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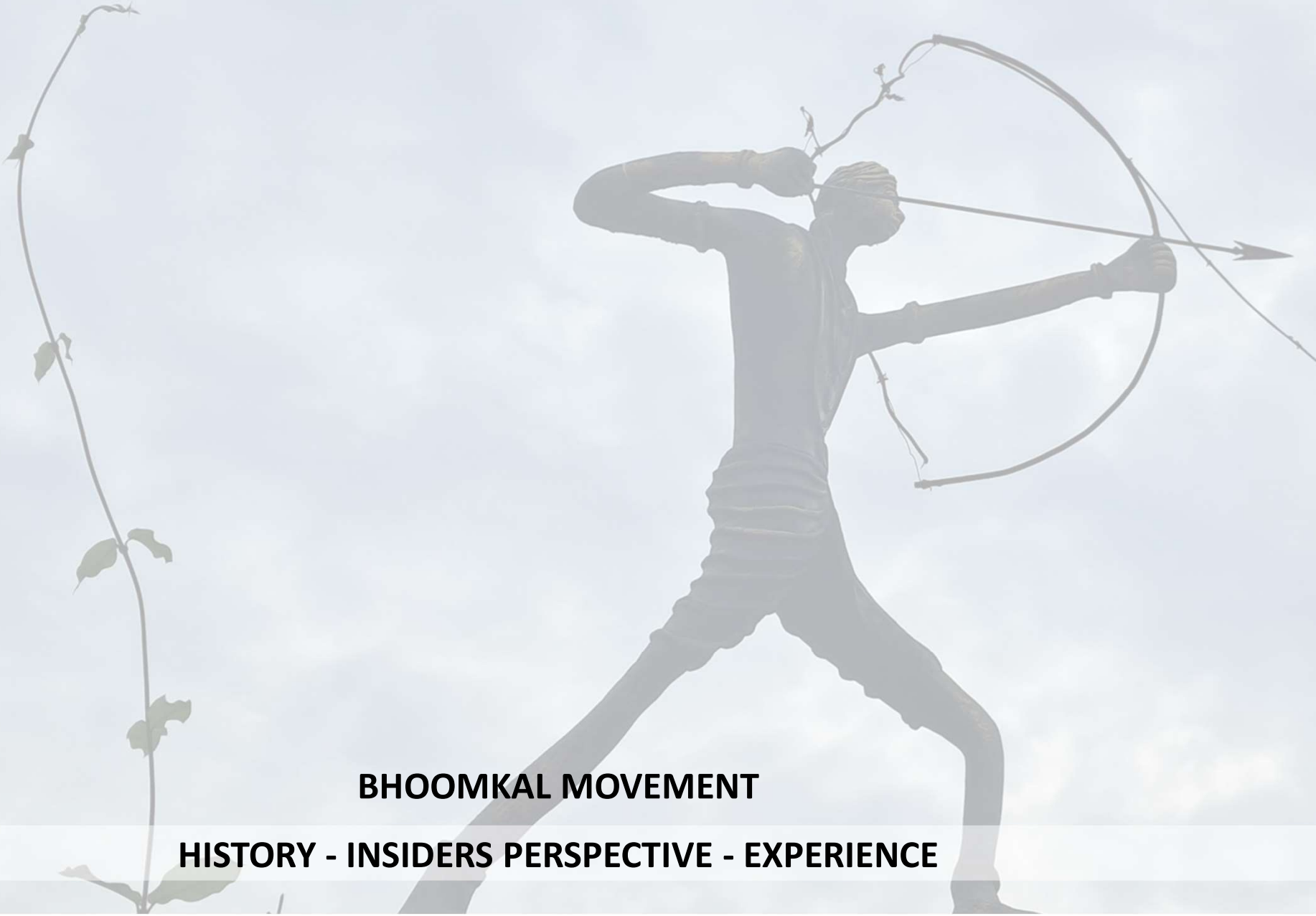
Development of National Tribal Freedom Fighter Museum at Garudeshwar, Rajpipla



BHOOMKAL MOVEMENT

HISTORY - INSIDERS PERSPECTIVE - EXPERIENCE

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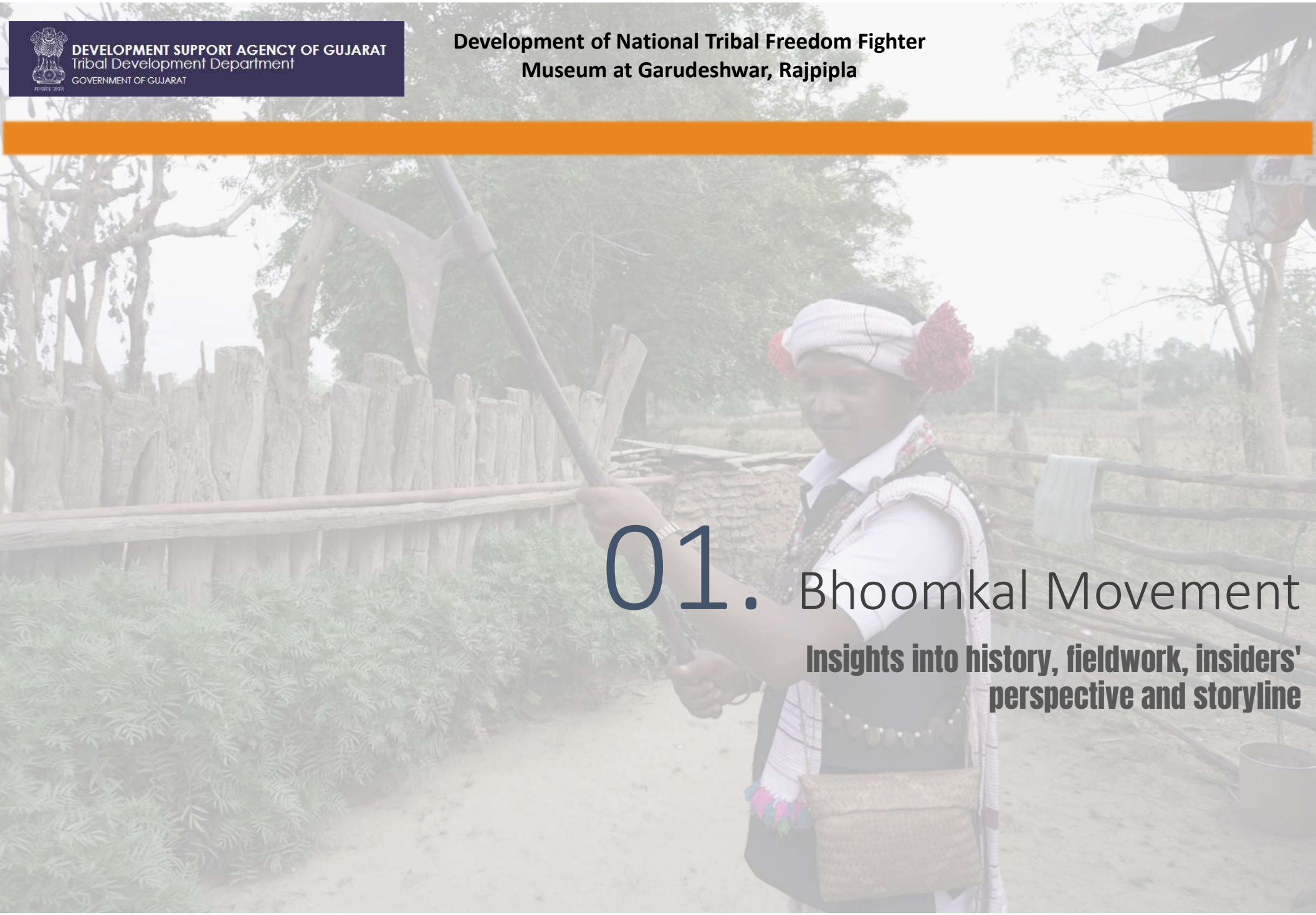

01. Bhoomkal Movement

Insights into history, fieldwork, insiders' perspective and storyline

Tribal Freedom Movements

- The tribal communities across India were the first to offer resistance to the British East India Company and later to the British Crown.
- From 1778 to 1947, the tribal communities have resisted the alien colonial ecosystem being enforced by the British Empire through their civil, military, judicial, education, etc. policies.
- The contribution of the tribal communities has been overshadowed by the mainstream narrative of the freedom of India.

AIM

- The NTFFM aims to exhibit, educate, and disseminate on the history of the Tribal Freedom Movements.
- NTFFM aims to present recognition to the communities and its heroes for their contribution in the freedom of India.
- The primary aim of the NTFFM is present the history from the perspective of the respective communities.

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Major Tribal Movements of India

National Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum, Gujarat

Major Tribal Movements of India

Sr. No.	Name of State	Zone	Movement	Name of Leader	Year	Tribe
1	Gujarat	West	Naikda Movement	Raja Rup Sinh Nayak & Joriya Parmeshwar	1838 1868	Naikda
2	Gujarat	West	Tribals of Dang	Multiple	1818 1914	Bhil
3	Gujarat	West	Guru Govind Giri & Mangadh	Guru Govind Guru	1913	Bhils
4	Gujarat	West	Eki Movement	Motilal Tejawat	1921 1922	Bhils
5	Madhya Pradesh	Central	Mahanayak Tantya Bhil	Tantya Bhil	1878 1889	Bhil
6	Chattisgarh	Central	Bhoomkal Movement	Veer Gundadhur	1910	Dhurve
7	Chattisgarh	Central	Sonakhan Movement	Veer Narayan Singh	1857	Binjhwar
8	Odisha	East	Sambalpur Movement	Veer Surendra Sai	1857	Binjhwar
9	Jharkhand	East	Mal Paharia movement	Tilkha Manjhi	1770	Mal Paharia
10	Jharkhand	East	Santali "Hul"	Murmu Brothers	1855 1856	Santal
11	Jharkhand	East	Ulgulan of Mundas	Birsa Munda	1898 1900	Munda

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Major Tribal Movements of India

12	Manipur	North East	Anglo-Kuki War	Multiple	1917 1919	Kuki
13	Mizoram	North East	Mizo movement	Rani Lalnu Roipuiliani	1892	Mizo
14	Meghalaya	North East	Anglo-Khasi War	U Tirot Sinh	1829	Khasi
15	Nagaland	North East	Heraka & Zeliangrong	Haipou Jadonang & Rani Gaidinliu	1928	Naga
16	Andhra Pradesh	South	Manyam Fituri of Rampa	Alluri Sitarama Raju	1922 1924	Bagata, Koya
17	Telangana	South	Gond Movement	Ramji Gond	1857	Gonds
	Telangana	South	Gond Movement	Komram Bheemu	1940	Gonds
18	Kerala	South	Kuruchiya Movement	Pazhassi Raja Kerala Verma	1800 1805	Kuruchiya
Unique	Andaman & Nicobar	South	Battle of Aberdeen	Multiple	1859	Multiple
-	Introduction and Orientation	General	Multiple Tribes	-	-	-
-	Minor Movements	General	Multiple Movements	-	-	-

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Status of storyline for major movements for NTFFM

- NTFFM will showcase 18 major movements and One movement from Andaman and Nicobar islands as a unique special gallery.
- DSAG worked on creating the historical storylines through literature study and field work.
- The storyline documents were prepared and sent for vetting to Scholars and Experts.
- In total 19 storylines for each movement to be showcased in NTFFM have been vetted officially by respective scholars and experts.
- Introduction Gallery plans to feature about 14 tribes featuring in our movements. Content for which is being worked upon based on a template prepared under guidance of Dr. Sanjay Prasad.
- Content for 80 minor movements have been prepared by DSAG.

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Field work conducted by DSAG

•Gujarat (One Month – August 2023)
Naikda Movement in Panchamahal, Gujarat
Movement of Dangi Tribals in Dang, Gujarat
Eki Movement in Khedbrahma, Gujarat
Mangadh Movement in Mangadh, Dahod, Guajrat

•Manyam Fituri / Rampa Movement in various locations of Andhra Pradesh (One Week) September 2023
•Gond Movements in Adilabad and Kumuram Bheem Asifabad District, Telangana (Four Days) September 2023
•Sambalpur Movement in Bargarh district, Odisha (Three Days) December 2023
•Ulgulan under Birsa Munda in Ranchi, Jharkhand (Three Days) December 2023
•Santal Hul in Dumka, Jharkhand (Three Days) December 2023

The Aim was to obtain an insight into the availability of resources through interaction with scholars, community members and visit important sites of historical events.

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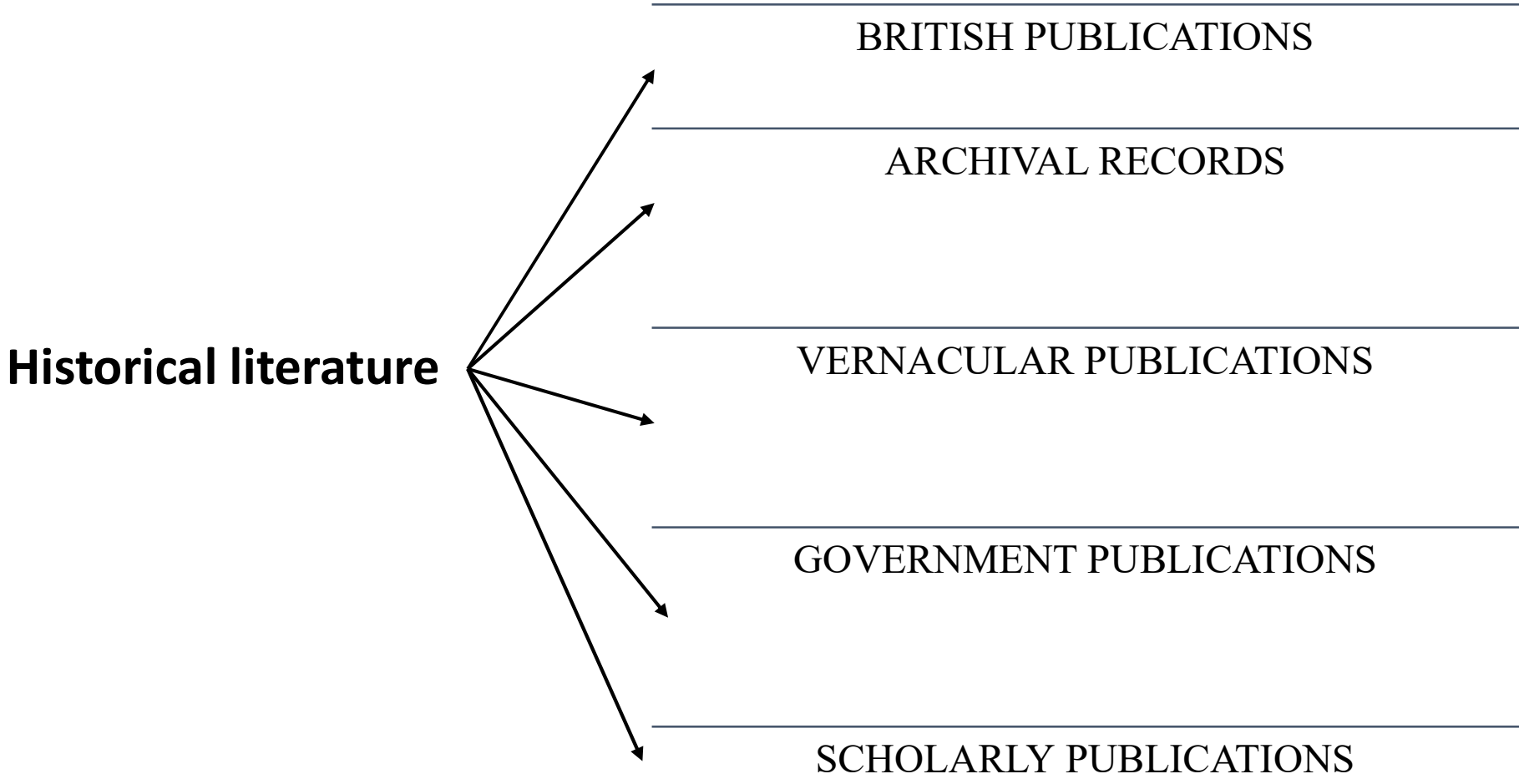
Historical literature Available



Field work :- Unsaid aspects of the Tribal Freedom Movements

- **Literature** alone cannot provide a comprehensive view of the tribal freedom movements.
- Field work is essential to understand the movement, events, causes, background, cultural nuances, impact and outcome.
- The Tribal Freedom Movements were predominantly guerilla warfare, which makes the study and exhibition of **geography** essential.
- Tribal **Memory** patterns are unique and can only be understood in the field be they in form of songs, stories, or artefacts.

Bhoomkal - Bastar, Chhattisgarh

Overview:

- In 1855, Bastar officially came under control of the British
- Bastar was under rule of the Kakatiya Dynasty.
- Between 1774 to 1910 about 10 Tribal Movements occurred in Bastar.
- British Colonial Policies become the cause for resentment.
- The Ghotul Policy of British and its implementation by Panda Baijnath was an important cause of resentment among the communities of Bastar.
- The 1910 Bhoomkal movement was the most prominent and final movement in Bastar
- The movement was led by Gunda Dhur of Dhurva Community with support of Diwan Lal Kalindra Singh of the Kingdom of Bastar (Kakatiya Dynasty).

Vision of bhoomkal

- An introduction to the communities involved in the movement. Bhoomkal like several tribal movements is a multi-tribal movement among which Dhurva being the leaders.
- A experience or feel of local geography is required for the visitor to engage with the history and enabling the community member to feel the connection.
- Tribal Movements were culmination of a series of minor movements which erupted in form of a major mass movement under a charismatic mass leader.
- Background History
  - Presenting the causes of the movement – Changes imposed by British
  - Presenting information about circumstances which led the to 1910 Bhoomkal – Events Predating the major mass movement
  - Rise of Resistance and Introduction of Leaders
  - Immediate Cause – Diwan Panda Baijnath and British interference in general administration

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History and Community memory

How

- Narration of events designed to attract attention and interest of people of varying age brackets with special focus on youth.
- Events are to be presented Chronologically with dates, location, and personnel involved.

Tribal Movements

including Bhoomkal did not just initiate. There were a series of cumulative movements leading upto these major movements.

Introduction to Leaders:

- Lal Kalindra Singh
- Veer Gunda Dhur
- Veer Debri Dhur
- Khodiya Dhur
- Madia Manjhi

Events of History

- Preparation of War with weapons
- Message Distribution
- War Tactics
- Actual events with Maps, dates, and personnel involved.
- British Response
- Important Battles
- Outcome

Ghotul policy – primary cause

- Ghotuls are centres of education for the tribal communities of Bastar and neighbouring regions.
- The Ghotuls of Muriya community are very popular especially through works of Verrier Elwin.
- British aimed to end Ghotuls and forcibly introduce western British education.
- Panda Baijnath committed acts of atrocities upon parents who refused to send their children to British schools. Parents were hung from trees and chilly powder were thrown in their eyes.
- End of Ghotul was a civilizational question for the Tribal communities since the traditional community knowledge and traditions were passed down to next generation through Ghotuls.

- **Ghotul was an important element for tribals of Bastar, for Bhoomkal. The architecture of the Ghotul is also intriguing and simple. The gallery can be designed to give a feel of a Ghotul where story of Bhoomkal is being taught as the experiencial output.**

Veer gunda dhur and bhoomkal

- Important to explain the significance and meaning of the names of movement.
- Bhoomkal means Earthquake in colloquial terminology, which as per our field work is probably is a word from Halbi language.
- Gunda Dhur was an exonym give to the leader by British while his birth name was **Dhurva Bagha Dhur**. Important to present the versions of the meaning of the names.
- The Societal Term '**Dhur**' means leader similar to Sarpanch, Patel, Munda etc.
- Background story to the rise of Gunda Dhur through story of personal tragedy of his sisters Kanakdai and Manakdai (Field work input)

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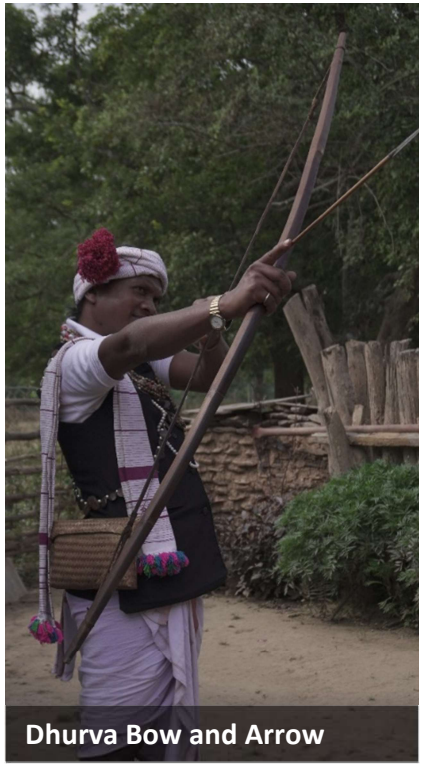
War preparation and insignia


Dhurva Bow and Arrow

- The tribals of Bastar spread the message of war through ‘Dara Miri’ – which was an artefact crafted with cultural significance and was passed through villages in form of a secretive message.
- Oath of Maa Danteshwari – Participants took oath which exhibits the significance of Maa Danteshwari for Bastar.
- Warriors of Bhoomkal movement were called Bhoomkaleya, the three pronged war strategy was to cut of communication, cut off transport and attack important centres of British.
- Bhoomkal Divas of 6th February 1910 – Mass Movement breaks out.

Dara Miri

Events of history

- Important battles and events are to be presented with maps, dates, names of personnel in a story telling method.
- In Bhoomkal movement, the Battle of Khadag Ghat was a significant turning point wherein British Duplicity led to the defeat of the Bhoomkaleya's. The event turned the tide in favour of the British.
- British response, arrival of reinforcements and British Military Tactics.
- The Battle of Alnaar – British through coercion avail information and undertake an attack in night and cause death of 500 Bhoomkaleya and capture of Madia Manjhi and Debri Dhur.
- Gunda Dhur and **Khodiya Dhur** escape
- Arrest of Lal Kalindra Singh
- Hanging of Madia Manjhi and **Debri Dhur**
- Execution of Final Suppression by British through their military might and its outcomes.
- Period of Trials and Sentences of the Captured. 78 were found guilty of which 27 died in prisons.

Legacy of bhoomkal

- Gunda Dhur was never captured.
- British had reward for Rs. 10,000 for his capture, which was never claimed – showcasing the loyalty of the community towards Gunda Dhur.
- No clarity is available on the fate of Gunda Dhur.
- Community narrative states he escaped into Odisha where he had sent his family before the war.
- Collation of community folk songs to express this aspect of the movement.
- During our field work in Netanaar, the native of Gunda Dhur – the descendants had sung for us a small portion of the folk songs of the community.
- H.L. Shukla's Book from 1991 - 'Bhumkāl, the Tribal Revolt in Bastar: The Story of Gundādhūr and His Movement'. Sharada Prakashan documents a song titled, 'Bhoomkal Git'

Contemporary aspects and community ownership

- The memory of Gunda Dhur among Dhurva today through community songs, stories or memorials.
- A video of his descendants speaking of the memory of Gunda Dhur
- Government recognition to Bhoomkal and its leaders – Holidays and Institutions named.
- Events, holidays, or festivities organised by Community in memory of Gunda Dhur
- Bhoomkal Smriti Divas

Visualisation of leaders

- Often, visualization of the leaders is a difficulty since photographs of most leaders are not available.
- In such situation, the Dhurva community has come up with an aspiring methodology. The "**Sambhagiya Dhurva Samaj**", an organisation of and by the Dhurva has developed a visual of Veer Gunda Dhur and Veer Debri Dhur by utilising the face of the current descendant and physical features as described by the community elders.
- This method can be utilised by NTFFM for all leaders where photographs are unavailable and descendants are alive.

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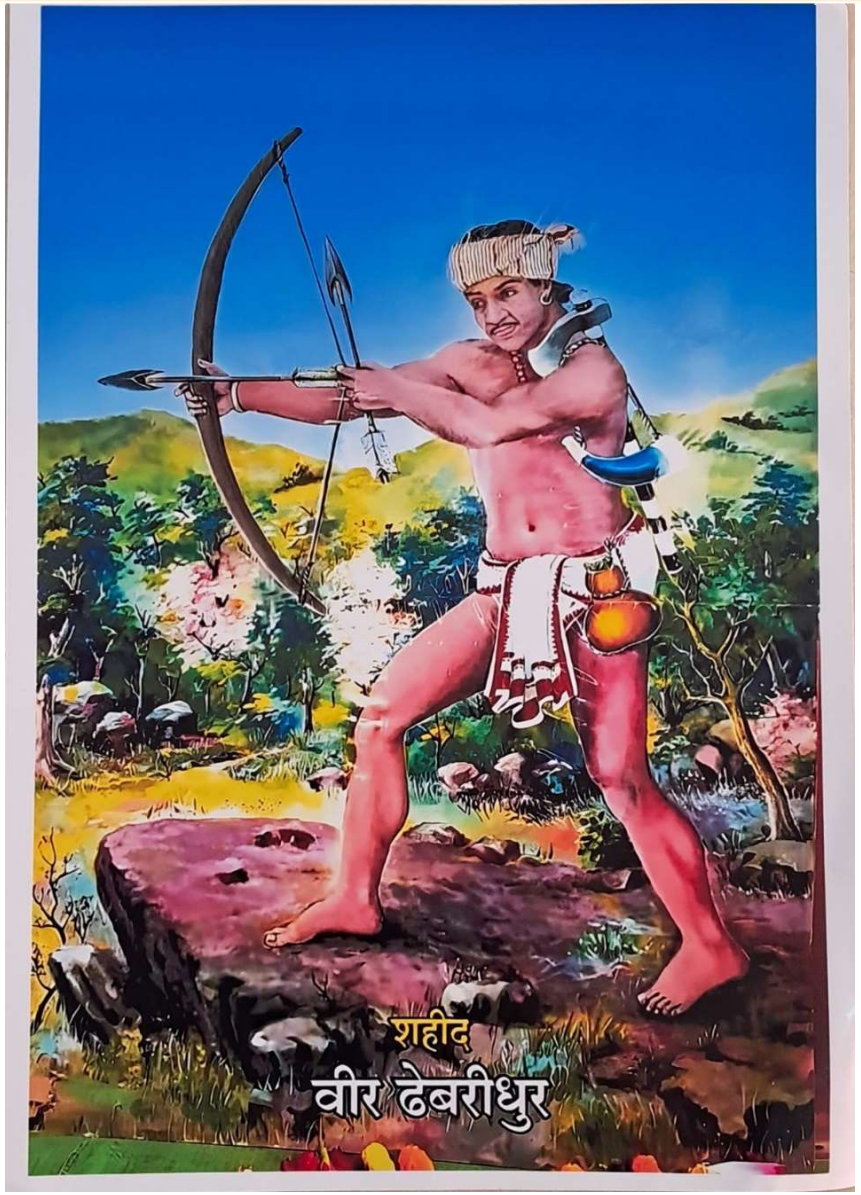
Community Designed Portraits of Heroes



THANK YOU