STEPWELLS OF INDIA

NATIONAL WATER MISSION
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RD & GR
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

STEPWELLS -

khandani khazane

for the

LIQUID ASSETS OF INDIA

khazane ki ek jhalak

khazane ki ek jhalak

We Thank

Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
Hon'ble Minister for Jal Shakti
Government of India

Shri Rattan Lal Kataria
Hon'ble Minister of State for Jal Shakti,
Social Justice and Empowerment
Government of India

Shri UP Singh
Secretary,
Department of Water Resources,
River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation,
Ministry of Jal Shakti

For their support and guidance

kahani khazane ki....

"Catch The Rain" campaign with the tagline "Catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls" was launched by National Water Mission (NWM) this year to catch the monsoon rains. The campaign is to nudge all the states and stakeholders to prepare appropriate rainwater harvesting structures, suitable to climatic and soil substrata conditions, with active participation of people before the onset of monsoon season. ie. We need to be Rain- Ready to catch it, when it falls, where it falls!

Water has been conserved and preserved in India since ancient times. Archeological excavations show that the Harappan civilization had exceptional systems of water conservation and preservation. We were motivated and inspired when we took a peek into India's Khandani Khazana used by our illustrious ancestors to store their "liquid assets" – Water – in the Stepwells. Stepwells are mainly found in Gujarat and Rajasthan of Western India. These deep wells, built by the royal rulers of those times for civic, strategic and philanthropic reasons, have steps that make it easy for people to access water and adequate water levels. These stepwells in the arid regions of country are a precious and assured sources of water even during the long dry spells in the year and served as warps and woofs of the intricate social web. Many of them have very beautiful designs and intricately carved arches, statues etc. The architecture and design of stepwell reflects the religious era in which they were built.

In an attempt to preserve their legacy, National Water Mission has gathered information of 100 unique and interesting stepwells found across India from various websites, books and field visits and put together in one book. The book not only includes photographs and details of stepwells, but also the precise GPS coordinates of their locations.

Come, join me for a journey into our *khandani khazane*. Let us see some of the *heere* and *anmol ratan* in these *khazane...*

-G. Asok Kumar
Additional Secretary and Mission Director,
National Water Mission,
Department of Water Resources,
River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation,
Ministry of Jal Shakti

New Delhi
16.6.2020

CHRONOLOGY

Timeline depicting the evolution of stepwells in western India[1]:

c.a. 2300 B.C. — Harappan Culture Builds Bath

100 — First Ghats In Northern India

200-400 — Rock Cut Stepwells

400 — Development of Shrines

540 — First Stone Construction In India

550-625 — First Stepwells At Dhank

850-950 — Stepped Ponds & Kund Vavs Peak Daedali & Abla At Bhinmal

825 — Chand Baori, Abhaneri

1514 — Tank Surkhej, Asapuri Mandir Stepwell, Ahmedabad

1498-1505 — Fusion Wells Built Near Ahmedabad – Rudabai's Stepwell, Adalaj; Stepwell At Sampa; Dada Harir, Ahmedabad; Ambapur, Budthal

1451 — Kankaria Tank, Ahmedabad

1405 — Navlakhi Stepwell, Baroda

1294 — Rataba Stepwell, Rampra

Late 1500s — **Matri Mata Stepwell, Lakhtar; Ganguo Tank, Loteshvar; Narayan Rao Stepwell, Idar; Geben Shah Well, Idar; Naga Bava Stepwell Near The Mehmedabad Market.**

1543 — Vidyadhara Stepwell, Sevasi

Late 1500s — Halisa Retreat Well; Minal Vav, Bhalej; Barkhali Mata, Umreth; Sikoter Mata, Petland

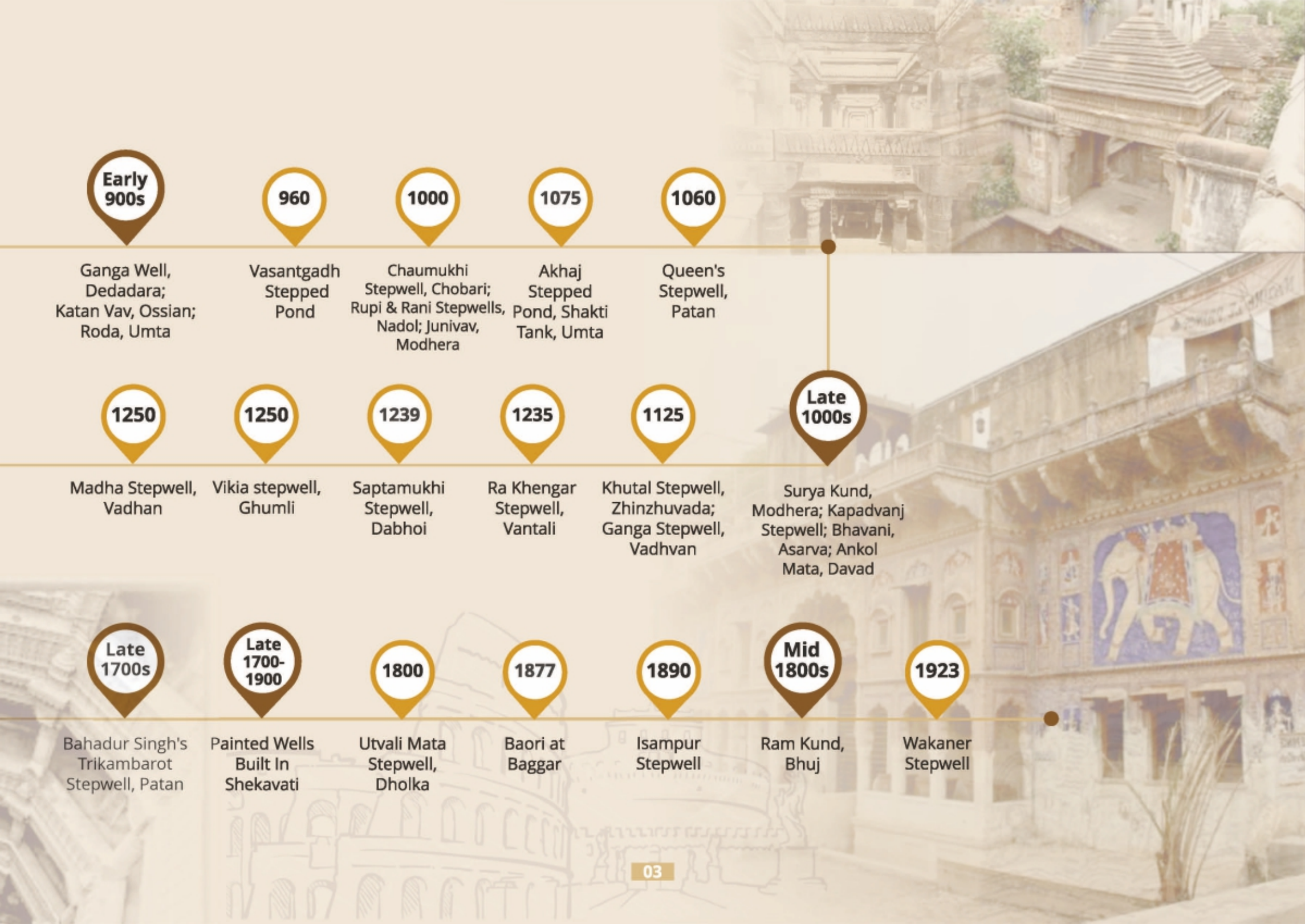
1575-1675 — Many Baories Built In Rajasthan

Late 1500s — Nimrana Stepwell; Nagaur Stepwell

1575-1675 — Many Baories Built In Rajasthan

Early 1600s — Panna Mia, Amber

[1]*Source : Step to Water : The Ancient Stepwells of india, book written by morna Livingston*



Early 900s
Ganga Well, Dedadara; Katan Vav, Ossian; Roda, Umta

960
Vasantgadh Stepped Pond

1000
Chaumukhi Stepwell, Chobari; Rupi & Rani Stepwells, Nadol; Junivav, Modhera

1075
Akhaj Stepped Pond, Shakti Tank, Umta

1060
Queen's Stepwell, Patan

1250
Madha Stepwell, Vadhan

1250
Vikia stepwell, Ghumli

1239
Saptamukhi Stepwell, Dabhoi

1235
Ra Khengar Stepwell, Vantali

1125
Khutal Stepwell, Zhinzhuvada; Ganga Stepwell, Vadhvan

Late 1000s
Surya Kund, Modhera; Kapadvanj Stepwell; Bhavani, Asarva; Ankol Mata, Davad

Late 1700s
Bahadur Singh's Trikambarot Stepwell, Patan

Late 1700-1900
Painted Wells Built In Shekavati

1800
Utvali Mata Stepwell, Dholka

1877
Baori at Baggar

1890
Isampur Stepwell

Mid 1800s
Ram Kund, Bhuj

1923
Wakaner Stepwell

01 baoliyon ka parichay...

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Stepwells are wells or ponds that store water. The water is reached by descending a set of steps to the water level. They may be multi-storied with a bullock turning a water wheel to raise the well water to the first or second floor. They are most common in Western India and are also found in the other arid regions of the Indian subcontinent, extending to Pakistan. The construction of stepwells is mainly utilitarian, though they may include embellishments of architectural significance, and be temple tanks.

Stepwells are examples of the many types of storage and irrigation tanks that were developed in India, mainly to cope with seasonal fluctuations in water availability. Both, stepwells, tanks and wells were built to make it easier for people to reach, maintain and manage groundwater levels.

The builders dug deep trenches into the earth for dependable, year-round groundwater. They lined the walls of these trenches with blocks of stone, without mortar, and created stairs leading down to the water. To construct a stepwell, workers dug a deep cylinder and placed a stone-lined trench beside it with a long staircase and side ledges. Water flowed into the trench from an opening in the well cylinder. Stepwells fall into similar categories based on their scale, layout, materials, and shape (they can be rectangular, circular, or even L-shaped) and can be built from masonry, rubble or brick. They may have as many as four separate entrances.

Stepwells usually consist of two parts: a vertical shaft from which water is drawn and the surrounding inclined subterranean passageways, chambers and steps which provide access to the well. The galleries and chambers surrounding these wells were often carved profusely with elaborate detail and became cool and quiet retreats during the hot summer season.

The majority of surviving stepwells originally served a leisure purpose as well as providing water. This was because the base of the well provided relief from the daytime heat. Stepwells also served as a place for social gatherings and religious ceremonies. Usually, women were more associated with these wells because they were the ones who collected the water. Also, it was they who prayed and offered gifts to the goddess of the well for her blessings. This led to the building of some significant ornamental and architectural features, often associated with dwellings in urban areas. It also ensured their survival as monuments.

1.2 NOMENCLATURE

A number of distinct names, sometimes local, exist for stepwells. In Hindi-speaking regions, they include names based on *baudi* (including bawdi in Rajasthani: बावड़ी, bawri, baoli, bavadi, and bavdi). In Gujarati and Marwari language, they are usually called *vav* or *vaav* (Gujarati: વાવ). Other names include *kalyani* or *pushkarani* (Kannada), *baoli* (Hindi: बावली) and *barav* (Marathi: बारव). In 18th-century, Ali Shah built Baoli Ghaus in Farrukhnagar, Haryana, and Agrasen Ki Baoli in New Delhi.

02 kuch bhooli-bisri baoliyan...

2.1 MYTHOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Water plays a special role in Hindu mythology. It is a boundary between heaven and earth known as Tirtha. Indian cosmology identifies water as a purifying and renewing element, and it is a crucial part of prayer and consecration. Its sacredness finds acknowledgment across the subcontinent. It is seen in extraordinary and monumental architecture that displays engineering achievements of India's designers and builders.

The stepwells – considered to be manmade Tirtha - not only became sources of drinking water, but cool sanctuaries for bathing, prayer, and meditation too. The term Tirtha also means "watering hole" and spot or expanse of water that gives merit to anyone who baths in it, owning to its own nature. All stepwells and stepped ponds are Tirthas. To Hindus three elemental ideas – water gives life, a daily bath cleans us of sin and a bath replicates a moment when one is closest to heaven – more than justified the labor of making pools in a near desert despite the hindrance of geography and climate.

While water buildings appeared in a period of emerging Hindu influence, bathing to wash away sins is even more ancient in India than Hinduism, as are Indian rituals of fertility that connect all women to water. It is not surprising that the presence of water invested in stepwells and stepped ponds with a strong religious meaning[1].

The step well can be considered to originate from the need to ensure water during the period of drought, and in the deep relationship of faith in the Water Gods as conspicuous even in the Vedas of around 1000 BC. Stepwells were not only used for water conservation and access, but also served as sites for religious ceremonies and rituals. Some were used as monuments, and were highly decorated with elaborate carved images.

According to classical texts there are four types of stepwells but reality shows countless variations of this basic classification:

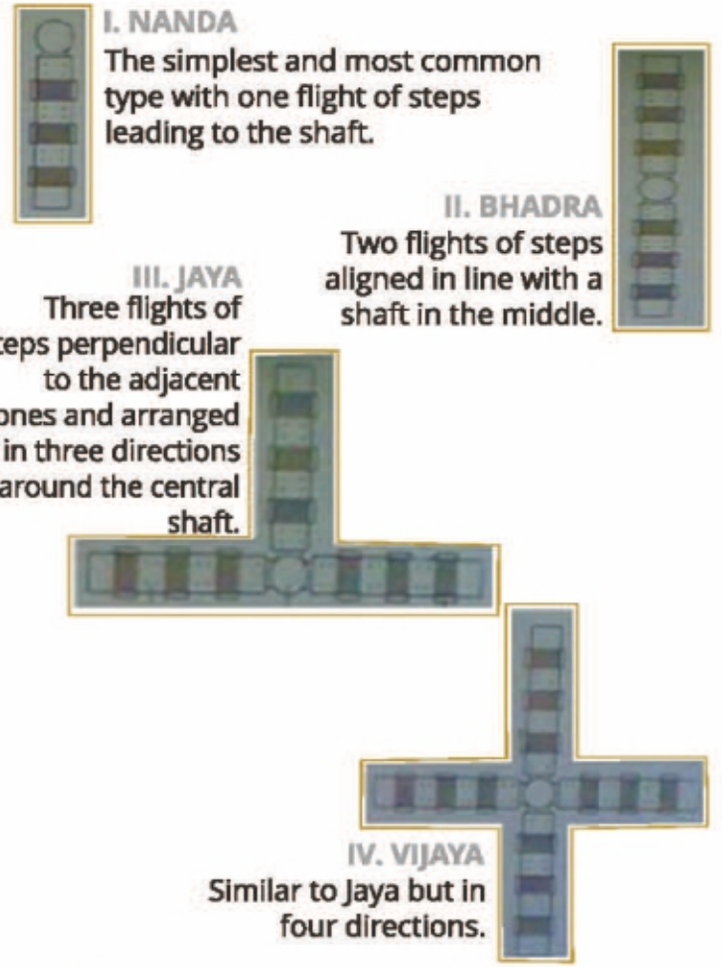


Figure 1: Types of Stepwell as per the ancient texts[2]

[1] *Source : Steps to Water: The Ancient Stepwells of India, book written by Moma Livingston*

2.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF STEPWELLS

INDUS VALLEY Stepwell
Dholavira and Mohenjo-daro

UPERKOT CAVES, Junagadh

MATA BHAVANI'S
Stepwell, Gujarat

The earliest stepwells (known also as baori) are speculated to have been built during the 1st millennium AD (some sources placing them in the 6th century AD, whilst others say they were first built between the 2nd and 4th century AD)[3]. The construction of stepwells developed over time and by the medieval period they became complex structures that showcased a mastery of engineering, architecture, and art. Hence, the best-known stepwells today date to this period of Indian history. Stepwells continued to be built in India, and it has been estimated that by the 19th century there were several thousand stepwells in existence.

Stepwells ensure availability of water during periods of drought. They had social, cultural and religious significance. These stepwells were proven to be well-built sturdy structures, for they withstood several earthquakes. The stepwells were dug deep into the ground and lined with masonry. Workers commissioned by rich people, including many women, built steps, in some cases more than 100, going down to the water table. In drier seasons, the water was lower in the structure. In rainy seasons, the water could be very near or at the top, which meant less of a trek downward to obtain water.

The stepwells originated to ensure water during periods of drought. Steps to reach the water level in artificially constructed reservoirs can be found in the sites of Indus Valley Civilization such as Dholavira and Mohenjo-daro. Mohenjo-daro (dated earlier than 2,500 BC) has cylindrical brick-lined wells which may be the predecessors of the stepwell. The first rock-cut stepwells in India date from 200-400 AD.

The earliest example of a bath-like pond reached by steps is found at Uperkot caves in Junagadh. These caves date back to the 4th century. Navghan Kuvo, a well with the circular staircase in the vicinity, is another example. It was possibly built in Western Satrap (200-400 AD) or Maitraka (600-700 AD) period. Though some believe it to be as late as the 11th century. The nearby Adi Kadi ni Vav was constructed either in the second half of the 10th century or the 15th century.

The stepwells at Dhank in Rajkot district are dated to 550-625 AD. The stepped ponds at Bhinmal (850-950 AD) are followed by it. The stepwells were constructed in the south-western region of Gujarat in around 600 AD; from there they spread north to Rajasthan and subsequently to the north and west India. Initially used as an art form by Hindus, the construction of these stepwells hit its peak during Muslim rule from the 11th to 16th century.

One of the earliest existing examples of stepwells was built in the 11th century in Gujarat, the Mata Bhavani's Stepwell. A long flight of steps leads to the water below a sequence of multi-story open pavilions positioned along the east/west axis. The elaborate ornamentation of the columns, brackets and beams are a prime example of how stepwells were used as a form of art.

The Mughal rulers did not disrupt the culture that was practiced in these stepwells and encouraged the building of stepwells. Stepwells during the medieval period were not merely utilitarian structures, but also artistic masterpieces.

[3] *Source:https://www.ancient-origins.net/ancient-places-asia*

2.3 STEPWELL FROM HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

The Indus Valley civilization (also called the Harrapan era) is one of the earliest known cultures of the Old World, dating from approximately 3300 to 1900 BCE. The major centers of Dholavira and Mohenjo-daro were known for their "urban planning, baked brick houses, elaborate drainage systems, water supply systems, and clusters of large non-residential buildings."

During the Circa 3rd to 2nd millennia BC period, the urban sites of the Harappan Civilisation demonstrated a high degree of hydraulic engineering skills. One of the best known examples of this is the 'Great Bath' at the site of Mohenjo-daro.

Figure 2: Stepwell found during the excavation at Dholavira, Kutch[6]

This has a pool or tank portion measuring

LENGTH - 12 metres (north to south)

WIDTH - 7 metres

DEPTH - 2.5 metres

within a larger building complex. It was accessed by steps, to which wooden covers were fixed by bitumen or asphalt[4]. Dholavira is an archaeological site in the state of Gujarat in Western India and one of the five largest Harappan sites that contain ruins of an ancient Indus Valley Civilization.

The 5,000-year-old stepwell is impressive and huge in size structure:

It is Rectangular Shape

LONG - 73.4m

WIDE - 29.3m

DEEP - 10m

Moreover, it is three times bigger than the Great Bath at Mohenjo-daro and the best furnished ancient reservoir discovered so far in the country[5].

[4] *Source: https://web.archive.org/web/20100903160914/http://www.infinityfoundation.com/hooja_book.htm*
[5] *Source: http://www.ancientpages.com/*
[6] *Image Credit: Archeological Survey of India*

03 khazane ke heere...

There are many stepwells in India still unmapped. But few of them are miracle of Indian architecture and heritage. Few stepwells across the India have been mentioned below:

3.1 STEPWELLS OF RAJASTHAN

As per information by CGWB[7] there are around 10000 step wells in Rajasthan. Every village in the state which is more than 100 years old had a stepwell. The confirmed figures are not available and no revenue records are available.

3.1.1 Chand Baori Stepwell

Chand Baori stepwell is one of the most overlooked landmarks in the country, consisting of 3,500 narrow steps over 13 storeys making it one of the deepest and largest stepwells in India.The well was build in 9th century over 1200 years ago. The depth of stepwell is around 100ft. Three corners have staircases that extend to the depth of this well. Water in this well can be stored for upto 1 year. It is one of the oldest and most attractive landmarks in Abhaneri village of Rajasthan and also the most visually spectacular step well in India.

Figure : Chand Baori stepwell

[7]CGWB – Central Ground Water Board

3.1.2 Toorji Ki Bawari

Toorji Ka Jhalra (Toorji's Stepwell) was built in Jodhpur in 1740s by a Queen, Maharaja Abhay Singh's Consort, continuing an age old tradition that Royal women would build public water works. As with all stepwells, the steps follow the fluctuating water table down, to provide easy all-year round access.

Interestingly this well was submerged and full of debris for decades. The well's original system consisted of a Persian Wheel, driven by a pair of bullocks circling the platform on top, which drew water up to two different access levels and a separate tank.

It has recently been drained, cleaned up and restored.

In the process, the excavations went down over two hundred feet to expose hand carved treasures in Jodhpur's famous rose-red sandstone; including intricate carvings of dancing elephants, medieval lions and cow water-spouts, as well as niches housing deities long gone.

Figure : Toor Ji Ki Bawari

3.1.3 Jachcha Ki Baori in Hindaun

Jachcha ki Baori is the largest stepwell, near Prahalad Kund at Hindaun.

The stepwell is said to have been built by Lakkhi Banjara. An interesting phenomenon associated with this is that when the water was not found during excavation, a saint said that if a Jachcha (pregnant woman) gives birth to a child, then the stepwell can get water in it. People say that once its water dried up and was cleaned, the stone statue of a lady lying on a stone crate between the middle of the Stepwell, was found. Because of this, the stepwell was named Jachcha Ki Baori. According to a folk tradition, the water of this Baudi does not require soap to clean dirty laundry.

Figure : Jachcha Ki Baori in Hindaun, Rajasthan

Figure : Raniji ki Baori

3.1.4 Raniji ki Baori

Raniji ki Baori, also "Queen's stepwell" is a noted stepwell situated in Bundi town in Rajasthan state in India. It was built in 1699 by Rani Nathavati Ji who was the younger queen of the ruling Rao Raja Anirudh Singh of Bundi. The multi-storeyed structure with places of worship on each floor is a 46 m deep stepwell with some superb carvings on its pillars and a high arched gate.

3.1.5 Kale Hanuman Baori

It is located opposite to Jal Mahal on rear side and is close to Kale Hanuman Mandir.

Figure : Kale Hanuman Baori

3.1.6 Panna Meena Ka Kund, Jaipur

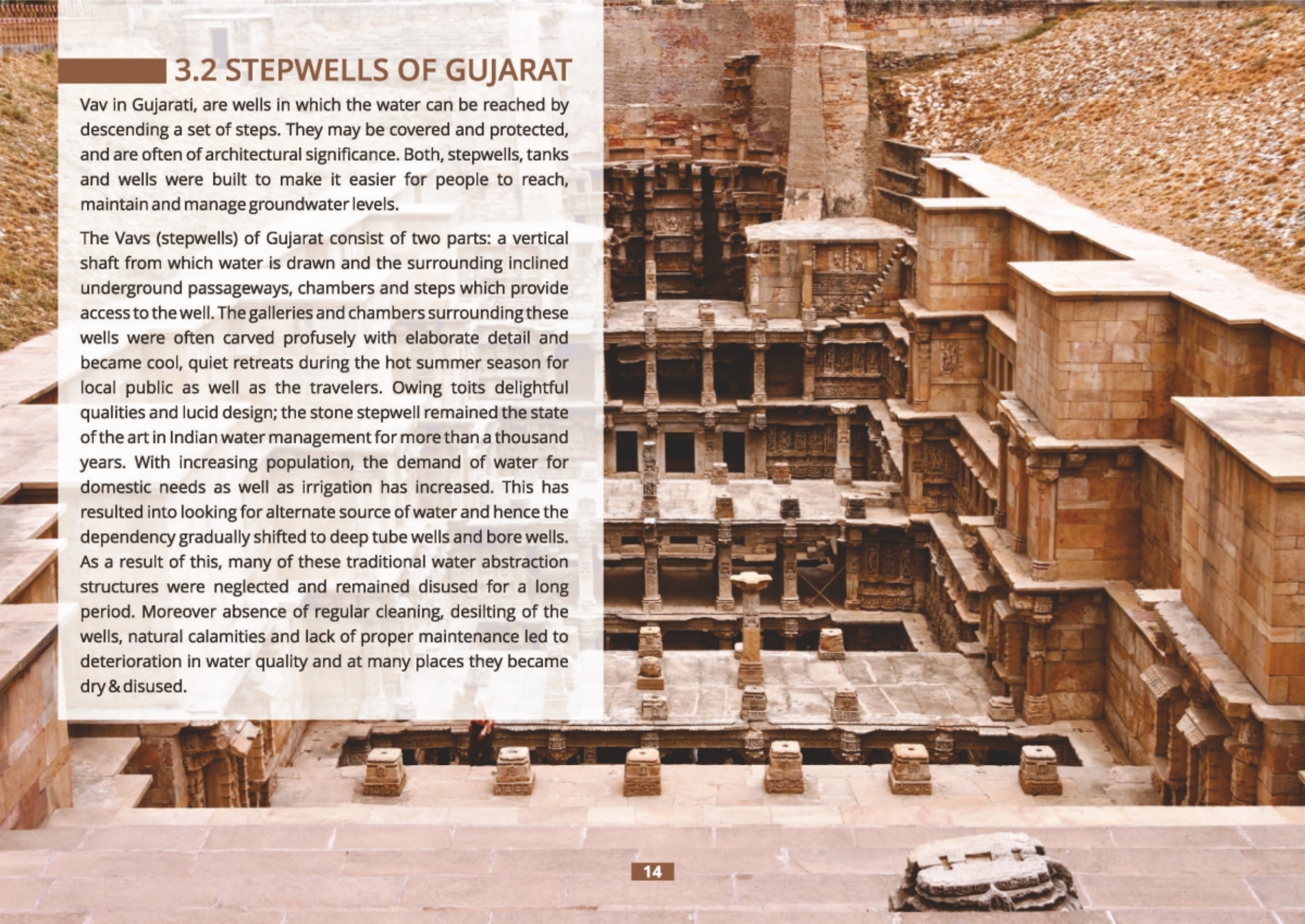
Situated near Anokhi Museum at Jaipur-Amer road, this beautiful place was constructed during 16th century. The place was mainly utilized as a place of social meetings. During ancient times, this place was utilized as a pool to save water. This beautiful Kund has a unique architecture and styling. This Kund was designed by a Brahmin and constructed by craftsmen and engineers. The place has stunning pattern of symmetrical stairs.

Figure : Panna Meena Ka Kund

3.2 STEPWELLS OF GUJARAT

Vav in Gujarati, are wells in which the water can be reached by descending a set of steps. They may be covered and protected, and are often of architectural significance. Both, stepwells, tanks and wells were built to make it easier for people to reach, maintain and manage groundwater levels.

The Vavs (stepwells) of Gujarat consist of two parts: a vertical shaft from which water is drawn and the surrounding inclined underground passageways, chambers and steps which provide access to the well. The galleries and chambers surrounding these wells were often carved profusely with elaborate detail and became cool, quiet retreats during the hot summer season for local public as well as the travelers. Owing toits delightful qualities and lucid design; the stone stepwell remained the state of the art in Indian water management for more than a thousand years. With increasing population, the demand of water for domestic needs as well as irrigation has increased. This has resulted into looking for alternate source of water and hence the dependency gradually shifted to deep tube wells and bore wells. As a result of this, many of these traditional water abstraction structures were neglected and remained disused for a long period. Moreover absence of regular cleaning, desilting of the wells, natural calamities and lack of proper maintenance led to deterioration in water quality and at many places they became dry & disused.



3.2.1 Rani Ki Vav, Patan

Rani ki Vav or Ranki Vav (lit. Queen's stepwell) is a stepwell situated in the town of Patan in Gujarat state of India. It is located on the banks of Saraswati River. Its construction is attributed to Udayamati, daughter of Khengara of Saurashtra, queen of the 11th-century Chaulukya dynasty and spouse of Bhima I. Silted over, it was rediscovered in 1940s and restored in 1980s by the Archaeological Survey of India. Rani ki Vav is declared the Monument of National Importance and protected by the ASI. It was added to the list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites on 22 June 2014. It was named India's "Cleanest Iconic Place" at the 2016 Indian Sanitation Conference.

ARCHITECTURE:

Rani ki Vav is considered as the finest and one of the largest example of stepwell architecture in Gujarat. It was built at the height of craftsmen's ability in stepwell construction and the Maru-Gurjara architecture style, reflecting mastery of this complex technique and beauty of detail and proportions.

It is classified as a Nanda-type stepwell. It measures approximately

LONG - 65 metres (213ft)

WIDE - 20 metres (66ft)

DEEP - 28 metres (92ft)

The fourth level is the deepest and leads into a

Rectangular tank

9.5 metres (31ft) by 9.4 metres (31ft)

At a depth of

23 metres (75 ft)

The entrance is located in the east, while the well is located at the western most end and consists of a Shaft.

Diameter - 10 metres (33 ft)

Deep - 30 metres (98 ft)

Pillars - 212 in the stepwell

History

Rani ki Vav was constructed during the rule of the Chaulukya dynasty. It is located on the banks of Saraswati River. Prabandha-Chintamani, composed by the Jain monk Merutunga in 1304, mentions:

> "Udaymati, the daughter of Naravaraha Khangara, built this novel stopwell at Shripattana (Patan) surpassing the glory of the Sahastraling Tank".

According to it, the stepwell was commissioned in 1063 and was completed after 20 years. It is generally assumed that it was built in memory of Bhima I (r.c. 1022-1064) by his queen Udayamati and probably completed by Udayamati and Karna after his death but the view, whether she was a widow when she commissioned it, is disputed. Commissariat puts the date of construction to 1032 based on the architectural similarity to Vimalavasahi temple on Mount Abu built in the same year.

The stepwell was later flooded by the nearby Saraswati river and silted over. In 1890s, Henry Cousens and James Burgess visited it when it was completely buried under the earth and only well shaft and few pillars were visible. In 1940s, the excavations carried out under the Baroda State revealed the stepwell. In 1986, the major excavation and restoration was carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). An image of Udayamati was also recovered during the excavation. The restoration was carried out from 1981 to 1987.

Structure

More than 500 principal sculptures and over a thousand minor ones combine religious, mythological and secular imagery, often referencing literary works. The ornamentation of stepwell depicts the entire universe inhabited by gods and goddesses; celestial beings; men and women; monks, priests and laity; animals, fishes and birds including real and mythical ones; as well as plants and trees.

Rani-ki-Vav impresses not only with its architectural structure and technological achievements in water sourcing and structural stability, but also in particular with its sculptural decoration, of true artistic mastery. The figurative motifs and sculptures, and the proportion of filled and empty spaces, provide the stepwell interiors with its unique aesthetic character.

The setting enhances these attributes in the way in way that the well descends suddenly from a plain plateau, which strengthens the perception of this space.

Rani-ki-Vav is an exceptional example of a distinctive form of subterranean water architecture of the Indian subcontinent, the stepwell, which is located on the banks of the Saraswati River in Patan. Initially built as a memorial in the 11th century CE, the stepwell was constructed as a religious as well as functional structure and designed as an inverted temple highlighting the sanctity of water.

Rani-ki-Vav is a single-component, water management system divided into seven levels of stairs and sculptural panels of high artistic and aesthetic quality. It is oriented in an east-west direction and combines all of the principle components of a stepwell, including a stepped corridor beginning at ground level, a series of four pavilions with an increasing amount of storeys towards the west, the tank, and the well in tunnel shaft form.

3.2.2 Adalaj Stepwells (Adalaj-ni-Vav), Gandhinagar

The stepwell is located in the village of Adalaj, close to Ahmedabad city and in Gandhinagar district in the Indian state of Gujarat. It was built in 1498 in the memory of Rana Veer Singh (the Vaghela dynasty of Dandai Des), by his wife Queen Rudadevi. It is a fine example of Indian architectural work.

Set in the quiet village of Adalaj, this vav has served as a resting place for hundreds of years for many pilgrims and caravans along their trade routes. Built in 1499 by Queen Rudabai, wife of the Vaghela chief, Veer singh, this five-storey stepwell was not just a cultural and utilitarian space, but also a spiritual refuge. It is believed that villagers would come every day in the morning to fill water, offer prayers to the deities carved into the walls and interact with each other in the cool shade of the Vav. There is an opening in the ceilings above the landing which allows the light and air to enter the octagonal well. However, direct sunlight does not touch the flight of steps or landings except for a brief period at noon. Hence some researchers say that the atmosphere inside the well is six degrees cooler than the outside. Another remarkable feature of this stepwell is that out of the many stepwells in Gujarat, it is the only one with three entrance stairs. All three stairs meet at the first storey, underground in a huge square platform, which has an octagonal opening on top. The Vav is a spectacular example of Indo-Islamic architecture and design. The harmonious play of intricate Islamic floral patterns seamlessly fusing into Hindu and Jain symbolism embody the culture and ethos of those times. All the walls are carved by ornamentation, mythological scenes along with everyday scenes of women churning buttermilk, dancers accompanied by musicians, women adorning themselves and a king sitting on a stool.

History

The Adalaj step well or 'Vav', as it is called in Gujarati, is intricately carved and is five stories deep. It was built in 1498. The history of the Adalaj stepwell is established by an inscription in Sanskrit found on a marble slab positioned in a recess on the first floor, from the eastern entry to the well. Its construction was started by Rana Veer Singh of the Vaghela dynasty of Dandai Desh. But he was killed in a war, where after the Muslim king Mahmud Begada of a neighbouring state built it in Indo-Islamic architectural style, in 1499.

The cultural and architectural depiction in the deep wells at various levels are a tribute to the history of stepwells, built initially by Hindus and subsequently ornamented and blended with Islamic architecture during the Muslim rule.

Legend

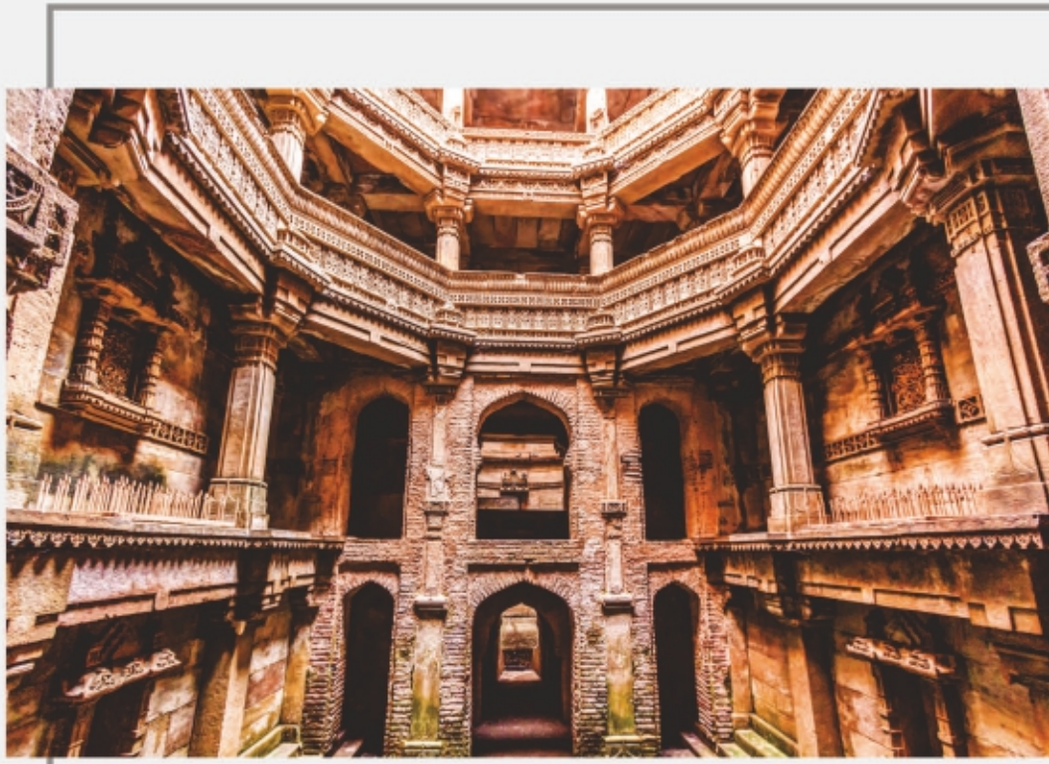
As per legend the 15th century, Rana Veer Singh of the Vaghela dynasty, a Hindu ruler, reigned over this territory known at that time as Dandai Desh. His kingdom was a small one. It was subject to water shortage and was highly dependent on the rains. To alleviate the misery of his people, the Rana began the construction of a large and deep stepwell.

Before this project could be completed, his kingdom was attacked by Mahmud Begada, the Muslim ruler of a neighbouring kingdom. The Rana king was killed in battle and his territory was occupied by the invader. Rana Veer Singh's widow, a beautiful lady known as Rani Roopba (or Roodabai), wanted to perform Sati and join her husband in the afterlife. However, Begada prevented her from giving up her own life and proposed marriage with the dowager.

She agreed to this marriage proposal on the condition that he would first complete the building of the stepwell. The Muslim king who was deeply enamoured of the queen's beauty agreed to the proposal and built the well in record time. Once the well was completed, Begada reminded the queen of her promise to marry him. Instead, the queen who had achieved her objective of completing the stepwell started by her husband, decided to end her life. She circumambulated the stepwell with prayers and jumped into the well, ending the saga of building the well in tragedy.

One version which is narrated in the 200 year old scriptures of Swaminarayan sect suggests that before she died, Rani Roopba requested religious saints to take bath in this stepwell so that the water in the stepwell gets purified by these saints thereby delivering her from her sins.

Another is linked to the tombs found near the well. The tombs of six masons who built the well are seen near the Vav. Begada asked the Masons if they could build another similar well and when they agreed Begada sentenced them to death instead. Begada was so impressed by the architectural excellence of the stepwell that he did not want a replica to be built.



Structure

Built in sandstone in the Solanki architectural style, the Adalaj stepwell is five stories deep. It is octagonal in plan at the top, built on intricately carved large number of pillars. Each floor is spacious enough to provide for people to congregate. It was dug deep to access groundwater at that level, accounting for seasonal fluctuations in water level due to rainfall over the years. The air and light vents in the roofs at various floors and at the landing level are in the form of large openings. From the first story level, three staircases lead to the bottom water level of the well, which is considered a unique feature. Built along the north–south axis, entrance is from the south, the three staircases are from the south, west and east directions leading to the landing, which is on the northern side of the well. Four small rooms with oriel windows decorated with minutely carved brackets are provided at the landing level, at the four corners. The structural system is typically Indian style with traditional trabeate with horizontal beams and lintels. At the bottom of the well is a square stepped floor in the shape of a funnel extending to the lowest plane.

This is chiselled into a circular well. Above the square floor, columns, beams, wall and arched openings spiral around; a feature that continues to the top. The top part of the well, however, is a vertical space open to the sky. The four corners of the square are strengthened with stone beams, set at 45 degree angle.

The motifs of flowers and graphics of Islamic architecture blend very well with the symbols of Hindu and Jain gods carved at various levels of the well. The dominant carvings on the upper floors are of elephants (3 inches (76 mm) in size), each of different design. The Islamic architectural style could be attributed to the Muslim king Begada who built it. The walls are carved with women performing daily chores such as churning of buttermilk, adorning themselves, scenes of performance of dancers and musicians, and the King overlooking all these activities.

3.2.3 Dada Harir Stepwell (Dada Harir Vavdi), Ahmedabad

History

The stepwell was built in 1485 by Dhai Harir, a household lady of Mahmud Begada according to the Persian inscription in the stepwell. She was the superintendent of the royal harem. Dhai Harir built a mosque and a tomb in which she was buried. The well bears two inscriptions, one in Sanskrit on the south, and one in Arabic on the north wall, of the first gallery.

A Sanskrit inscription says that the stepwell was built in December 1499 AD. It was during the reign of Mahmud Shah that Bai Harir Sultani, locally known as Dhai Harir, built the stepwell. The name later corrupted into Dada Hari. It costed 3,29,000 Mahmudis (₹ 3 lakh) at that time. The ornate stepwell has spiral staircases pieced into the sidewall of the well shaft and descending to the different platform levels.

Dada Harir Stepwell is a stepwell in Asarwa area 15 km off Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India.

Structure

Built in sandstone in Solanki architectural style, the Dada Harir stepwell is five stories deep. It is octagonal (8-sided polygon) in plan at the top, built on intricately carved large number of pillars. Each floor is spacious enough to provide for people to congregate. It was dug deep to access ground water at that level, accounting for seasonal fluctuations in water level due to rainfall over the year. The air and light vents in the roofs at various floors and at the landing level are in the form of large openings. From the first story level, three staircases lead to the bottom water level of the well, which is considered a unique feature.

At the level of the ground, it is 190 feet long by 40 feet wide. At the east end, from a domed canopy, a descent of eight steps leads to a covered gallery. A second flight of nine steps leads to another gallery, and a third of eight steps to the lowest gallery two or three foot above the level of the water. At each landing a corridor runs along the sides and leads to other galleries that cross the well at intervals.

Built along an east–west axis, entrance is from the East, the two spiral staircases are in West, near the well. The structural system is typically Indian style with traditional trabeat with horizontal beams and lintels. At the bottom of the well is a square stepped floor in the shape of a funnel extending to the lowest plane. This is chiseled into a circular well. Above the square floor, columns, beams, wall and arched openings spiral around; a feature that continues to the top. The top part of the well, however, is a vertical space open to the sky. The four corners of the square are strengthened with stone beams, set at 45 degree angle. The motifs of flowers and graphics of Islamic architecture blend very well with the symbols of Hindu and Jain gods carved at various levels of the well. The dominant carvings on the upper floors are of elephants (3 inches (76 mm) in size), each of different design. The Islamic architectural style could be attributed to Sultani Dhai Harir who built it.

3.3 STEPWELLS OF MAHARASHTRA

3.3.1 Key Shaped stepwell - Satara District

This is a historic stepwell with simple architecture. This key shaped well has 15-20 steps to enter inside. The whole construction is by Deccan basalt. Despite several years of poor maintenance it is still in a good condition. The well is owned privately. The well can be reach by Mumbai-Bangalore highway. The well has survived for many years. This well is not very popular among tourists.

Village: Khandala, Khandala taluka, Satara

3.3.2 Khazana well, Beed District

A historical well which never dries. It is located 6 km south of Beed city on Beed-Solapur road. It has constant 2-3 m (5 to 6 feet) water level. This well collects water from Bindusara river and supplies it through the 7 doors to the different parts of the city. One of the doors open up below the clock tower on Karanja road. The Deccan Trap Basalt forms the principal aquifer in the area.

In the 16th century, Nizam's ruled over Marathwada. At that time, Murtuza Khan, king of Ahmednagar, paid a tribute to (the then chief of Beed) Salabat Khan, to build a well here. Raja Bhaskar, the renowned architect of that time, drew it. All the treasures from Murtaza Shah were spent for this well, hence this well is called 'treasure well'.

Khazana Well was constructed in 991 AH (1583) by Salabat Khan, a Jagirdar of Beed in the period of Murtaza Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar. It is said that the water level in this well remains unchanged even in droughts. Three currents of water start from the well and irrigate the land of Barg o Zar (meaning 'Leaves and Flowers', pronounced in colloquial as Balguzar) around the town. During droughts municipality of the town take water from this well and supply it to some parts of the town and surrounding villages. Salabat Khan also constructed Karanja (fountains) and a garden in the centre of the town. Tower of Karanja is still standing in the middle of the town in a very bad condition.

3.3.3 Sindkhed Raja Baodi (Stepwell), Buldhana District

It is a large diameter stepwell. It is located in Sindkhed Raja town, Sindkhed Raja taluka, Buldhana District. The place is famous as the birth place of Jijamata, (Rajmata Jijau) mother of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. At present the site is a protected monument under the jurisdictional control of ASI, Nagpur. The stepwell was built by Lakhobaji Jadhav, grandfather of Chhatrapati Shivaji about 400 years back. It was used for irrigation and supplying drinking water to the Rajwada. The Deccan Trap Basalt forms the principal aquifer in the area.

3.3.4 Panhala Fort Baodi (Stepwell), Kolhapur District

The Panhala Fort of King Bhoja built on a hillock located in Panhala, 20 kilometres northwest of Kolhapur in Maharashtra had Stepwells (Baolis) built into the inner portion of a bastion. This well taps underground springs originating in nearby higher hill slopes. The Deccan Trap Basalt forms the principal aquifer in the area.

3.3.5 Baramotichi vihir, Satara District

Baramotichi vihir, an ancient step-well near Taluka and District Satara. This well was completed in 1646 by Sahib Sau. Virubhai Bhosale and was meant to be a water source to all the farms around. The well is octogonal in shape and was built to look like dug-out Shivling i.e., a vertical column with an arm extending to the side. The well is having the depth of 33 m and diameter of 16 m. This was not a traditional step-well like the ones in Rajasthan. A step-well is just a well with steps all along the sides which lead you to the bottom of the well. This one had steps from one side leading to the middle of the well from where there were look-out galleries. The Deccan Trap Basalt forms the principal aquifer in the area.

3.4 STEPWELLS OF KARNATAKA

3.4.1 Malpannagudi - Pushkarani (stepwells) at Hampi

Temples of Hampi also feature a small water tank, usually in front and also stepped. The Pushkaranies are symmetrical, either square or joined double square. In the center of these some water tanks were a shrine with a statue. These were public utilities, while bathing facilities and ghat facilities existed on the banks of the Tungabhadra river with several mandapa and shrines. The water tanks had steps to walk down and fetch water. The most intricate five level highly symmetric gray stone stepwell was fed by a stone aqua-duct near the Maha Ramanavami (Mahanavami) procession and events performance platform, housed within the royal and court residence campus.

3.4.2 Lakkundi in Gadag

Lakkundi in Gadag is noted for its stepwells, artistically built with small canopied niches inside the walls of the wells enshrining with idols. There are numerous ancient wells in Lakkundi, of which the Chateer Bavi, Kanne Bavi and Musukina Bavi are popular for their carvings and architectural beauty. Most of the wells are carved with tiny Siva shrines in the form of niches into the walls.

Manikesvara Temple with Stepped Kalyani is one of the most famous in Lakkundi . On 3 sides of the Kalyani there are steps and they approach the mandapa of the temples, forming a bridge on the fourth side.

3.4.3 Trikuteshwara Temple at Gadag

Stepwells attached to 800 year old Trikuteshwara Temple at Gadag during the reign of the Western Chalukyas was designed and built by the acclaimed architect Jakanachari and it is a famous tourist destination.

3.4.4 Stepwell at Aihole (a UNESCO world heritage site)

Stepwell at Aihole (a UNESCO world heritage site) Aihole, is a historic site of ancient and medieval era monument to north Buddhist, Hindu and Jain Karnataka, dating from the 6th century through the 12th century CE. Aihole being situated on the right bank of river Malaprabha has few wells in the village.

3.4.5 Stepwell at Badami (Agasthya Lake)

Stepwell at Badami (Agasthya Lake) is a famous tourist place for rock cut caves. Pink Sandstone Kaladgi Series stepwell is located at the foot-hill of Badami caves. The Badami caves are considered an example of Indian rock-cut architecture, especially Badami Chalukya architecture, which dates back to the 6th century. Badami was previously known as Vataapi Badami, the capital of the early Chalukya dynasty, which ruled much of Karnataka from the 6th to the 8th century.

3.4.6. Santhebennur Honda -Stepwell at Santhebennur, Davangere

It is a Protected ASI monument. History of Santhebennur is closely linked to the Pushkarini. The region was a part of the Vijayanagar Empire, and Kenga Hanumantappa Nayaka, a local palegar, built a Rama Temple and a Pushkarini in the 16th century. It is said that the Vasanta Mantapa, at the centre of the Pushkarini, was built to commemorate Kenga Hanumantappa Nayaka's victory over the rulers of Bijapur.

3.5 STEPWELLS OF ANDHRA PRADESH

3.5.1 Badi Baoli at Ibrahim Bagh

Introduction

A Stepwell called Badi Baoli is located at Ibrahim Bagh, or the Qutb Shahi Heritage Park (Qutub Shahi tombs - Saat maqbara, referring to the tombs of the seven kings) at the Shaikpet village and mandal, Hyderabad district, Telangana State.

History and historical significance of stepwell / "baoli".

The Well was built more than 400 years ago by Sultan Qutb-ul-Mulk, the first ruler of the Qutb Shahi dynasty. The Qutb Shahis were contemporaries of the Mughals. They ruled parts of present-day Telangana from 1512 until 1686-87, when Aurangzeb conquered Golconda.

Type of formation/aquifer, depth of water and depth of stepwell.

The formation is granite gneiss - Hard rock aquifer system. The depth of well is 18 m.

Current utility status. (Whether they are still in use)

The well is being used currently for the purpose of gardening on the premises.

Scope of revival of stepwell.

The well was restored by Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) in the year 2016.

Popularity among tourists.

The park has already been nominated for UNESCO World Heritage Site status. It is a popular destination in the tourist circuit of Hyderabad and visitors who arrive at Golconda fort do not miss to explore these tombs.

3.5.2 Stepwell at Kashi Viswanatha temple, Penukonda Fort

Introduction
Stepwell at Kashi Viswanatha temple, Penukonda fort, located 76 km south of Anantapur, Andhra Pradesh. Penukonda means a big hill.

History and historical significance of stepwell / "baoli".
The stepwel was built around 14th Century CE during Vijayanagara times. Structured in multiple levels, decorated with carvings of different animals and motifs, this stepwell is magnificent and intact.

Type of formation / aquifer, depth of water and depth of stepwell.
The formation is granite gneiss - Hard rock aquifer system.

Current utility status
(Whether they are still in use)
Not in use.

Scope of revival of stepwell
The well can be restored.

3.5.3 Stepwell at Mylacherla village, Chandrasekharapuram mandal

Introduction
Stepwell is located at Mylacherla village, Chandrasekharapuram mandal in the Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh.

History and historical significance of stepwell / "baoli".
The stepwell is an architectural marvel built by the 'Gandi brothers', both cattle farmers, at a place in the Nallamalla forests, as suggested by a seer from Bhairavakona.

Type of formation/aquifer, depth of water and depth of stepwell.
The formation is Meta Sediments - Hard rock aquifer system.

Current utility status
(Whether they are still in use)
Source of drinking water.

Scope of revival of stepwell
The well can be restored.

04 heeron ke halaat...

Whilst there are many stepwells in India today, a number of them have been forgotten and left to decay. This abandonment is not an entirely new phenomenon. During the British Raj, for example, stepwells were viewed as unhygienic, as they were thought to be breeding grounds for diseases and parasites. As a result, the authorities had many stepwells barricaded, filled in, or simply destroyed[8]. Today, modern water supply systems, such as taps and water tanks, have also reduced dependency on stepwells. Consequently, some stepwells have become rubbish dumps and latrines, whilst others have been turned into storage areas, quarried for their stone, or just left to deteriorate.

Now many wells are dried up because of unregulated pumping, or when the water is present in some cases it is covered with algae or plant growth. Stepwells are also being used as garbage dumps and latrines. Some have been mined for stone for use in other structures. Others are crumbling from lack of maintenance. Some have been destroyed. Many stepwells have been abandoned and are in disrepair since the introduction of modern waterworks, plumbing and village taps.

Unfortunately, many of them lack water due to the precipitous drop in the water table, a crisis only recently being addressed. But in other areas, plenty of wells with water are used for washing, irrigation, and thirst-quenching—exactly as they were used hundreds of years ago. Some wells are still being used as temples, while others have been used appropriately for clever contemporary uses, extending stepwell significance into the 21st century. For instance, a hotel in Rajasthan offers elegant dinners in a nearby stepwell, while certain renowned architects and artists have incorporated the wells into their work.

In late 2014, it was reported that officials in Delhi authorized the de-silting and restoration of five medieval stepwells, following the successful work that was carried out on two others. Thus, there is hope that these historical monuments will receive the care and attention they deserve. Moreover, some Indian engineers are also reported to have drawn inspiration from these ancient structures to design new tanks for water collection.

[8] *Source: www.ancient-origins.net*

05 kuch aur anmol ratan, khazane se..

Stepwell No. 1

Latitude	:	27° 59' 59.67" N
Longitude	:	76° 22' 57.45" E
Altitude (m)	:	324 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Alwar
Town	:	Neemrana
Name of the Stepwell	:	Neemrana town
Address	:	Adjacent to road, just north of Neemrana town

Details Available :

At 9 stories deep, this is one of the largest stepwells in the world. The entrance to Nimrana Stepwell (ca. 1570) passes through a great arch, like that of a desert caravan-serai. The portal is the size of a city gate and opens to an uninterrupted view of the water. On three sides, ledges are repeated on each of the 9 stories (Hindus preferred odd numbers). The well has no decoration and was built of stucco over rubble, with slate-like stair treads and roofs on the arcades.

Stepwell No. 2

Latitude	: 22° 58' 28.1" N
Longitude	: 72° 36' 12.34" E
Altitude (m)	: 44 m
State	: Gujarat
District	: Ahmedabad
Town	: Ahmedabad
Name of the Stepwell	: Jethabhai Stepwell (Jethabhai ni Vav)
Address	: Isanpur, Ahmedabad

Details Available :

The stepwell was built by Jethabhai Jivanlal Nagjibhai (or Mulji) of Ahmedabad around 1860s. The stepwell is 210 feet (64 m) in length and 21-22 feet (6.4 to 6.7 m) wide, with a dome raised on 12 pillars on the entrance at the west end. It has the usual descents from platform or gallery to gallery. It has 4 pavilions and the entrance pavilion is canopied.

Stepwell No. 3

Latitude	: 23° 2' 39.47" N
Longitude	: 72° 36' 24.71" E
Altitude (m)	: 53 m
State	: Gujarat
District	: Ahmedabad
Town	: Ahmedabad
Name of the Stepwell	: Mata Bhavani Stepwell (Mata Bhavani ni Vav)
Address	: Asarwa, Ahmedabad

Details Available :

Mata Bhavani's stepwell was built in the 11th century during Solanki dynasty rule in Gujarat. It is one of the earliest existing examples of stepwells in India. A long flight of steps lead to the water below a sequence of multi-story open pavilions, which were positioned along the east/west axis. The elaborate ornamentation of the columns, brackets and beams are a prime example of how stepwells were used as a form of art. A much later constructed small shrine of Hindu Goddess Bhavani is located at lower gallery from which the stepwell derived its name. The stepwell is 46 meter long and 5.1 meter wide at entrance. It has 3 stories and 3 pavilions. The diameter of well is 4.8 meter.

Stepwell No. 4

Latitude	:	23° 2' 39.47" N
Longitude	:	72° 35' 49.92" E
Altitude (m)	:	58 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Ahmedabad
Town	:	Ahmedabad
Name of the Stepwell	:	Amritavarshini Vav, also known as Panchkuva Stepwell or Katkhuni Vav
Address	:	Located near the Panchkuva Darwaja.

Details Available :

Amritavarshini Vav was completed in 1723 as per Devanagari and Persian inscription (Vikram Samvat 1779/A.H. 1135) in the stepwell. It was built by Raghunathdas, diwan to Haidar Quli Khan, who was the governor of Gujarat during his stay in the city in 1721–1722 for charitable purpose. Sparsely ornamented, Amriavarshini Vav is notable for its L-shaped plan and has simple design. It has 3 storeys and is more than 50 feet deep. The bracing arches have different shapes at the two storeys and in the kuta (pavilion tower) before the well shaft. It was declared a protected monument in 1969 and was conserved in 1999. It was recharged later by digging in 2004.

Stepwell No. 5

Latitude	:	10° 57' 13.03" N
Longitude	:	78° 40' 0.89" E
Altitude (m)	:	100 m
State	:	Tamil Nadu
District	:	Tiruchirappalli
Town	:	Tiruchirappalli
Name of the Stepwell	:	Swastika-shaped stepwell
Address	:	Behind the Pundarikakshan Perumal Temple in Thiruvellarai.

Details Available :

A swastika-shaped temple tank built during 800 AD is present in the south-western corner of the street around the temple. It has four stepped gateways, each having 51 steps. The tank is believed to have been built by Kamban Araiyan during the reign of Dantivarman. In modern times, it is maintained by the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Tamil Nadu. The temple complex covers an area of 2.62 ha (6.5 acres), while the tank covers an area of 0.1256 ha (0.310 acres).

Stepwell No. 6

Latitude	:	21° 28' 49.97" N
Longitude	:	76° 16' 45.42" E
Altitude (m)	:	395 m
State	:	Madhya Pradesh
District	:	Burhanpur
Town	:	Burhanpur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Moti Mahal
Address	:	Next to Moti Mahal, near AsirGarh Fort.

Details Available :

The Stepwell is located close to Moti Mahal (Pearl Palace), the burial place of Moti Begam, beloved of Shah Jahan. Moti Mahal is to the west of Asirgarh fort.

Stepwell No. 7

Latitude	:	28° 37' 33.75" N
Longitude	:	77° 13' 29.76" E
Altitude (m)	:	218 m
State	:	Delhi
District	:	New Delhi
Town	:	New Delhi
Name of the Stepwell	:	Agrasen ki Baoli
Address	:	Off Hailey Road. (also known as Agar Sain ki Baoli or Ugrasen ki Baoli).

Details Available :

Agrasen ki Baoli (also known as Agar Sain ki Baoli or Ugrasen ki Baoli), designated a protected monument by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), is 60m long and 15m wide. The Baoli was originally built by Maharaja Agrasen, in the Mahabharat era, and later rebuilt by the Agrawal community in the 14th century, most probably during the Tughlaq period. Some parts of the well, with 103 steps, are permanently immersed in water. The visible parts of this historical step well consist of three levels. Each level is lined with arched niches on both sides.

Stepwell No. 8

Latitude	:	28° 31' 13.61" N
Longitude	:	77° 11' 0.32" E
Altitude (m)	:	252 m
State	:	Delhi
District	:	South West Delhi
Town	:	Mehrauli
Name of the Stepwell	:	Rajon ki Baoli
Address	:	Mehrauli Archaeological Park.

Details Available :

A famous stepwell in Mehrauli Archaeological Park in Delhi, Rajaon ki Baoli is believed to have been built by Daulat Khan during the reign of Sikandar Lodi in 1516.

Stepwell No. 9

Latitude	:	28° 35' 31.36" N
Longitude	:	77° 14' 30.96" E
Altitude (m)	:	210 m
State	:	South Delhi
District	:	South West Delhi
Town	:	Nizamuddin
Name of the Stepwell	:	Hazrat Nizamuddin Baoli.

Details Available :

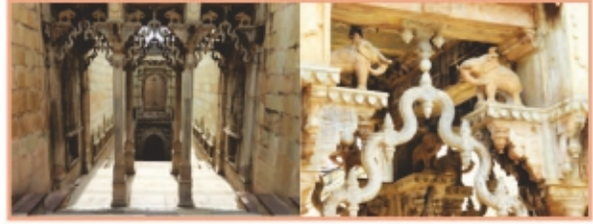
This baoli was constructed over 800 years ago by Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya. It is over 160 feet deep, and is one of the few stepwells left in Delhi that is fed by an active underground spring. This stepwell was Partially restored in 2008.

Stepwell No. 10

Latitude	:	22° 29' 3.17" N
Longitude	:	73° 31' 4.45" E
Altitude (m)	:	179 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Panchmahal
Town	:	Champaner
Name of the Stepwell	:	Champaner Helical Vav (Stepwell).

Details Available :

This is a rare helical stepwell, constructed in the 16th Century. Champaner, today is a site of the Champaner-Pavagadh Archaeological Park, which UNESCO designated a World Heritage Site in 2004.



Stepwell No. 11

Latitude	: 26° 52' 8.36" N
Longitude	: 80° 54' 47.92" E
Altitude (m)	: 129 m
State	: Uttar Pradesh
District	: Lucknow
Town	: Lucknow
Name of the Stepwell	: Shahi Baoli
Address	: Bara Imambara, Hussainabad.

Details Available :

Nawab Asif-ud-daula built it during the years 1784-1794 and got the design of this baoli drafted by Kifayat-ullah, who was one of the most skilful architects of those times. The exquisite Indo-Islamic architectural design of this structure makes it an impeccably unique edifice. The Shahi Baoli was built along with the other units of the Bada Imambara in order to provide food and work to the famine-stricken natives of Awadh. To the east of the main courtyard of the Bada Imambara lies the Shahi Baoli. Entrance to the Shahi Baoli is through a double arched gateway. On moving further, an open flight of stairs lead down to the stepwell. Encompassing this well stands a multi-storeyed structure which comprises many open arched windows and inter-connected galleries.

Stepwell No. 12

Latitude	:	25° 26' 25.05" N
Longitude	:	75° 38' 21.36" E
Altitude (m)	:	275 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Bundi
Town	:	Bundi
Name of the Stepwell	:	Raniji ki Baori.

Details Available :

This stepwell was built in 1699 by Rani Nathavati Ji who was the younger queen of the ruling Rao Raja Anirudh Singh of Bundi. It is a 46 m deep stepwell with some superb carvings on its pillars and a high arched gate. It is a multi-storied structure with places of worship on each floor. The stepwell has a narrow entrance marked by 4 pillars. Stone elephant statues that face each other stand in the corners. Ogee brackets decorate all the archways of 46 m deep Raniji ki Baori, which is reputedly the largest Baori of Bundi. Baoris were significant social constructions in the medieval Bundi since they acted as assembly areas for the townsfolk. It was constructed during the reign of his son Maharao Raja Budh Singh who ruled Bundi from 1695 AD to 1729 AD.

Stepwell No. 13

Latitude	:	26° 52' 54.73" N
Longitude	:	75° 38' 21.36" E
Altitude (m)	:	299 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Dausa
Town	:	Bhandrej
Name of the Stepwell	:	Bara Baoli
Address	:	Bhandarej

Details Available :

This five-story stepwell was built by the Kumbhani Rajputs in 1732 AD. A classic example of the Hindu style of architecture, the Bara Baoli has 150 wide steps, which end at the main well which is then allegedly connected by a secret tunnel to the palace.

Stepwell No. 14

Latitude	:	15° 23' 35.25" N
Longitude	:	75° 43' 13.5" E
Altitude (m)	:	655 m
State	:	Karnataka
District	:	Gadag
Town	:	Lakkundi
Name of the Stepwell	:	Muskin Bhanvi
Address	:	Manikesvara Temple

Details Available :

Muskin bhanvi means 'Veiled Well'.'Kalyani' is the local name for a stepwell. Manikesvara Temple with stepwell Kalyani is one of the Tourist attractions of Lakkundi. The stepwell is from Chalukya period carved with tiny Siva shrines in the form of niches into the walls. On 3 sides of the Kalyani there are steps and the approach to the mandapa of the temples forms a bridge on the 4th side.

Stepwell No. 15

Latitude	:	27° 10' 43.81" N
Longitude	:	78° 1' 18.44" E
Altitude (m)	:	181 m
State	:	Uttar Pradesh
District	:	Agra
Town	:	Agra
Name of the Stepwell	:	Akbar Baoli
Address	:	Akbari Mahal, Agra Fort

Details Available :

The stepwell or the baoli in Agra Fort in Akbari Mahal compound near the Bengali Burj was built by Akbar. For convenience a stairway leads down to the water level. Its purpose was purely utilitarian as is evidenced by the unusual size of the shaft, and the well being 8m in diameter and 25m in depth. It is 6 storeyed each with a rotating gallery round the shaft which is 5.4m in diameter. The lowest storey has no rotating gallery. Instead it has 4 flights of steps descending to the water at 24m below the mouth of the well. The baoli was placed with special relation with the Fort walls in such a position that could draw on the outer air for ventilation through two walls at right angles. The question of ventilation was a very important one in this case, for it must be borne in mind that the well was primarily designed to afford a cool retreat during the heat of the day. This is clearly demonstrated by its intimate connections with the place and its spacious subterranean chambers. The main approach down a wide flight of steps in the thickness of the outer wall is clearly part of the original design of the Fort.

Stepwell No. 16

Latitude	: 21° 52' 46.39" N
Longitude	: 69° 42' 15.5" E
Altitude (m)	: 87 m
State	: Gujarat
District	: Jamnagar
Town	: Ghumli
Name of the Stepwell	: Vikia Vav

Details Available :

Vikai Vav is an early 12th century stepwell located near Ghumli, in Gujarat. This ruined stepwell standing in the wilderness measures 60m long x 7m wide and is one of the largest of its kind in the state. The well features numerous flights of steps and string coursed carvings. The entrance pavilions still remain in 3 places.

Stepwell No. 17

Latitude	:	19° 4' 20.55" N
Longitude	:	74° 46' 55.54" E
Altitude (m)	:	658 m
State	:	Maharashtra
District	:	Ahmednagar
Town	:	Ahmednagar
Name of the Stepwell	:	Hatti Barav (Bhingar stepwell)

Details Available :

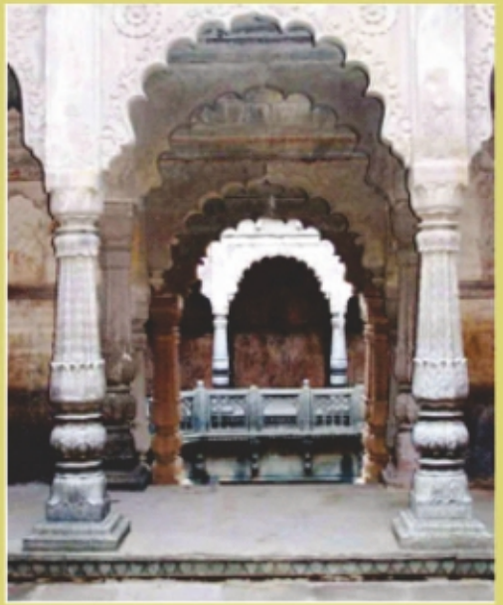
Giant stepwell totally made with Basalt rock, is more than 20 meters in diameter of this square shaped well with geometrical design. The medieval capital of the Nizam Shahi dynasty, Ahmednagar seems to have been really keen on pachyderms. Hatti Barav, a huge, ancient well with a series of picturesque steps cut in a pattern of neat geometric squares leading down to the water, was built so that elephants could be used to draw water from it.

Stepwell No. 18

Latitude	:	23° 16' 5.47" N
Longitude	:	77° 23' 59.3" E
Altitude (m)	:	499 m
State	:	Madhya Pradesh
District	:	Bhopal
Town	:	Shahjahanabad
Name of the Stepwell	:	Bada Bagh Stepwell

Details Available :

This stepwell is 3 stories deep. Built by Nawab Wazir Mohammed Khan around 1819 and later conserved by Nawab Qudsia Begum, the stepwell was more recently restored in 2013-14.



Stepwell No. 19

Latitude	:	25° 17' 27.53" N
Longitude	:	83° 0' 20.84" E
Altitude (m)	:	84 m
State	:	Uttar Pradesh
District	:	Varanasi
Town	:	Varanasi
Name of the Stepwell	:	Lolark Kund

Details Available :

Lolark Kund is a sacred pond in Varanasi where Hindu devotees arrive in large numbers to worship Lolark Aditya who is believed to favor blessings on couples' fertility. The entrance to the kund can be reached from either of the 3 flights of steps which descend down towards it.

Stepwell No. 20

Latitude	:	23° 47' 10.77" N
Longitude	:	72° 38' 54.52" E
Altitude (m)	:	156 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Mehsana
Town	:	Vadnagar
Name of the Stepwell	:	Pancham Mehta Vav

Details Available :

On Vadnagar's outskirts stands the dilapidated Pancham Mehta ni Vav, a beautiful 7 storey stepwell. It was built by a local leader, Pancham Mehta, in the 16th century for providing drinking water to travellers. Though stepwells were common in Gujarat and Rajasthan during the medieval period, this Vav is unique. It has two wells and is linked to a water channel with carved outlets to drink water from. This arrangement was for those who wanted to drink water but didn't want to climb 7 storeys down.

Stepwell No. 21

Latitude	:	15° 34' 30.9" N
Longitude	:	76° 25' 14.53" E
Altitude (m)	:	485 m
State	:	Karnataka
District	:	Koppal
Town	:	Kanakagiri
Name of the Stepwell	:	Venkatappa Naik Royal Bath

Details Available :

Also called Venkatappa Bavi, the Royal Bath was constructed by Venkatappa Naik during Vijayanagara rule. The structure is a stepwell surrounded by a corridor and a temple at one end. This well-temple complex is built in Vijayanagara architectural style. Presently the well is dry. The structure is decorated with beautiful floral and geometric carvings. A pair of lions are prominent on the outside of the balcony. The structure is designed to draw water from the well and poured into a channel which probably watered the surrounding gardens.

Stepwell No. 22

Latitude	:	23° 47' 10.77" N
Longitude	:	72° 38' 54.52" E
Altitude (m)	:	156 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Mehsana
Town	:	Vadnagar
Name of the Stepwell	:	Pancham Mehta Vav

Details Available :

Hidden behind the Ghazra ka tomb, is this pretty red sandstone 19th century baoli. The structure, though unknown to most that visit this little town, is unique for its beautiful double pillars and delicate arches that surround its long rectangular tank and a circular well at the back. Hemmed in by buildings on all sides, the structure looks better conserved than the neighbouring Ghazra ka tomb, though in terms of cleanliness much needs to be done. The tank water, as usual, remains dirty, though the well water appeared clean. The circular pattern of the well and the arches show distinct Mughal influence.

Stepwell No. 23

Latitude	:	28° 29' 1.64" N
Longitude	:	77° 16' 57.72" E
Altitude (m)	:	226 m
State	:	Haryana
District	:	Faridabad
Town	:	Faridabad
Name of the Stepwell	:	Suraj Kund

Details Available :

Surajkund is an ancient reservoir of the 10th century, 2 kilometers away to the south-west from a more ancient dam of the 8th century called the Anagpur Dam; both located 8 km (5 miles) from South Delhi in Faridabad, Haryana, India. Surajkund (literal meaning is 'Lake of the Sun') is an artificial Kund ('Kund' means "lake" or reservoir) built in the backdrop of the Aravalli hills with an amphitheatre shaped embankment constructed in semicircular form. It is said to have been built by the Gurjar king Suraj Pal of Tomar dynasty in the 10th century. Tomar was a sun worshipper and he had therefore built a Sun temple on its western bank.

Stepwell No. 24

Latitude	:	23° 29' 0.27" N
Longitude	:	72° 27' 42.05" E
Altitude (m)	:	91 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Mehsana
Town	:	Akhaj
Name of the Stepwell	:	Shakti Kund

Details Available :

The kund is said to be constructed during the Solanki era probably in the 12th century and is said to be connected to the Kund at Modhera by a subterranean passage.

Stepwell No. 25

Latitude	:	25° 41' 28.31" N
Longitude	:	78° 32' 18" E
Altitude (m)	:	213 m
State	:	Madhya Pradesh
District	:	Datia
Town	:	Syari
Name of the Stepwell	:	Chandeva Ki Bawri (Chandewa Stepwell).

Details Available :

The large stepwell, repaired by Orchha's ruler Veer Singh in 1618 CE, is a fine example of the early 16th century Bundela architecture that sports arches and lotusbud shaped brackets.

Stepwell No. 26

Latitude	:	24° 42' 31.27" N
Longitude	:	78° 8' 9.99" E
Altitude (m)	:	451 m
State	:	Madhya Pradesh
District	:	Ashoknagar
Town	:	Chanderi
Name of the Stepwell	:	Chakla Stepwell

Details Available :

The Chakla Bawdi is a large square stepwell built during the Khilji rule. It is said that the Bawdi was meant only for the ladies of the royal household and not the common people. On the edge of the Bawdi are built two tombs, one belongs to Sheikh Raji's wife while the other is without an inscription and probably of a saint. Also in the vicinity are the ruins of a large palace, possibly also of the Khilji period. It is located to the south of town, on the way to Khandargiri.

Stepwell No. 27

Latitude	:	26° 19' 6.63" N
Longitude	:	73° 56' 41.27" E
Altitude (m)	:	300 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Pali
Town	:	Balunda
Name of the Stepwell	:	Shyam Bawdi
Address	:	Balunda

Details Available :

Shyam bawdi stepwell in Balunda was built by Thakur Jagat Singhji of Balunda in 1770 AD. Thakur Jagal Singh ji was a devotee of Lord Krishna, and Shyam was another name of Lord Krishna , so he named it Shyam Bawdi , made in red sandstone, with beautiful stone caving on the pillars and jharokhas. The stepwell is about 50 feet deep (3 stories), about 120 feet in length and 27 feet breadth. There are 2 jharokhas in the stepwell for women to sit , and there are 2 chhatris (cenotaphs) and a toran on the top of the stepwell. There is a Shiva temple attached to it.

Stepwell No. 28

Latitude	:	23° 1' 33.59" N
Longitude	:	72° 38' 10.33" E
Altitude (m)	:	54 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Ahmedabad
Town	:	Ahmedabad
Name of the Stepwell	:	Khodiyar Mata ni Vav
Address	:	Bapunagar also known as Pauranik Vav.

Details Available :

This stepwell, one among three in the Bapunagar Ward, is relatively intact. It is adjacent to the Viratnagar AMC sub-zonal office. The stepwell has a south facing entrance and has 3 Kutas. It is not very heavily ornamented, only featuring basic details around the niches and along the walls. The 2 Toda at the entrance are topped with stone blocks, with a pointed arch on their top. Each has a small recess to accommodate a small lamp, and several chiselled geometric bands. The structure of the well is a composite of sandstone columns, with brick and lime mortar in the arches and side walls. The side walls feature sandstone bands with geometric patterns. The arches supporting the first Kuta have reliefs of a lotus in full bloom. The well shaft features multi-layered arches and there are concentric geometric patterns on the walls and cornices. The arches themselves are narrow and pointed, suggesting that the stepwell was built in the Mughal era.

Stepwell No. 29

Latitude	:	14° 4' 43.77" N
Longitude	:	77° 35' 43.87" E
Altitude (m)	:	574 m
State	:	Andhra Pradesh
District	:	Anantapur
Town	:	Penukonda
Name of the Stepwell	:	Basava (Bullock) well, by Ajithanath Jain Temple.

Details Available :

To enter the well one has to pass underneath the large sculptured bull. Going by the pillar design it is said that it is constructed during Vijayanagara times.





Stepwell No. 30

Latitude	:	22° 59' 52.07" N
Longitude	:	72° 32' 24.7" E
Altitude (m)	:	44 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Ahmedabad
Town	:	Ahmedabad
Name of the Stepwell	:	Khodiyar Maata ni Vaav
Address	:	Vasna

Details Available :

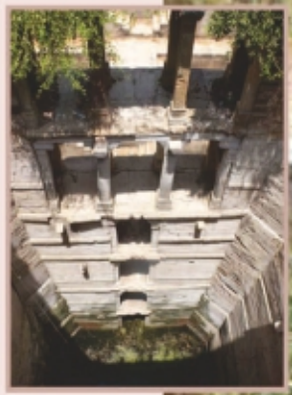
Located within the old mill colony of Guptanagar, this stepwell is among the most dilapidated that we have found. A small structure with only 2 Kuta, it faces considerable threat from encroachments and neglect. The adjoining house has extended its structure right to the edge of the stepwell, increasing the risk of collapse. The well itself is oriented with its entrance facing north, and is constructed mostly from stone with a brick infill. The size of the bricks suggest it belongs to the Mughal period. The structure has a few geometric carvings on the risers and a carving of a lotus in bloom on the front of the arches. The stone on the steps appears to have been obtained from other collapsed structures from the time. Much of the structure has also been replaced at later dates. The stepwell is threatened by roots of a Banyan tree which has grown into the well shaft. The residents also use the stepwell as a dumping ground, and have built little shrines in the niches of the stepwell.

Stepwell No. 31

Latitude	:	25° 0' 39.19" N
Longitude	:	72° 15' 36.45" E
Altitude (m)	:	148 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Jalore
Town	:	Bhinmal
Name of the Stepwell	:	Dadeli Bawari

Details Available :

The Bawari is situated at Bhinmal in Jalor. It is 75 km away from Jalor district. This is a multi-storied magnificent stepwell of bygone era. It has plaster surrounding wall and downward staircases leading to the well. It has wall attached balconies, pillars with brackets and human carving on the wall.



Stepwell No. 32

Latitude	:	22° 52' 3.36" N
Longitude	:	71° 34' 56.12" E
Altitude (m)	:	70 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Surendranagar
Town	:	Rajsitapur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Rajsitapur Vav

Details Available :

Rajsitapur is a very old village of Dhrangadhra Block. It has long history. It has a fort and also there are many old places in this village. The ancient temple of ambaji and the adjoining stepwell in the Rajput street are worth seeing.

Stepwell No. 33

Latitude	:	20° 1' 31.8" N
Longitude	:	75° 9' 55.19" E
Altitude (m)	:	605 m
State	:	Maharashtra
District	:	Aurangabad
Town	:	Verul
Name of the Stepwell	:	Shivatirtha

Details Available :

An 18th century stepwell, known as Shivatirtha, built by Maratha Queen Ahilyabai Holkar for use of pilgrims at Verul village, Maharastra is a subterranean complex is built in a square form with entrance on all 4 sides. The steps descend to a water tank in the center with 8 shrines surrounding it. Each shrine has a Shiva lingam installed in it. Pilgrims would do their ablution here before visiting the Grishneshwar Temple, a major Shaivaite pilgrimage site in Central Maharashtra.

Stepwell No. 34

Latitude	:	12° 47' 29.96" N
Longitude	:	79° 39' 40.12" E
Altitude (m)	:	91 m
State	:	Tamil Nadu
District	:	Kanchipuram
Town	:	Ayyangarkulam
Name of the Stepwell	:	Sri Sanjeevirayar Temple Stepwell (Nadavavi Kinaru) (Stepwell Chitra Pournami).

Details Available :

The Nadavavi kinaru is a stepwell exactly located in Kanchipuram village called Ayyangarkulam. It is built near Sanjeevarayar temple or hanuman temple. It is active only during Chitra poornima due to visit of Kanchi Varadharaja Perumal and give darshan to devotees in the underground mandapam. The stepwell has an arch quite similar to the one at Hampi Thulabharam, but of smaller size with a gajalakshmi on top. It contains a well like structure with cloistered verandahs. This structure is usually full of water. There is a mechanism (yetram) to take out water when required. Columns around the corridor are beautifully carved with various inspirations in it. Basically, each column is made of several geometrical volumns like Hexadecagon with 16 faces, octahedron, cuboid etc.

Stepwell No. 35

Latitude	:	12° 39' 28.26" N
Longitude	:	76° 38' 49.42" E
Altitude (m)	:	1024 m
State	:	Karnataka
District	:	Mandya
Town	:	Melukote
Name of the Stepwell	:	Sisters Kalyani (Akka-Tangi kola)

Details Available :

These beautiful twin tanks are described as sister ponds and according to traditional accounts, when one of the sisters wanted to create these ponds, the other agreed to join hesitatingly. That is why water in one is crystal clear and in the other some what slushy. The real reason for this difference is that the later tank is reserved for drinking. The date of creation of these tanks is not known.

Stepwell No. 36

Latitude	:	17° 58' 8.35" N
Longitude	:	79° 35' 58.91" E
Altitude (m)	:	274 m
State	:	Telangana
District	:	Warangal
Town	:	Warangal
Name of the Stepwell	:	Metla bavi

Details Available :

Located about 3 km from Warangal Fort, the stepwell is an architectural and scientific marvel. The three-storey structure — also referred to as Anthasthula Bavi, Metla Bavi, Digudu Bavi, Eetha Kolanu — is believed to be Queen Rudramadevi's swimming pool.

Stepwell No. 37

Latitude	:	15° 24' 23.77" N
Longitude	:	74° 0' 0.08" E
Altitude (m)	:	33 m
State	:	Goa
District	:	North Goa
Town	:	Ponda
Name of the Stepwell	:	Safa Masjid stepwell

Details Available :

Safa masjid and baoli ~ built by Ibraham Adil Shah in 1560 CE, the mosque is on a raised platform and is surrounded by 10 incomplete laterite pillars. The baoli wall has niches in the form of mihrab arches and is fed by a spring, keeping the baoli water clean at all times and is inspired by Indo-Persian architecture.

Stepwell No. 38

Latitude	:	25° 37' 21.66" N
Longitude	:	74° 55' 28.66" E
Altitude (m)	:	369 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Bhilwara
Town	:	Shahpura
Name of the Stepwell	:	Chaman Bawari

Details Available :

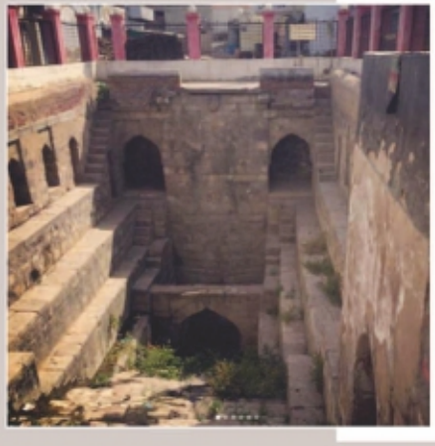
The Bawari is situated near Kund Gate at Shahpura in Bhilwara district. It is 55km away from Bhilwara. It is a beautiful stepwell cladded with red sand stone. It is rectangular in design. There have been made foliated arch springs.

Stepwell No. 39

Latitude	:	28° 22' 26.28" N
Longitude	:	76° 42' 55.54" E
Altitude (m)	:	229 m
State	:	Haryana
District	:	Jhajjar
Town	:	Luhari
Name of the Stepwell	:	Luhari baoli

Details Available :

Centuries old Baoli in village Luhari , is situated at boundry line of two Districts i.e Gurgaon and Jhajjar. The Baoli is said to be built by Ameels of Jhajjar Pargana, in olden days. It is constructed by heavy soft stone blocks or Jhajjar's usual underground extracted stone masonry. Now it is lying completely abandoned and a years old tree can be seen grown in its wall. But its grace is still attractive and deserve conservation.

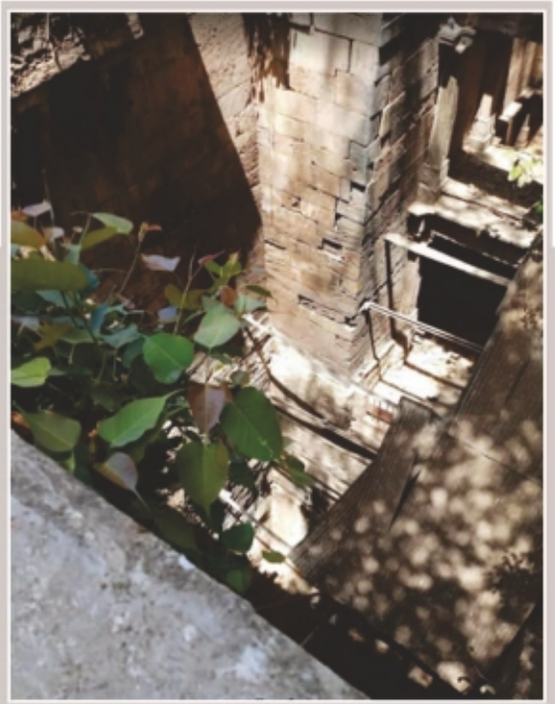


Stepwell No. 40

Latitude	:	23° 36' 5.43" N
Longitude	:	72° 57' 40.53" E
Altitude (m)	:	146 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Sabarkantha
Town	:	Himmatnagar
Name of the Stepwell	:	Kaji Vav (Kazi ni Vavdi)

Details Available :

Further on is a well, known as the Kazi ni Vavdi, with inscriptions on the side walls, one in Arabic and the other in Devnagri, bearing respectively the dates 1417 (820 Hijri year) and 1522 (Samvat 1578). The second inscription shows that the well was built in 1522 by Shamsher-ul-Mulk, who is stated by tradition to have been a son of Sultan Ahmed Shah.

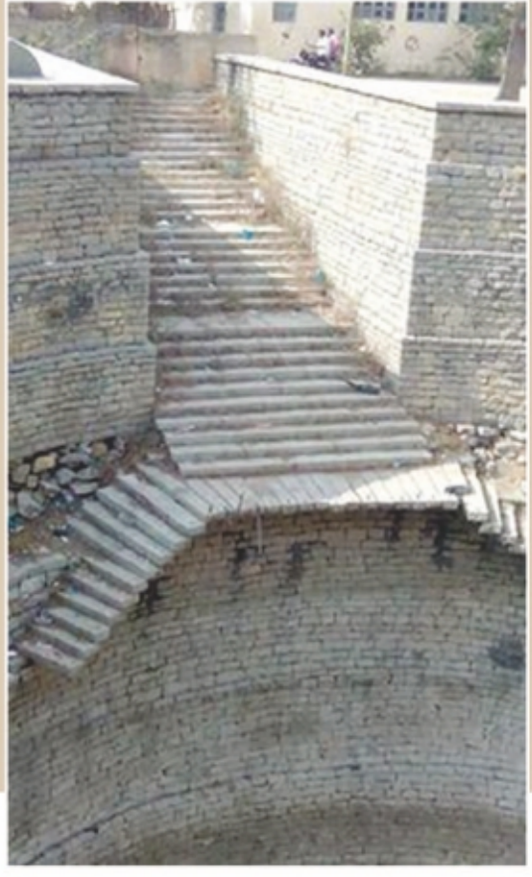


Stepwell No. 41

Latitude	:	22° 59' 34.29" N
Longitude	:	72° 36' 23.13" E
Altitude (m)	:	48 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Ahmedabad
Town	:	Ahmedabad
Name of the Stepwell	:	Uttam Nagar Garden Vav (Veni doshi ni vav)

Details Available :

Relatively plain, but otherwise intact, this stepwell is located opposite the Uttamnagar Garden in Maninagar. The stepwell sits in a vacant plot surrounded by a residential neighbourhood. The entrance to the well points to the west. This entire structure was once completely buried. AMC acted proactively to unearth this stepwell and restore it. The stepwell has two 'Toda', or entrance pillars on either side and has two kuta going down into the well. The original structure was made of brick and lime mortar. Lime plaster was applied to the walls, are a part of the restoration. The structure is mostly unadorned, except for diamond patterns carved into the risers of the steps, and a few decorative bands in above niches in the side walls.

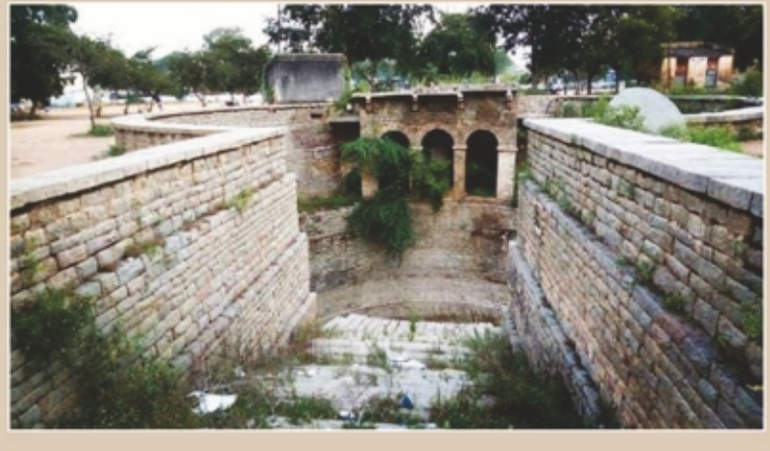


Stepwell No. 42

Latitude	:	16° 21' 43.31" N
Longitude	:	78° 3' 38.19" E
Altitude (m)	:	407 m
State	:	Telangana
District	:	Mahbubnagar
Town	:	Wanaparthy
Name of the Stepwell	:	Garuda Pushkarni

Details Available :

Town Wanaparthy, in telangana state, was under the rule of Krishnadevaraya. It is said that this well has a tunnel which connects to a small village named Sri rangapur, which is approximately 11 miles away from this place.



Stepwell No. 43

Latitude	:	13° 48' 50.95" N
Longitude	:	77° 7' 45.44" E
Altitude (m)	:	772 m
State	:	Andhra Pradesh
District	:	Anantapur
Town	:	Ratnagiri
Name of the Stepwell	:	Ratnagiri Fort Kalyani

Details Available :

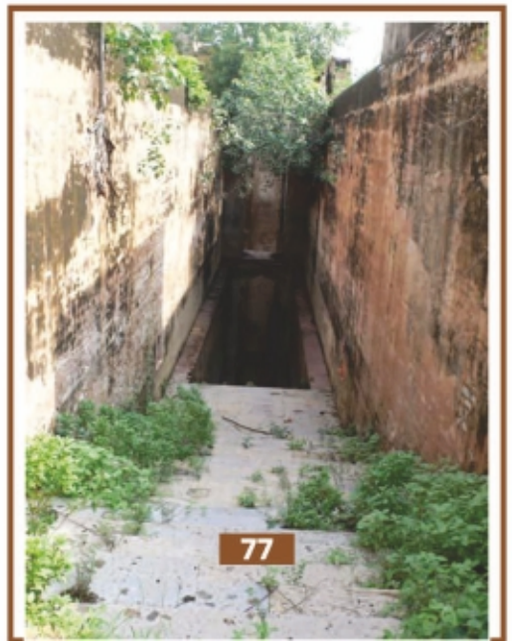
The walls are stepped, these stone walls prevent dirt from collapsing and also helps keep water fresh and clear. Back then water level would be much higher, probably 10 or 20 feet Above ground level. About 100 meters from the well are ruins of a temple on higher ground. Going by the looks of the ruins and well, is Vijayanagara style construction. The temple has stones wall, its Shikhara is brick and mortar. Unlike Chalukyan temple builders, Vijayanagara counterparts went for brick and mortar Shikharas/Gopuras.

Stepwell No. 44

Latitude	:	25° 50' 43.25" N
Longitude	:	76° 20' 50.69" E
Altitude (m)	:	248 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Sawai Madhopur
Town	:	Phalaudi or Falaudi
Name of the Stepwell	:	Teja Jee Baoli

Details Available :

The baoli is dedicated to Teja Jee. It is a square shaped deep water reservoir with multiple member of staircases leading to it. The entrance of the baoli has aliones on both sides which has image of hard ganesha in it. The entrance to the baoli has foliated arch opening with spendrals on both the sides.



Stepwell No. 45

Latitude	:	26° 0' 18.5" N
Longitude	:	76° 35' 59.4" E
Altitude (m)	:	228 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Sawai Madhopur
Town	:	Khandar
Name of the Stepwell	:	Banjara ki Baoli
Address	:	Khandar

Details Available :

The Baoli is situated at Khandar, Sawai Madhopur. The Baoli is rectangular in shape. A flight of steps lead to the water tank. There are arches on the either side of the tank. It is 40 KM away from Sawai Madhopur railway station.

Stepwell No. 46

Latitude	:	26° 1' 14.07" N
Longitude	:	76° 27' 16.62" E
Altitude (m)	:	451 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Sawai Madhopur
Town	:	Sawai Madhopur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Meethi Bawari - Ranthambhore Fort.

Details Available :

The Baoli is situated at Ranthambhore Fort in Sawai Madhopur district. The baoli is a square shaped natural water reservoir. The structure also has a number of staircases leading to its store. The structure had arched gateway of the entrance supported by columns.

Stepwell No. 47

Latitude	: 26° 0' 13.1" N
Longitude	: 76° 21' 52.7" E
Altitude (m)	: 274 m
State	: Rajasthan
District	: Sawai Madhopur
Town	: Sawai Madhopur
Name of the Stepwell	: Banjara ki Baoli
Address	: Sawaimadhopur.

Details Available :

The Baoli is situated at Alampur village. It is 3 Km away from Sawai Madhopur railway station. The baoli has a rectangular plan with side ramps and a balcony on top, which has pillars holding the structure & window. The wall has niches & a decorated pattika.

Stepwell No. 48

Latitude	:	25° 59' 31.9" N
Longitude	:	76° 22' 21.06" E
Altitude (m)	:	302 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Sawai Madhopur
Town	:	Sawai Madhopur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Peer ki Baoli

Details Available :

The Baoli is situated at Sawai Madhopur city. The baoli belongs to Peer. This is a square shaped water reservoir with multiple number of staircases leading to the inside.

Stepwell No. 49

Latitude	: 26° 0' 9.26" N
Longitude	: 76° 22' 4.51" E
Altitude (m)	: 280 m
State	: Rajasthan
District	: Sawai Madhopur
Town	: Village Alampur
Name of the Stepwell	: Ghori Bawari

Details Available :

The temple is situated at Ranthambhore Fort in Sawai Madhopur district. The structure is a cylindrical shaped water reservoir made open from one side. There are number of staircases leading to the base of Bawari. The opening of the Bawari has circular boundary.

Stepwell No. 50

Latitude	:	22° 11' 51.66" N
Longitude	:	73° 0' 13.81" E
Altitude (m)	:	28 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Vadodara
Town	:	Bhoj
Name of the Stepwell	:	Bhoj Vav

Details Available :

Bhoj Vav means a stepwell. It is a richly sculptured monument. It was one of the largest and the most sumptuous structures of its type. A beautifully chiseled stepwell, this Vav is counted amongst the finest architectural structures of Gujarat.

Stepwell No. 51

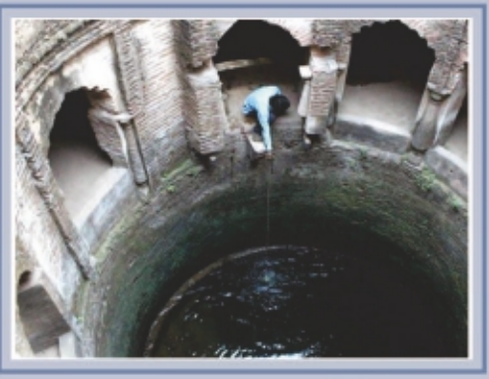
Latitude	:	25° 30' 28.49" N
Longitude	:	74° 40' 22.63" E
Altitude (m)	:	453 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Bhilwara
Town	:	Banera
Name of the Stepwell	:	Khari Ka Kund

Details Available :

The Kund is situated near Char Bhuja Mandir at Banera in Bhilwara district. This is a narrow but a deep stepwell with 3 sides of plain walls and a fourth side with a pillared hall like pavilion with screamed railings and foliated arched openings. On the opposite side of the entrance are steps that go down to the depths of the well.

Stepwell No. 52

Latitude	:	25° 28' 57.38" N
Longitude	:	78° 53' 57.37" E
Altitude (m)	:	280 m
State	:	Madhya Pradesh
District	:	Tikamgarh
Town	:	Kudar
Name of the Stepwell	:	Garhkundar Fort Bawadi.



Details Available :

The Garhkundar Fort, about 70 km from the city, is considered mysterious. The entire Bundelkhand is in the grip of drought, but the bawdi (pond) built in the fort has not been dry for hundreds of years. Its water is extremely cold and delicious. There is no clear information about its depth till date. It is considered to be 1500 to 2000 years old. Many rulers including Chandels, Bundelas ruled here.

Stepwell No. 53

Latitude	:	26° 17' 26.78" N
Longitude	:	73° 2' 0.58" E
Altitude (m)	:	241 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Jodhpur
Town	:	Jodhpur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Nawlakhi Baoli

Details Available :

The baoli is situated at Umaid Garden in Jodhpur district. It is an old stepwell made in the Umaid garden. It is double story baoli having 4 blocks. Stone steps have been made to reached the water level. The whole structure rests on thick octagonal stone pillars.

Stepwell No. 54

Latitude	:	24° 34' 41.41" N
Longitude	:	73° 41' 54.53" E
Altitude (m)	:	578 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Udaipur
Town	:	Udaipur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Toran Baori

Details Available :

This is a huge baoli but is a neglected structure with a beautiful corbelled arch and carved sculptures in the Bhadrikas and Rathikas all around the wall. A step staircase leads to the water tank which is through toran. There are figures of women, god and goddesses carved on its façade. The stepwell which is the source of water has now been covered with metallic covers.

Stepwell No. 55

Latitude	:	23° 36' 18.99" N
Longitude	:	80° 7' 8.31" E
Altitude (m)	:	416 m
State	:	Madhya Pradesh
District	:	Katni
Town	:	Kuwan
Name of the Stepwell	:	Kuwan Bawdi 2 (inside Shesh Nag Temple)

Details Available :

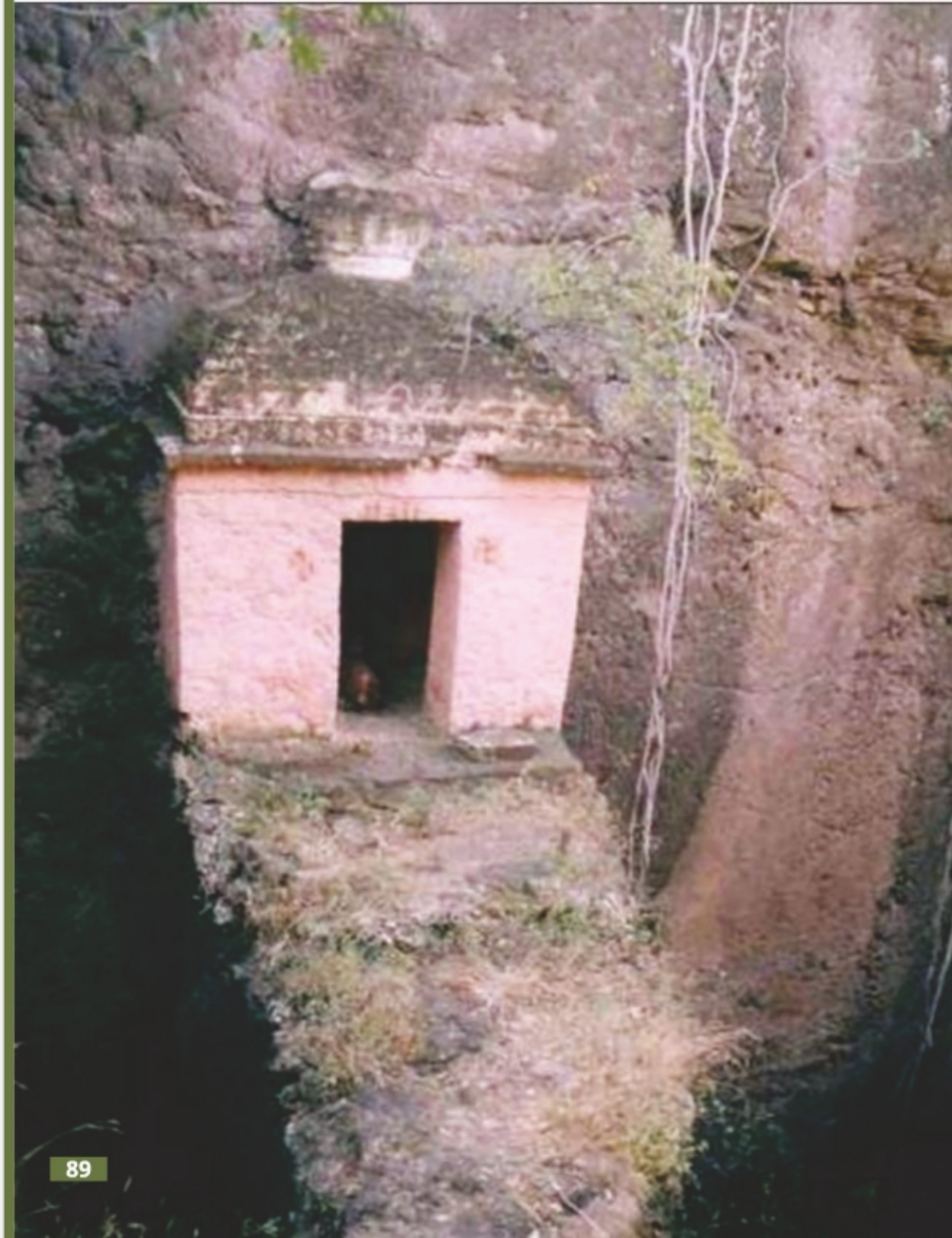
This Bawdi is in the Shesh Nag Temple. This bawdi was originally built of stones but it appears in the 19th century it might had been renovated because the material is not the same as the original material used in repairing was not same.

Stepwell No. 56

Latitude	:	17° 51' 29.13" N
Longitude	:	74° 19' 21.12" E
Altitude (m)	:	884 m
State	:	Maharashtra
District	:	Satara
Town	:	Santoshgad
Name of the Stepwell	:	Santoshgad Shiva Temple well

Details Available :

This is a 50-55 ft deep water cistern which looks like, a square. The well is empty and contains no water today. This structure is one of its kinds. Steps are carved to reach till the bottom. On the way, there is a temple of lord Shiva.



Stepwell No. 57

Latitude	:	24° 31' 52.81" N
Longitude	:	74° 34' 5.16" E
Altitude (m)	:	476 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Chittorgarh
Town	:	Binota
Name of the Stepwell	:	Binota bavdi

Details Available :

This stepwell's architectural style has many features. Grand entrances were built on 3 sides for entry into the stepwell. On the west side, the idol of Bheruji was set up and on the other side the idol of Ganapati was set up to worship. After 20 stairs, the arched doors are built. Stepwell was made three-storey here. The arched gate was constructed to enter the Kund at the bottom floor. On the second floor, large arches had been constructed in the middle and in left-right small arches have been constructed with beautiful architectural designs, which are different from each other in the shape.

Stepwell No. 58

Latitude	:	18.6957 N
Longitude	:	78.02111E
Altitude (m)	:	30 m
State	:	Telangana
District	:	Nizamabad
Town	:	Jankampet vg, Yedapalli Mandal.
Name of the Stepwell	:	Ashtamukhi Koneru
Address	:	Lakshminarasimha swamy temple, near Asok Sagar, Jankampet village.

Details Available :

This is a unique 8 faced stepwell known locally as "Ashtamukhi koneru". This is said to be built either in 3 AD by Jains or during the period of Maharaj Shivaji by Hindus. The 8 faces represent the Ashta-dikhpalakas who are said to be the protectors of the nearby Lakshminarasimhaswamy temple. Locals believe that doing perambulation of the koneru chanting the 8 worded mantra "Om Namo Narayanaya" is auspicious to ward off the bad influence of Shani.

Stepwell No. 59

Latitude	:	22° 11' 41.37" N
Longitude	:	69° 24' 48.37" E
Altitude (m)	:	39 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Porbandar
Town	:	Datrana
Name of the Stepwell	:	Dant Vav

Details Available :

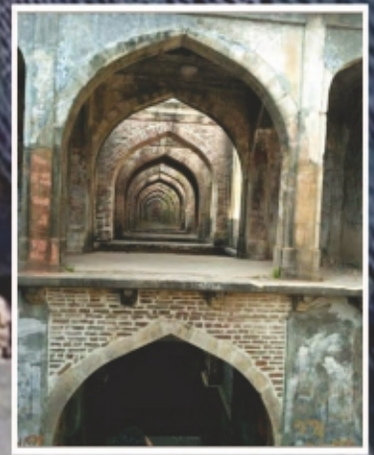
L shaped stepwell of Datrana (Taluka - Khambhaliya, District-Dwarka). It is known as Dant Vav and is located near the famous Danteswar Mahadev temple. Some believe it to be contemporary with Vav of Visavada, i.e. from around 13th century.

Stepwell No. 60

Latitude	:	21° 56' 46.15" N
Longitude	:	73° 8' 1.58" E
Altitude (m)	:	30 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Vadodara
Town	:	Atali, Karjan
Name of the Stepwell	:	Atali Vav

Details Available :

It is located between farms and surprisingly colossal as one can count at least 7 storeys and it appears to have more. The structure is of late Mughal or early Maratha period. First kuta is situated on 2nd level (unusually) and it is 2 storeyed having Islamic arched entrances. The stepwell doesn't hold water anymore.



Stepwell No. 61

Latitude	: 26° 59' 0.26" N
Longitude	: 76° 5' 7.35" E
Altitude (m)	: 362 m
State	: Rajasthan
District	: Jaipur
Town	: Palri Kalan
Name of the Stepwell	: Sevadas ki Baoli

Details Available :

Unusually even the walls of the main circular shaft are almost honeycombed with small rooms and chambers linked by tiny passages and stairways. Earlier upto 11 villages and hamlets used its water which may explain its size and depth. Hidden away down stairs, is a slender track winding among bullock-tilled fields. One could easily pass by without realising that the compound's small chhatri (a domed memorial) and elevated pavilion mark a somewhat more significant site.

Stepwell No. 62

Latitude	:	24° 34' 24.11" N
Longitude	:	73° 41' 31.11" E
Altitude (m)	:	584 m
State	:	Rajasthan
District	:	Udaipur
Town	:	Udaipur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Navalkha Hanuman Temple baori.

Details Available :

This is a splendid structure not only for its architectural plan but also for the sculpted niches. This water tank is arrogated and rectangular in plan with 2 high walls franking on the either sides and on the other end. The entire tank is intersected by a arched opening wall. Over it spandrels there are floral maddens. The most remarkable thing about the complex are the small niches that run all along the wall with its beautifully carved sculptures placed inside them. There are numerous sculptures of fernale god and goddess, which do not seem to be belonging to the recount past, rather quite old. The brackets supporting the Cornish have been profusely carved.

Stepwell No. 63

Latitude	:	23° 6' 53.87" N
Longitude	:	84° 47' 3.57" E
Altitude (m)	:	626 m
State	:	Jharkhand
District	:	Gumla
Town	:	Bhitargarh
Name of the Stepwell	:	Bhitargarh stepwell

Details Available :

This 17th century stepwell has a simplistic design. It is made of stone and bricks. The anterior arena has very narrow staircase approaching water. The stepwell is dilapidated and unutilized.

Stepwell No. 64

Latitude	:	22° 58' 36.69" N
Longitude	:	72° 40' 48.63" E
Altitude (m)	:	48 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Ahmedabad
Town	:	Memadpur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Memadpur Talav Vav

Details Available :

This small stepwell is built within the area of a lake. The ground around the structure has been raised during renovations by the Jal Sampatti Vibhag, and the structure has been fenced off. The structure is very narrow, and once had 3 Kutas. One of the Kuta towers has been removed and replaced with a well and arched opening. The structure consists of sandstone pillars and beams, with brick and lime mortar infill in the walls. The lintels are carved with bird figures, while the niches have sculptures of 7 saints. These motifs suggest that the structure was built by a Hindu patron. There is a small Hawda (a trough for livestock) with an irrigation channel connected to the stepwell.

Stepwell No. 65

Latitude	:	22° 55' 33.62" N
Longitude	:	72° 38' 6.41" E
Altitude (m)	:	40 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Ahmedabad
Town	:	Ropda
Name of the Stepwell	:	Derani – Jethani ni Vav

Details Available :

The structure, like most others, is made from brick and lime mortar. The Jal Sampatti Vibhag has made significant renovations and additions to the structure, including what appears to be the reconstruction of an entire level in the structure. Most of the structure has also been covered in cement plaster. The lowermost level of the last Kuta has been constructed in stone, rather than brick for better durability of under water. A lot of silt has accumulated in this well and there may be another layer to the structure that has been lost today.

Stepwell No. 66

Latitude	:	16° 11' 44.3" N
Longitude	:	78° 3' 11.2" E
Altitude (m)	:	326 m
State	:	Telangana
District	:	Mahbubnagar
Town	:	Shri Rangpur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Ghoda Devi Temple Koneru

Details Available :

This stepwell is now submerged under the recently built dam and the reservoir.

Stepwell No. 67

Latitude	:	14° 58' 19.42" N
Longitude	:	75° 20' 55.96" E
Altitude (m)	:	576 m
State	:	Karnataka
District	:	Haveri
Town	:	Savanur
Name of the Stepwell	:	Vishnu teertha

Details Available :

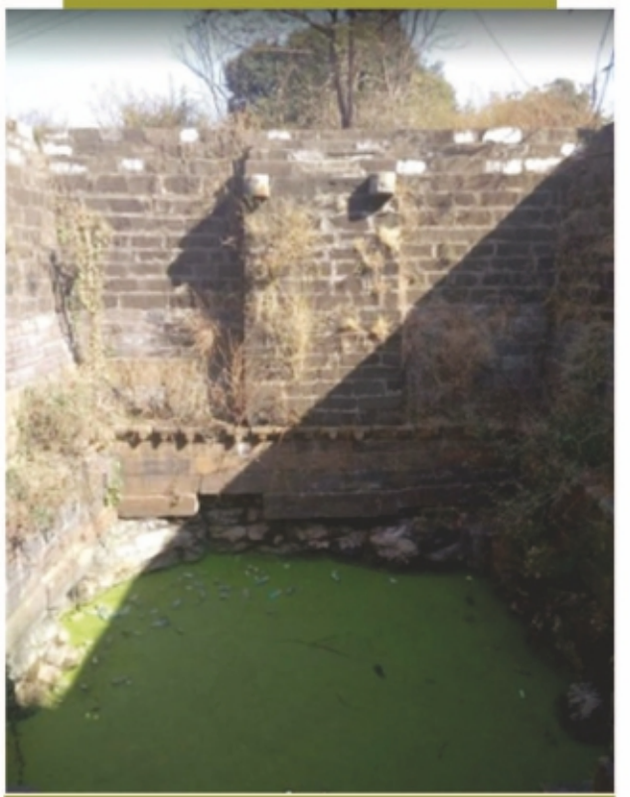
There is a beautiful stepwell located hidden somewhere in the agricultural fields near Savanur town known as Vishnu Teertha. It is a hidden gem which cannot be found on the tourist map. Hidden from the crowds, it is a haven for history and architecture enthusiasts. The construction style is simple and similar to the stepped tank at Lakshmeshvara.

Stepwell No. 68

Latitude	:	20° 50' 58.51" N
Longitude	:	78° 48' 2.29" E
Altitude (m)	:	298 m
State	:	Maharashtra
District	:	Wardha
Town	:	Kelzar
Name of the Stepwell	:	Shri Ganesh Kund

Details Available :

The Bahuli Vihir at the Kelzar Ganapati mandir complex is in black basalt stone and lime mortar and it is in good condition with its water still in use for temple activities. It is a very old complex dating to around 4th to 5th century. The temple has historic and religious significance even today. It is one of the Ashtavinayak temples of Ganapati in Vidarbha.



Stepwell No. 69

Latitude	:	21° 19' 54.68" N
Longitude	:	78° 56' 28.04" E
Altitude (m)	:	339 m
State	:	Maharashtra
District	:	Nagpur
Town	:	Adasa
Name of the Stepwell	:	Adasa Bahuli Vihir
Address	:	Ganapati temple complex

Details Available :

The Bahuli Vihir at Adasa is well protected and maintained with its water in use by the residents of the temple complex. The Vihir is protected with a boundary wall and fence and is entirely in sandstone and lime mortar. As the premises is at the foothill of the temple and in good condition, there are no iron grills on the top of the steps. The stepwell has chambers and level platforms inside with narrow steps and arches at 2 levels. It is away from the houses and not encroached by residents. The architecture style shows utilitarian purpose and no carvings or detailing is seen except few mouldings on arches and the parapet walls.

Stepwell No. 70

Latitude	:	22° 51' 41.26" N
Longitude	:	72° 41' 45.93" E
Altitude (m)	:	38 m
State	:	Gujarat
District	:	Kheda
Town	:	Kanij
Name of the Stepwell	:	Guruji ni Vav

Details Available :

This stepwell, constructed in the Mughal era, is suffering from severe dilapidation. A small well, near the village of Kanij, is currently covered in vegetation and has not been maintained. The lime and brick structure is extremely plain and does not have much ornamentation. The inside of the structure is plastered with lime.

Stepwell No. 71

Latitude	: 22° 55' 28.61" N
Longitude	: 72° 38' 11.19" E
Altitude (m)	: 41 m
State	: Gujarat
District	: Ahmedabad
Town	: Ropda
Name of the Stepwell	: Khodiyar Mata ni Vav

Details Available :

The only part of this stepwell still visible today, is the wall of the well shaft. At almost 8 m wide, this is the largest well shaft among the wells we have documented. The well was probably abandoned long ago. As a replacement, a stepwell exists nearby, and has completed its own useful life. The rest of the structure is lost today, and has likely been pillaged and lost a long time ago.

Stepwell No. 72

Latitude	: 23° 3' 14.94" N
Longitude	: 72° 36' 26.45" E
Altitude (m)	: 58 m
State	: Gujarat
District	: Ahmedabad
Town	: Ahmedabad
Name of the Stepwell	: Syed Hazrat Jalaluddin ni Vav
Address	: Girdharnagar

Details Available :

This stepwell is known formally as Saiyad Hazrat Jalaluddin Ni Vav and to the locals as Jajhar Vav. Upon first inspection, this well appears to have an apartment like structure, with 3 levels stacked one above the other, rather than the traditional stepped layout. No other documented wells have this structure, making it completely unique. The well shafts clearly have Mughal era bricks. In contrast, the landings have been sealed by bricks that seem to belong to the early colonial era. Each of the floor plates is just over 5.5 sqmt in size. The ornamentation around the niches and on the columns, reminisces of Sultanate structures, but the quality of the carving seems inferior to specimens which belong to that period. Carved bands, also known as Gagrakapatti, on the beams, and stepped 'Sunidhya' column capitals indicate the original axis of the stepwell. There are symbols of a lotus in full bloom within the niches. Bands with floral and geometric patterns are also prominently visible.




Stepwell No. 73

Latitude	:	18° 57' 29.6" N
Longitude	:	73° 7' 42.17" E
Altitude (m)	:	11 m
State	:	Maharashtra
District	:	Mumbai
Town	:	Kudave, Panvel
Name of the Stepwell	:	Kudave Panvel Stepwell

Details Available :

Nearly 3 km away from Panvel station lies a 19th century stepwell in Kudave village. A two-storey structure below the ground level, the stepwell is located in a private property to the east of the village, along the banks of Karnavati River. Despite being a part of the draft heritage list released by The Mumbai Metropolitan Region-Heritage Conservation Society (MMR-HCS), the stepwell is one of the structures not notified as heritage yet. Stepwells like the one in Kudave are significant not only as architectural ruins but as good rain harvesting and water storage systems. Several stepwells exist in the state but this is rare and ornate in nature. It must have been an important water body, which could have been commissioned by the wealthy 'Sahukars' during the flourishing times. The water is still being used, but the structure has been neglected. Stepwell is said to be constructed in the 18th century. The stepwell has features of Deccan architecture such as multi-foliated archways, decorative cornices and brackets. It had been built using black basalt stone masonry. The stone walls of the well have decorative arched niches at regular intervals. Its gateway has typical Maratha style arches on its east and west surface. It has a decorative stone cornice *chajja* above it with stone brackets supporting it.

Stepwell No. 74

Latitude	: 26° 59' 55.68" N
Longitude	: 76° 5' 29.16" E
Altitude (m)	: 357 m
State	: Rajasthan
District	: Jaipur
Town	: Khawa Raniji
Name of the Stepwell	: Bohraji ki Baoli

Details Available :

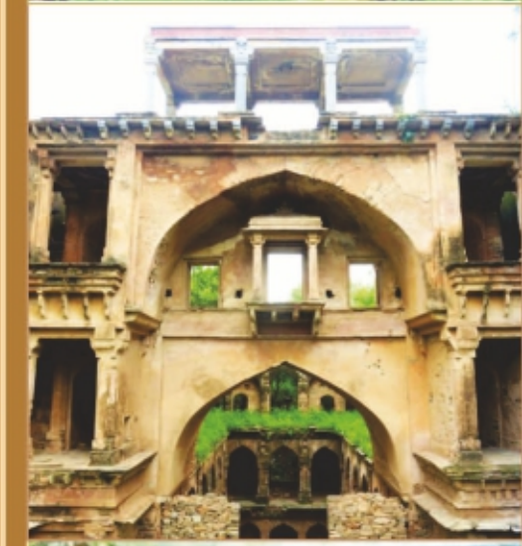
According to legend, Bohraji ki Baoli was built by a man named Deenaramji Bohara on the insistence of his wife in 1510. Its water was used for drinking, irrigation and worship, including numerous cultural and religious events each year such as the annual Goddess Jobner Mataji event, where thousands of visitors bathed and worshipped the Goddess in the Bohraji temple.

Stepwell No. 75

Latitude	: 28° 2' 48.53" N
Longitude	: 76° 5' 57.15" E
Altitude (m)	: 309 m
State	: Haryana
District	: Mahendragarh
Town	: Narnaul
Name of the Stepwell	: Mirza Ali Jan's Baoli

Details Available :

This baoli built by Mirza Ali Jan, the Nawab of Narnaul during the reign of Emperor Akbar, is situated to the north-west of the town of Narnaul. The main structure of the building is in the shape of a huge arched gateway carrying the 'Takhat' with a rectangular pillared '*Chhatri*' (Kiosk) on its top. The '*Chhatri*' has a decorated flap, resting on the eight pillars made of grey stone into rows that open to all sides. Below it, there is a balcony with staircases. The Takhat stands on the main arched entrance of the baoli. On the south, the main arched opening is attached with the three-storied 'baoli' and further a well.



06 dhanyawaad ki boondein...

National Water Mission (NWM) would like to acknowledge:

"Stepwell Atlas" (www.stepwell.org) which aims to be a community driven resource to accurately map and collate information on stepwells, (and through this to raise their profile and visibility and safeguard their future) for the wealth of information on Stepwells . Some of their collected data is used in this book ;

Ms. Victoria Lautman (Vanishing Stepwells in India) and Ms. Jutta Jain-Neubauer (Stepwells of Gujarat), who are enthusiastic writers/bloggers on stepwells of India and their writings are referred to compile this book;

Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) for providing information regarding 23 stepwells mentioned in this book.

Ms. Pradnya Mathur, Consultant, NWM for collating and compiling information on stepwells for this book.

07 nwm ke baare mein...

The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) launched by the Government of India identified the approach to be adopted to meet the challenges of impact of climate change through institutionalization of eight national missions. National Water Mission was one of the eight missions set up. The Union Cabinet approved (on 6th April, 2011) the comprehensive Mission Document for National Water Mission (NWM).

The main objective of NWM is "conservation of water, minimizing wastage and ensuring its more equitable distribution both across and within States through integrated water resources development and management".

NWM has the following five goals:

(I) Comprehensive water data base in public domain and assessment of the impact of climate change on water resource

(ii) Promotion of citizen and state actions for water conservation, augmentation and preservation

(iii) Focused attention to vulnerable areas including over-exploited areas

(iv) Increasing water use efficiency by 20%

(v) Promotion of basin level integrated water resources management

Each of these goals have well defined strategies (total 39 strategies) and action points.

Recent Initiatives of National Water Mission:

- "National Water Mission Awards" were instituted to encourage and incentivize organisations and individuals to conserve and manage water. The first NWM awards were given on 25.09.2019 to 22 winners.
- "Water-Talk" - A seminar series to promote dialogue and information sharing among participants of water related topics was started on 22nd March 2019 and are being held on third Fridays of every month since then. Its aim is to stimulate awareness, build capacities of stakeholders and encourage people to become active participants to sustain life by saving water. From May 2020 onwards it has been shifted to digital platforms.
- 'Sahi-Fasal' – a campaign to nudge the farmers to grow crops which are less water intensive and uses it efficiently; have nutritional quality and are remunerative to the farmers was launched on 14th November 2019 in Amritsar with workshop attended by 850 farmers. This was followed by a technical workshop in New Delhi on 26th and 27th November, 2019 where Mr. Walter Jehne a renowned micro-biologist and water expert gave the key note address. The 3rd workshop at Aurangabad on 13th January 2020 was attended by 1200 farmers. The 4th workshop was held at Kurukshetra on 14th February 2020.
- Social media publicity materials - a profile Video on the goals, strategies and activities of NWM and jingles ('Kal-ki-suraksha-keliye' & 'Ye-shahar-shahar') on water conservation were launched.

- Issued circular requesting Ministries & Departments to install "aerators" in office toilets & Rain Water Harvesting Systems at their office premises.
- State and UT Governments are supported to formulate a State Specific Action Plan (SSAP) on water at basin level for sustainable development & management of its water resources linking it with their State Action Plan for climate change.
- For developing standards in respect of improving water use efficiency in domestic appliances, NWM, in collaboration with Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS), is working on efficiency labeling standards for house-hold appliances like washing machines, sanitary wares & fittings.
- Has awarded 26 Base Line studies covering 6 States for improving water use efficiency in irrigation sector.
- Bureau of Water Use Efficiency on the lines of Bureau of Energy Use Efficiency is being planned.
- Taken up scoping studies by undertaking comprehensive water audit/ benchmarking in two industrial sectors i.e. thermal power plants & textile industries for enhancing industrial water use efficiency in India.
- "Catch The Rain" campaign with the tagline "Catch the rain, where it falls, when it falls" was launched to promote Rain Water Harvesting Structures appropriate to the climate and soil-strata conditions and to create space to store as much rain water as possible with people's active participation (before the onset on the monsoon). Roof top rain water harvesting structures, clearing of encroachments of water bodies and their channels, de-silting of existing water bodies, creation of new water harvesting structures etc based on soil and atmospheric conditions are taken up as part of the campaign. Rain Centers with dedicated staff and mobile numbers to give technical support to be opened in all districts.

National Water Mission

Catch The Rain

PIKKU, the mascot of the
National Water Mission's
"Catch The Rain" campaign.
Peacock, our National Bird and is
very closely linked with rains.
National Water Mission's
five goals transform into Pikku's
colorful plumage

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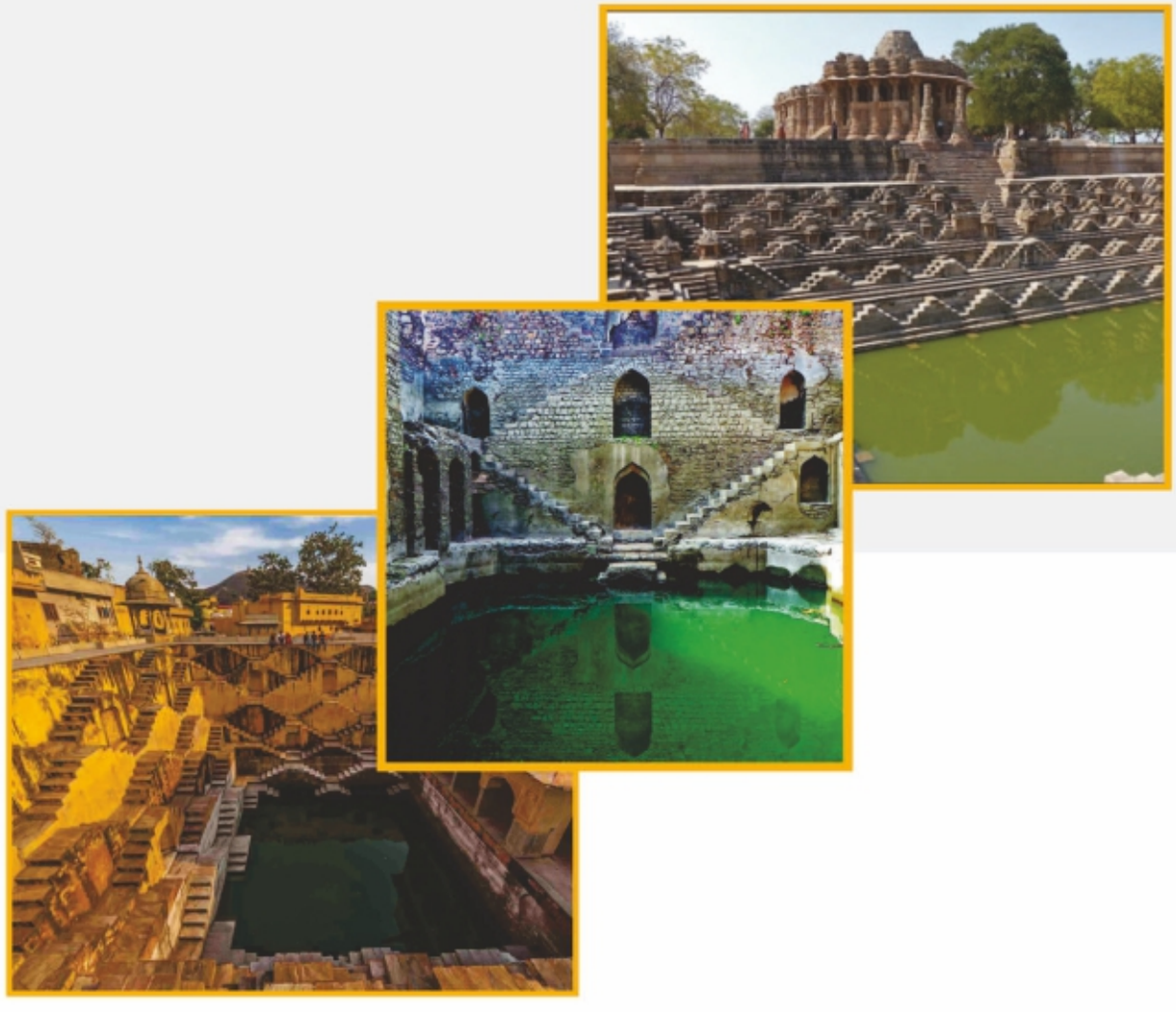

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DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES, RD & GR
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
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