in quantities, dried and stored and vegetables were prepared from these for 3 to 4 months, as per the number of members in the family.
- Guar beans were dried and used for twelve months by boiling them or deep frying them and making its wafers. With production of Ker being high in March, its pickle was prepared with turmeric-salt water and used in daily meals. The use of Ker was beneficial for stomach health. In April, khijada pods were also used in diet.
- Information related to use of forest and seasonal products, such as Gangi, Kundher, Looskha, Gangni, Gugal, Chimed, Piluni Kokadi, Ker, Kerdo, Pilu, Lai, Bordi, Bhangro, Chiyana, Liyar, Chani Bor, small teti of Pipli tree, Khijdo or Kandho was obtained from local people. During some personal household visits, some people emphasised use of this seasonal produce. Majority of these products were available in rural areas, and people of urban areas of Kutch purchased these from market for use.



Methods for preservation of grains – cereals in earlier period



- The ways in which natural products were used as food; food was also preserved in the same way. Earlier, grains were cleaned and filled in earthen cylindrical vessels and covered tightly with cloth over the lid, so that moisture does not affect the grains. Whenever grains were required to be taken out, one hole was kept above the bottom of the bin; it was closed with clean cloth; this cloth was removed to take the grains and the hole was properly closed again.
- If there was bajra or jowar in grains, then ash of fireplace was mixed. No other medicine, chemical or mercury was added; fireplace ash was anti bacterial as such, which prevented pests and did not spoil the grains.
- There was a different method for pulses like mung, korad, etc. Here ash was not used, but the clay bin was first filled with pulses and then a two to three inches thick layer of sand was placed on top of it, so that no air reached the pulses and prevented them from spoiling. Since pulses were to be taken out from the bottom, the top sand does not get into it. In this way, grains were preserved throughout the year.

Key features of residences in various areas of Kutch

- If we talk of the earlier period, then mostly houses were made from materials such as mud clay coating, country tiles, grass, etc., as these buildings were suitable for the cold and hot climate of Kutch. These clay building had big wooden beam which provided support to ceiling or roof prepared from bamboo chips or country tiles. Filtered cool air came from country tiles. Since the country tiles are made of clay, they did not become much hot and provided relief in heat. And walls of houses were made much thicker than the present walls. Mud gar (paste) is coated on the front and rear portion of stone walls so that the building provide relief during both the hot and cold seasons. Whereas present buildings are made of cement and steel, these are more heated. Plaster coating applied on walls and floor wss prepared by mixing cow dung, clay and water. As the plaster coating consists of cow dung which is anti bacterial, insects never occur. Some people also used horse and donkey dung.
- In construction of old buildings, hot lime was used in lieu of cement. Lime is more durable than cement and gives more coolness. Also height of ceiling of the building was kept 15 feet or more, so that air circulated freely and there could be relief from heat.
- In earlier period, space was kept between two houses at the rear side, which was called “*chhitri*” or “*vicheni*”; it was important for air and light. It is not available in present multi-storey buildings and row houses.



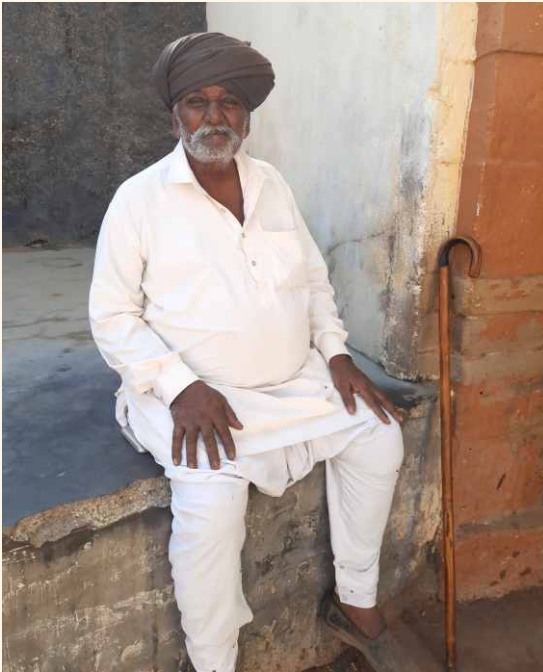
- In Banni area, mainly Bhungas (huts) were made of coating of clay and mud and ceiling from Dharab (grass). Coolness remained in the bhunga, even in severe summers. Temperature inside the bhunga is very low. Similarly, there is warmth inside the bhunga during winters. This means, that it will not be cold in winter and rain water will not come inside during monsoon. Moreover, it is 100 percent earthquake-proof. The Bhungas in Rapar, Prantha areas of Wagad are slightly different from Khadir areas.
- In the mud bhunga, a raised earthen platform is made; on which the building is constructed with brick masonry work. In the ceiling wooden beam is kept and ceiling is made by filling the grass. Grass is tied with horizontal – vertical wooden logs, for which, branches of trees of Ankado, Tankaro, Kheep, Kerad and Zar (Peeloo or Liyari) were used. These bhungas were made in square and round in shape.
- The Jat people of Banni prepared bhunga by using wood only; in the local language it is called “utaro” or “pakha”. To get protection from rainy water and insects, a wooden platform is prepared on hilly land, on which the wooden structure is constructed and ceiling is made from Dharab grass. Separate bhungas were constructed in their residences for kitchen, seating and sleeping purposes.
- Clay and wood were also used in Pachham area. The speciality here was that for applying plaster on walls, powder of corn millet was mixed with clay and construction was done with this. In other types of buildings, masonry work was done with bricks prepared by mixing lake clay and powder of corn millet and powder of other grains. For making ceiling on wooden structure, jute was kept on Dharab grasses and ceiling was prepared. So that building remained cool and rainy water slipped away and stopped entering into bhunga.
- In the matter of buildings, the bhunga in Rapar-Khadir of Wagad area were different from the bhungas of Banni and Pachham area. As much stone is available in Wagad-Rapar-Khadir and certain areas of Lakhpat, Abadasa and Nakhatrana, 90% of walls were made from stone; on which, country tiles were used for making ceiling. 10% people of Koli or backward class and people of very interior area used clay for constructing walls.



- In building construction in the Bela area, sand named “lilvo” was used in masonry work of stone wall. Earlier lime was used in construction, similarly this lilvo sand is used in masonry work. This type of lilvo sand was available only from some mines in some areas of Bela.
- Bhungas of Fakirani Jat of Lakhpat and Abadasa or somewhat were different. Complete house, i.e., Bhunga, made from grass, wood, woodboard and vegetation/trees, is called Pakha in Fakirani Jat language. Here ceiling on the wall and floor were made only from grass, wood and vegetation/trees. Fakirani Jat people never reside permanently at one place, i.e., when they are required to move to other place, they will dismantle the Pakha and take with them. Moreover Bhungas were also prepared by using Dir, Kal, Kheep or Kheepdo, Lai, Millet, Jowar husk. Coir rope type cord was made from Pan grass and tied with bamboo chips which provided strength to the bhunga. Mostly building of this community were of oblong shape. As this community used to graze their camels in Cheriya, their houses were mostly constructed near sea coast.
- Similarly in old period, Vagher fishermen of Mundra taluka made bhunga from a special grass named “kaa”. This “kaa” grass is tied with the help of coir rope to prepare bhunga with pre-dug wooden poles or bamboos. In old period, locals were prepared it themselves with their own labour by working on the grass; but at present, there is no such bhunga.
- In this way, earlier people developed various methods for making air-conditioned accommodations by properly using natural produces in conformity with the nature. However, in the present modern era, though facilities have increased on account of new methods, difficulties have also increased. Instead of getting natural air and light, we are making artificial efforts for accessing coolness and heat.



Key features of costumes in various areas of Kutch



- In the earlier period, dressing was such that it provided relief in cold and heat, was comfortable in working and maintained dignity of the culture of the society. Normally, clothes made from cotton and Khadi, such as Bhenso, Madarpat, Nayanclak (Nanclak) were corresponding to the weather. Except these, wearing clothes made from Saskin or Satin and Poplin in such a way that entire body was covered and were white in color mostly, such that effect of heat was less. Men wore Jabbho (long cloak), dhoti and black cap or turban on head, shirt-pyjama while ladies wore sarees and children wore half-pant and shirt or frock type clothes.
- Old clothes were not as soft as available at present; because work was labourious and were made from thick and strong Madharpat cloth; even if you had to seat anywhere, the cloth was so strong that it will not get torn. People of Patel community wore only one Bandi (jacket) type cloth, it was called as Kediya or Keradiya; under this there will be

Choyno-Choyni or Dhoti. Rabari women wore woollen clothes; it remained same in all the season.

- Earlier Nayanclak (Nanclak) (Bhenso) named cloth was available, which was costly, wealthy people wore it during special occasions; but now, this cloth is not available. Ladies wore sarees of Madhura cloth, which was of cotton. Patidar Patels wore sarees of Amravati which were of original cotton. Also use of Malmal (Muslin) and Raydi Malmal (Muslin) were also used.
- Clothes of Jat people of Banni were of black colour. Men wore dresses of black coloured long shirt (Sadaro) upto knee, a 5.5 meter length below and black coloured turban on head and Ajarakh on shoulder, which was prepared by Khatri people of Dhamdka village. Ladies wore self-embroidered Gajo and Kajri. Jat ladies wore nose rings and braid their hair; which was their special identity. The Khatri people of Dhamdka made maximum use of Malir, Ajarakh and cotton cloth. Some people went to Gujarat for trading bullocks; they used to bring long coats from there to wear in winters.



- Normally, people of that period had tolerance to overcome adversity. Therefore, instead of purchasing clothes like warm coat, sweater, they knew how to protect themselves naturally from cold and heat by wearing scarf-muffler so that ears, nose, face and head were covered and would provide relief in all seasons. In winters for getting protection from cold, thick woollen dhuns, khatta and also home-made rugs made of cotton cloth, Adhiyo and Kamlo were used. Moreover in order to get protection from cold, they wore two pairs simultaneously, i.e., double pairs. Earlier, there was a method of making rugs from old clothes. Financially sound people used various woollen clothes.

Present period dietary changes

- As per the information regarding changes in the diet, mostly, nothing has remained as per earlier period. All food products such as grains, vegetables, milk, oil are of sub-standard quality, produced unnaturally and without nutrition. Now, millet, jowar, ratad and korad is not consumed or very less is eaten. Instead of these, wheat has become the main. Earlier rice was rarely eaten, and that too red rice coming from Sindh, which is now not available. Earlier, there was sweetness in the grains; it is not in today's artificially produced grains.
- In comparison to the earlier period, population has increased many fold; at present, production of milk type product is done artificially. Milking of cow is done by giving compulsory injections. This is not only harmful to the cows, but it is also harmful to all of us who are drinking such milk.
- Earlier grains or cereals were grinded in home in mill, so the nutritional elements were preserved. Presently, flour grinded in the chakki or mill is made very thin; on account of grinding grain with speed, it becomes very hot and thin and the nutrition remained therein is destroyed. Grandfathers were eating Sav or Sau, Chichani, Dhrabad grass seeds in place of grains. Seeds were separated from the grass and were grinded in Jandhar (handmill) and eaten by making Roti or rab (gruel). Now availability of such grass is very rare, and even if available, no one is prepared to undertake the labour.
- Aged Maldharis of Banni said that earlier cows-buffalos ate naturally grown grass and various nutritional grasses and were giving sweet milk; but now, cows are given artificially made Khol (oil cake) and Bhunso (husk) type diet resulting in milk without any quality. On account of consuming such diet, at present, weakness and presence of various diseases are common in the people. Our disease resistance power is diminishing.



“Earlier grains were naturally sweet - when kept in mouth, it had taste, sweetness and there was nutrition with wholesome essence. Whereas nowadays, there is neither taste nor nutrition. If we are eating today's grains, we feel that we are eating grass. Not only this, even in non vegetarian food, such as fish, sea food, there is not earlier type of fun in quantity or taste”.

Elders of Fakirani Jat people informed with grief that, camel milk, which was most sattvic, nutritional and drunken in large quantity, therefore, people remained healthy! However, the present generation say that they do not like the taste of camel milk and it is very heavy in digestion; if the present generation is not in a position to digest the camel milk, then how they will get protection from dangerous diseases?

Climatic changes

- Changes are evident in the climate, especially as per the information received from people. At present, the proportion of temperature has increased very much in comparison to the temperature of earlier 70-80 years. Earlier, while summers were hot, but there was relief on account of vegetation. There were no appliances like fans due to lack of electricity. Even hand fans were enough for providing relief from heat. On account of changes in climate, some people complain that they feel uncomfortable even in air-conditioning. On account of humid heat, items are prone to spoiling and loss of crispiness.
- Earlier, there were good numbers of trees; on account of which, people got relief by sitting under the shade of trees. Over time, the consumption of wood and human selfishness led to massive deforestation on large scale, resulting in soil erosion, irregularity in rainfall and the entire cycle of biodiversity has been effected.
- Earlier, even though there were no appliances like refrigerators; vegetables or other items did not get spoilt. However, at present on account of chemical farming, grains and vegetables spoil quickly. Nuisance of insects and mosquitoes has increased very immensely. On account of which, diseases which were never heard before are forthcoming.
- In present period, we all are witnessing that there is no fixed period for season. In Kutch, mostly heat prevails. There is irregularity in rain; sometimes experiencing famine for four to five years; on the other hand, problems due to excessive rain occurs on account of torrential rain. Sometimes it is cold in night and there are rains with heat during the day; we all have seen these three types of season. Which is really very astonishing. Since the earthquake in Kutch, the average quantum of rainfall has increased in last twenty years. Whereas in the earlier period, famines were occurring frequently. But if we talk of present, then since last year, in the beginning of 2021, it has rained almost every month.
- On account of increase in quantum of temperature, effects are also noticed on animals; animals are not getting proper fodder; no grasslands are remaining. Such situation has a profound effect on animal milk. Now it has become impossible to get pure milk as before; recently many people have started using milk packets.
- As result of changes in climate, today quantum of various types of diseases has increasing alarmingly. Health of people is not able to sustain small changes. Ailments are spreading very fast. Use of modern equipment is also not proving effective. Expenses for health are increasing continuously.

“In our villages, we made Nesada (wells); we were getting potable water from these; normally, it is salty water, but after rainfall, sweet water is also available from well. But nowadays, there is no timely rain; then how will sweet water be available in well?”

- Banni.

Changes in daily routine due to diverse climate changes

- In order to maintain body temperature, earlier people went to work mainly in morning till lunch time, and thereafter in the evening. During afternoon, they remained at home and took measures to protect body from heat. Local shops and markets were also kept closed during noon.
- As long as sunshine was available, they worked; during cold period they remained at home in the morning and evening. Changes in timing of market and shops were made accordingly.

Findings derived from information obtained from various areas of Kutch

- In comparison to bigger cities of Gujarat, our Kutch district has better climatic conditions. However, major changes have been observed in the atmosphere considering the situation prevailing eight to ten decades before, and atmosphere is changing very rapidly.
- Notable changes have occurred in the methods of consuming food by the people, which will become very much harmful to their health. Diet suitable for hot weather is taken in cold and diet suitable for cold is taken in heat. Entire summer, ice water is consumed treating it as cold, but actually the efficacy of ice is very hot. In summers, one should avoid use of vegetables like brinjals; however, at present, brinjals are eaten in the entire year. Moreover, cheese, paneer, bread and fermented items are consumed in higher quantity, which takes longer time in digestion; on account of which, diseases like obesity, stomach diseases, diabetes have taken over.
- Atmospheric changes are also noted in agriculture produces; interference of human have played an important role in this. During earlier period, harvesting of crops was done after giving sufficient time required for natural ripening and farming was done naturally; whereas in the fast food era, unnatural efforts are made for producing the agricultural rapidly. Earlier, vegetables like peas, radish, tuver (pulses), fenugreek were available in winter, which are now available for the entire year. Of course, such vegetables are not suitable for eating. In spite of this, these non-seasonal vegetables and fruits are used sufficiently. On account of these unnatural produce, various types of diseases are prevailing in humans.
- The environment of our Kutch district will become polluted in a short period on due to slow penetration of companies. At present, on account of production of poisonous gases and toxic water by the companies, serious effects have occurred on both atmosphere and fertility of land.

“

Summary

On basis of the findings of the above study, in the earlier period, food, environment, farming, immunity levels were very much healthy, whereas today's health is at threat at every stage. Effects of climate change are becoming more and more severe; on account of which, conditions of underprivileged groups are becoming more and more pitiful. Inequality is increasing; health-related problems are increasing; resources are running out.

If we want to see our forthcoming generations healthy, then we are required to follow the natural practices which our elders followed from now onwards; else it will be too late.

”

Lessons from elders' to the present generation

During the study, the elders emphasized on three main things to sustain themselves and stay healthy in the increasingly changing climate.

- If you want to keep your body sound and healthy, then one should avoid outside and packed food and eat simple and wholesome food at home, which is digestive. Always eat little less food than the hunger levels; keeping the necessary space for air and water does not cause stomach problems and body will remain energetic.
- Give definite place to exercise, walking and physical exertion in daily life; sedentary and restful life will ultimately invite many diseases in the body. The more exertion you give to body, the healthy the body will remain.
- Remaining awake late at night, unnecessarily use of mobile and less sleeping have serious effects on eyes, brain and heart. So sleep as much as possible so that the body will remain active during the day.

Valuable advice of elders worth remembering always

“If there is regularity in each stage of life, then you will always remain physically and mentally strong.”

Thanking



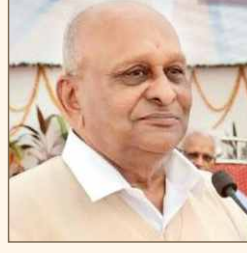
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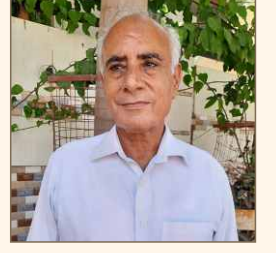
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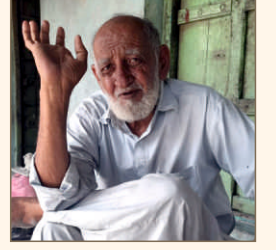
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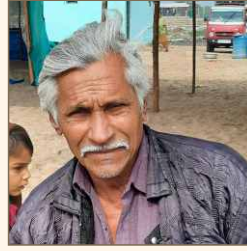
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Shri Lakhamaben Rabari, Julrai



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Shri Meghbhai Hari Gadhave, Kathda



Shri Osmanbhai Notiyar, Lakhpat



Shri Abdremanbhai Hingora, Abdasa



Shri Sarabai Ibrahim Vagher, Navinal



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Shri Umar Haji Suleman Jat, Jakhau



Shri Vela Uga Marvada, Bhirandiyara



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કચ્છીયત

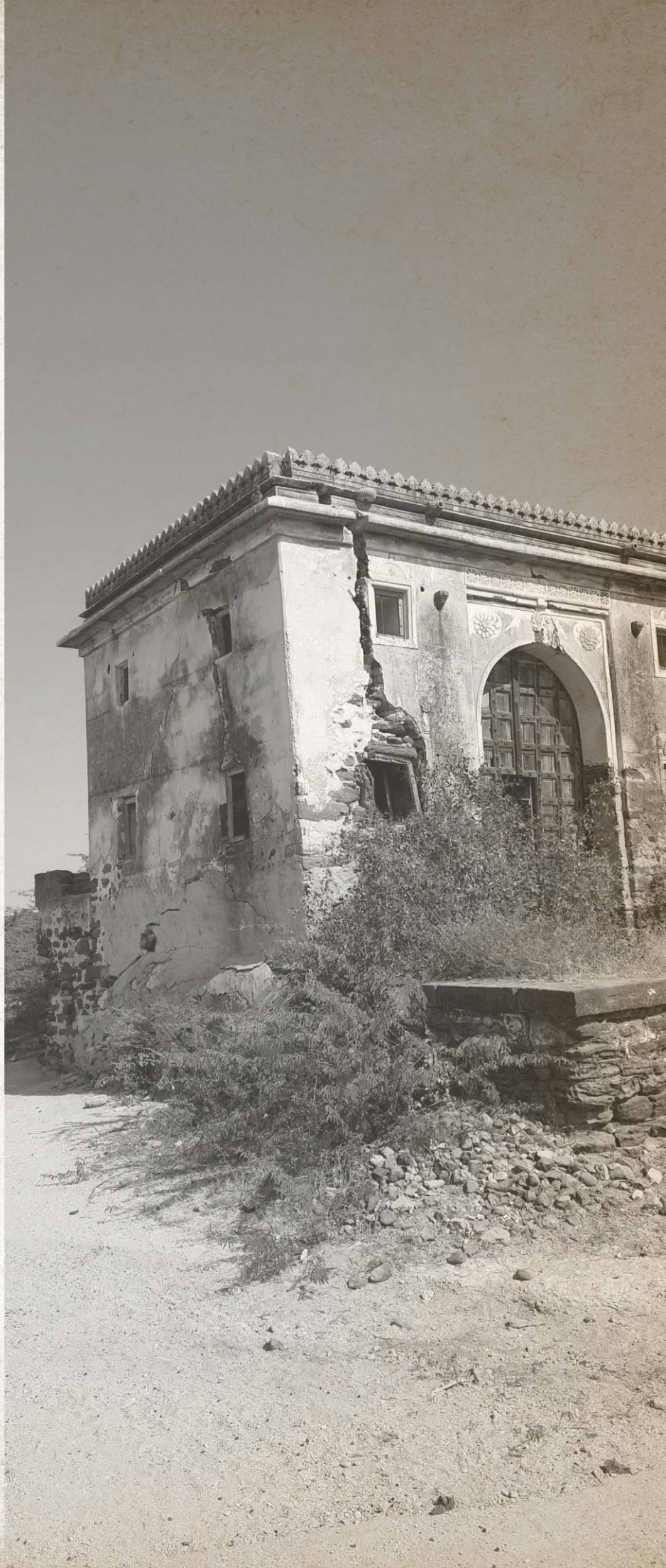
પીર, વીર ને ધીરની ધરતી,
ગરવી ને ગંભીર,
આંસુ અમરત -નીર
અહીંનો પરસેવો પણ ખીર !

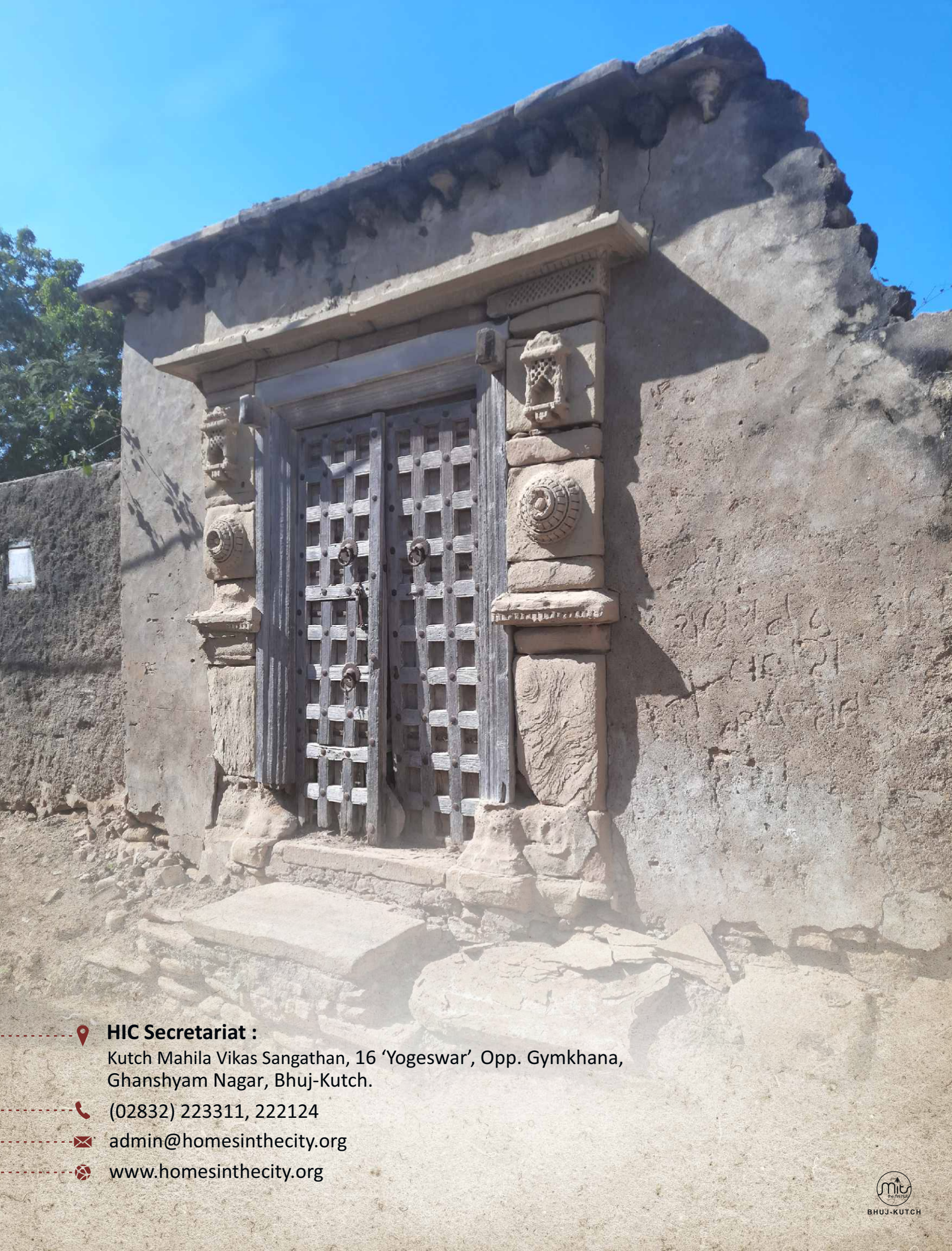
ભૂજિયો મંદિર ભુજંગનું
છે ખમતીધર ખડીર,
ધીંગો ઝારો ધરખમ
હાજરા-હજુર હાજીપીર !

જગડુ, જેસલ, જેઠીબા
મેકણ, મીર, હમીર;
ખૂટે ખજાના, પણ નાં ખૂટે
કચ્છડાની જાગીર !

મદોના આ મૂલકમાં મહેકે,
હિમત, હોશ, હીર;
ખલકમાં પાથરે ખુશ્બૂ,
ખાંખત, ખંત, ખમીર !

-પ્વાબ





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