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# Rejuvenation of Malguzari Tanks

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# Gond Kingdom – Early 18<sup>th</sup> century

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- Constructed during the period of Gond kingdom.
- It is mentioned that the Gond king went to Benaras for 'Kashi yatra' where he saw the skill of water management of 'Kohli' community & brought them to his kingdom.
- The 'Kohli' community was granted lands by king and to irrigate these lands they constructed these tanks

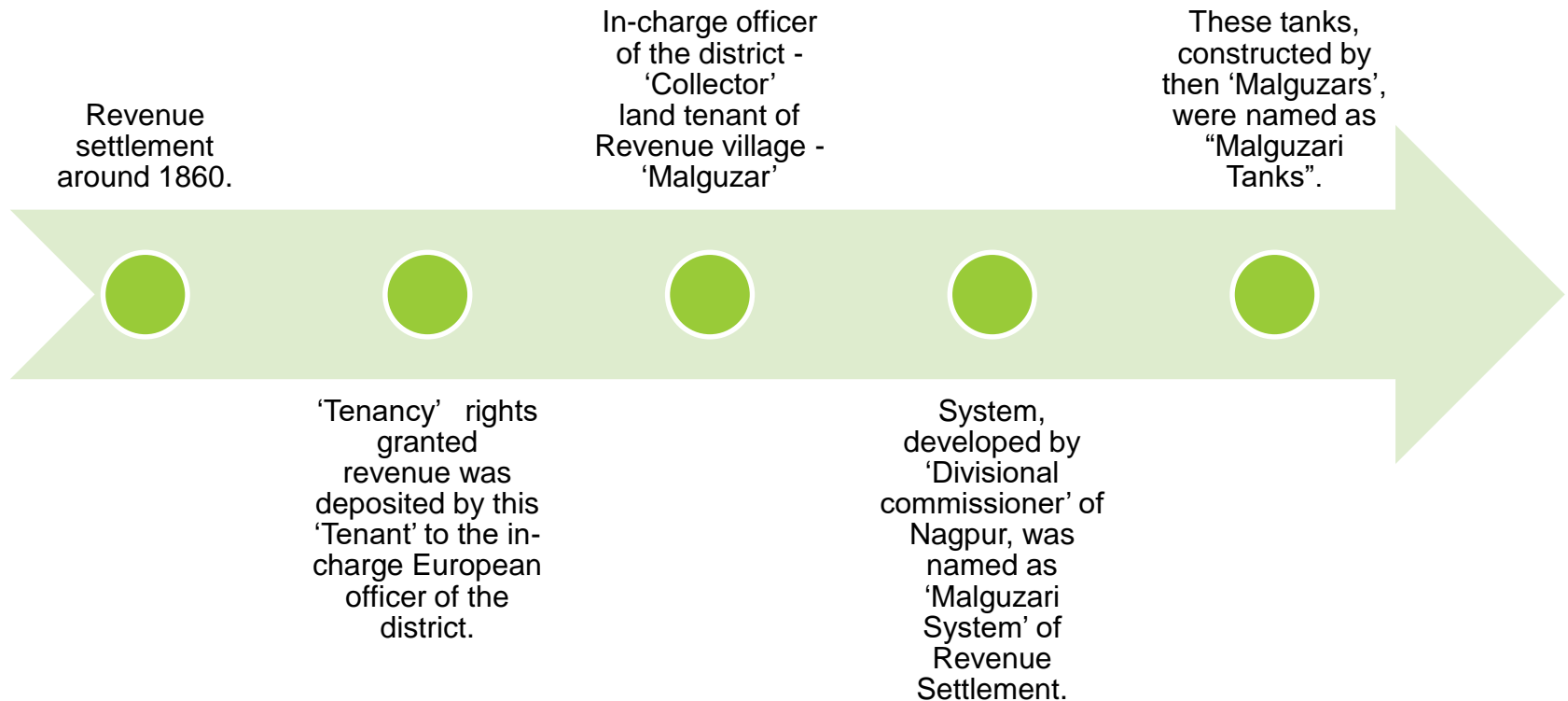
# Bhonsla Kingdom – Mid 18<sup>th</sup> century

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- The king had granted “free water Rights” to the community.
- These rights were subsequently protected by Bhosla kingdom
- There is due mention of this in ‘Wazib-ul-Arz’ OR ‘Records of Rights’ kept at village level.
- The community later on started growing sugarcane which used for making jaggery. The jaggery was used as barter for food grains during war campaign in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

# British Era – Early 19<sup>th</sup> century

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# Central Province and Berar

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- After Independence this area was part of Madhya Pradesh.
- In 1950, the then Madhya Pradesh Assembly passed 'Abolition of Malguzari' act.
- Then these Malguzari tanks were taken over by the state government
- Later on this area became a part of Maharashtra.

# Role of Maharashtra State Govt

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- In 1950, after taking over these tanks, Govt of Maharashtra opened a malguzari tank division at Gondia, for modernisation of these tanks.
- After modernization ,Govt. of Maharashtra started charging water cess to malguzari lands in command.
- Malguzar of “Navegaon Bandh” went to court and finally “Supreme court of India” decided in favour of malguzars and ruled that the Malguzars have free right over the water but didn’t lay down conditions for who should maintain these tanks
- More than 1000 tanks in the Vidarbha region bore the brunt of this decision and went unmaintained since then.

# Important Aspects of Malugazari tanks

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- A traditional system of irrigation.
- Only system in which land and water Rights are granted to stake holders.
- These tanks are constructed in series from Ridge to the valley and in some places there is a series of even 5/7 tanks in one valley.
- The underlying geological strata is porosive but the porosity is less.
- These tanks impound water through out the year which ensures sufficient ground water recharge.

# Rejuvenation - process

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The first step was to desilt the tank to remove the fine sand and earth that is carried by moving water and deposited as a sediment.

After the desilting was completed, the boundary wall of the tank was strengthened.

22 tanks have been desilted and the bankwork of dam has been strengthened. Also, the guide bunds to spill channel have been constructed.



# Methodology adopted for rejuvenation – W.R.D

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Preliminary survey for identification of heavily silted tanks with weak embankment.

Identification of such tanks to decide priority and survey of estimate preparation

Send papered the works under machinery deployment programme of 'Mechanical Organization'.

Approved by W.R.D Govt. of Maharashtra

Execution of work

# Rejuvenation - timeline

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- In year 2007 central ground water Board carried out study of geomorphology of the Bhandara district and recommended the rejuvenation of Malguzari tanks.
- In year 2008-09 minor irrigation division Bhandara of water resources department started the programme by using machinery of “mechanical organization” of department.
- The first tank that was restored in 2008 was the Jambhora Malguzari tank located 35 kms away from Bhandara.



# Janbhora tank in Bhandara District

First Malguzari tank to be rejuvenated

# Benefits of the restoration process

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Due to recharging of fresh water, groundwater levels and its quality improved considerably.

De-silting has resulted into increase in storage of tank which further helped to increase agricultural output and fish production

This enabled the farmers to grow two seasonal and perennial crops.

Employment levels have also increased because of this.

The silt from the Malguzari is rich in nitrogen and phosphorus and is used as manure thus cutting down the use of chemical fertilizers.

Creation of additional drinking water sources for animals has led to the reduction in man animal conflict in the region.

# Lessons to be learnt

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- The revival of the Malguzaari tanks has shown that there are cheaper and simpler methods for water conservation than the construction of big dams.
- Smaller projects such as this aren't as expensive and difficult to implement.
- The buy-in from the community and the ownership that the people feel can't be replicated with bigger state-run projects.

# Proposed Activity Chart

Activity	Department	Remarks
1. To carry out base line survey before starting the project.	1. Tata Institute of Social Science. 2. IIM Nagpur Students / Project.	1. Human Development Index of Beneficiary Village. 2. Per Capita Income
2. Ground Water Quality and Ground Water Level.	G.S.D.A. to conduct survey and testing.	Establish Observation Wells and to Establish Accuracy in Data.
3. To Carry out Khus and Bamboo plantation.	Social Forestry	The activity can be taken up under MGNREGA on submergence line.

Continued...

# Proposed Activity Chart

Activity	Department	Remarks
4. Fisheries development by constructing Mogra bandh and Rearing pond.	1. District fisheries development officer through fisheries co-operative society	1. This work is already approved under MGNREGA
5. a) Develop Spirulina Cultivation b) Gobar Gas Plant (Domestic)	1. D.R.D.A. through self help groups of Women of beneficiary village.	1. To train SHG and launch the program.
6. Dairy Development	1. District Dairy Development Officer	1. To strengthen the dairy industry.

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Thank You

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