

Ganjam admn launches scheme to revive ponds

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Berhampur: In a bid to rejuvenate traditional ponds by desilting, the Ganjam district administration on Wednesday launched Jal Samruddhi Yojana.

“Besides increasing the storage capacity of the water bodies, farmers will also be benefited under the scheme by using the rich alluvial soil and increasing irrigation potential (through minor irrigation ponds),” said Ganjam collector Vijay Amruta Kulange, who launched the scheme at Rikapalli under Chhatrapur block.

“We are cleaning the water bodies by observing Jal Swachhata Divas every Monday across the district with public participation. Now we have launched the Jal Samruddhi Yojana to desilt and rejuvenate the water

bodies with participation of the people,” he said.

“There will be no government funds utilized under the scheme as the public will help dig up the ponds,” said Shinde Dattatraya Bhausahab, project director, District Rural Development Agency. “On the other hand, the government would get revenue in the shape of royalty on transportation of alluvial soil to fields,” he added. The farmers would bear the charges of transportation and other machinery.

In the first phase, he said they will desilt at least two ponds in each block and one pond under urban local bodies. “Tehsildars of the respective blocks will monitor the scheme, in collaboration with the forest and water resources development departments,” he said.

“The programme has already been implemented in states like Maharashtra, while a study conducted by the University of Michigan in Telangana revealed increase in crop yield and reduction in use of fertilizer following the use of silt,” said Bhairab Nayak, a retired agriculture officer.