

Documentation of Ganga from Gaumukh to Gangasagar

Ballia District

Intangible Cultural Heritage



INTACH

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February-March 2021

Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage

National Mission for Clean Ganga
(Reg. Society)
Ministry of Jal Shakti
Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation
Government of India




INTACH Indian
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Contents

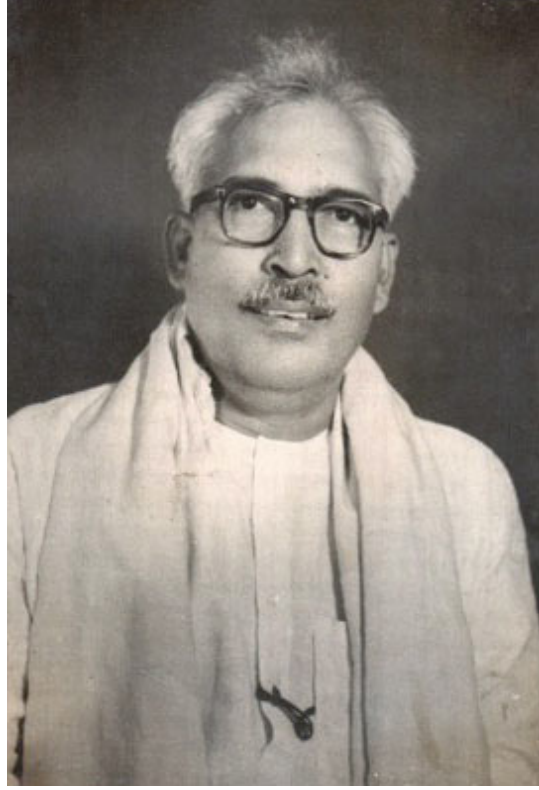
Introduction.....	1
Ballia in History	5
The 1857 Uprising in Ballia	13
1942: August Kranti, Baaghi Ballia and Chittu Pandey	16
Balliyag, Ballua: Etymology and Sant Nagari Ballia.....	25
Ujjiyar Village: The trail of Rama's exile.....	32
Sacred Complexes.....	40
Gangatiri Cow.....	56
Foodways.....	58
Languages, Literature and Luminaries of Ballia.....	61
Theatre: Sankalp Sahitiyik Samajik evam Sanskritik Sanstha, Ballia.....	75
Traditional Crafts of Ballia.....	77
Folklore of Lorik and Lorik Dih.....	90
Fairs and Festivals.....	92
Hindi Tithi Cultural Calendar.....	99
Bibliography.....	107

Newspaper Coverage of INTACH Field Investigation

Research Team and Acknowledgement

Cover Image: Semi-finished Sinauhara, coloured buffed with Kewara (Pandanus odorifer) leaf and coloured with lacquer, kept for drying

Back Cover: A Peepul tree (Sacred fig) in the background with saplings of yellow mustard in foreground at Lorik Dih



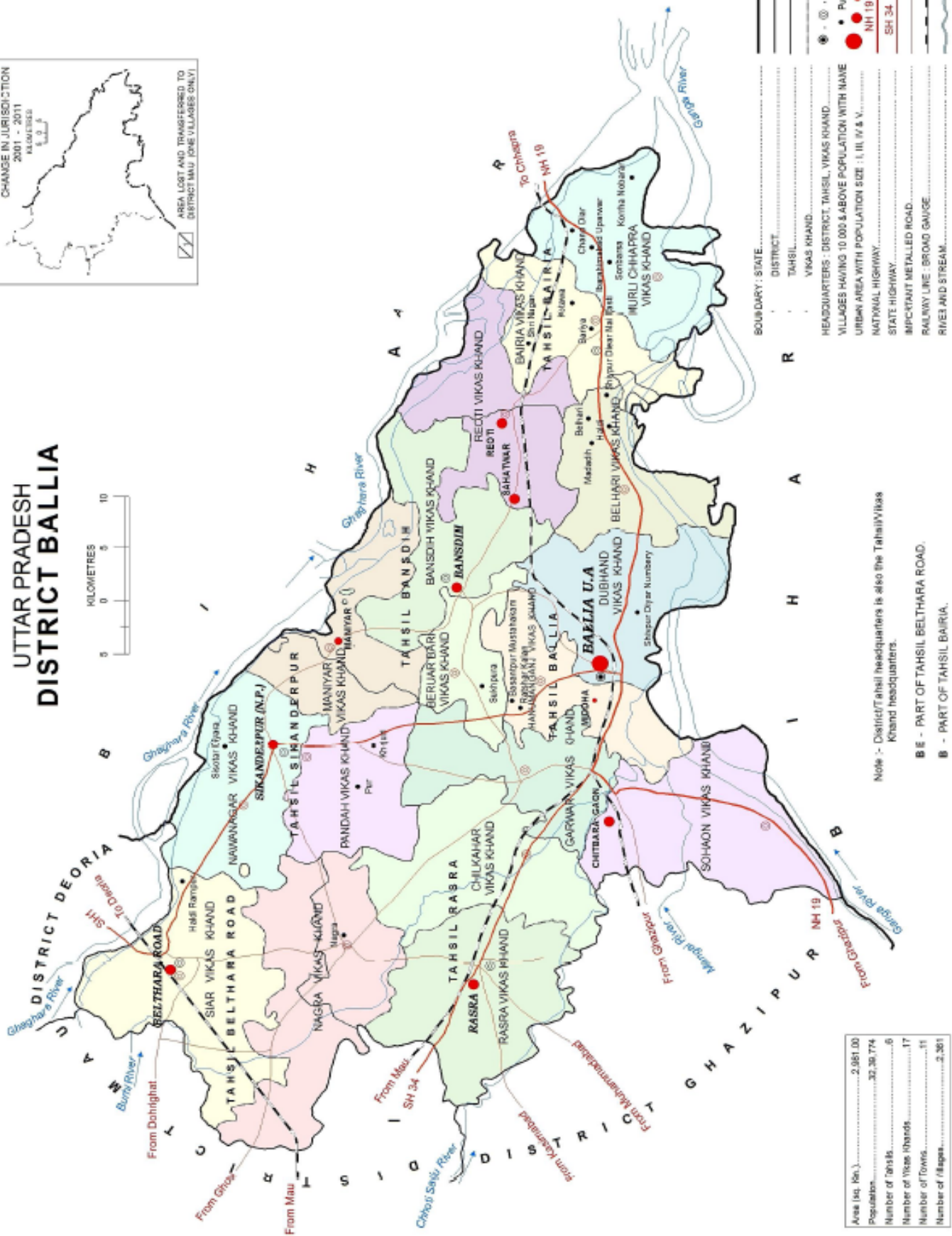
“बलिया ज़िला नहीं राष्ट्र है”

~ आचार्य हज़ारी प्रसाद द्विवेदी

Ballia is not a District. It is a Nation.

Acharya Hazari Prasad Dwivedi

UTTAR PRADESH DISTRICT BALLIA



Area (sq. Km.)	2,061.00
Population	32,30,774
Number of Tahsils	6
Number of Villages	17
Number of Towns	15
Number of Blocks	2,361

- BOUNDARY : STATE.....
- DISTRICT.....
- TAHSIL.....
- VILLAGES.....
- VILLAGES HAVING 10 000 & ABOVE POPULATION WITH NAME.....
- URBAN AREA WITH POPULATION SIZE : I, III, IV & V.....
- NATIONAL HIGHWAY.....
- STATE HIGHWAY.....
- IMPACT METALLED ROAD.....
- RAILWAY LINE : BROAD GAUGE.....
- RIVER AND STREAM.....

Note :- District/Tahsil headquarters is also the Tahsil/Vikas Khand headquarters.

BE - PART OF BELTHARA ROAD.

B - PART OF TAHSIL BAIIRA.

Introduction



Figure 1 Rural women look at goats grazing in the field, Ballia

Ballia district is one of the districts of Uttar Pradesh, India. This district is a part of Azamgarh division situated in the east of Uttar Pradesh. The main economic activity is agriculture. There are six tehsils in this district: Ballia, Bansdih, Rasra, Bairia, Sikandarpur and Belthara. Rasra is the second major commercial area of the district, having a government sugar mill and a cotton weaving industry. Though Ballia's core occupation is agriculture there are some additional small industries. Maniyar is known for its bindi industry and is a major supplier, while Hanumanganj area is popular for the dying craft Sinauhara. The Sikandarpur area of Ballia once was popular for Doli or palanquin. However, with course of time and rapid modernisation these crafts seek actionable attention from policy makers and stakeholders.

Geographically speaking the district is surrounded by three rivers namely, Ganga, Ghaghra and Saryu. Ghaghra River forms the northern boundary of the district and it originates from the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. The changes made in the course of the Ghaghra river are more sudden and volatile than in the Ganga. However, the damage done by Ghaghra is generally less due to its long run from the hills to the plains (Neville, 1907, 4-5). This river also receives very less drainage in this district, thus making its tributaries almost insignificant.



Figure 2 A Panoramic image near Sidehswarnath Mandir, Sarai Kota where Ganga is joined by tributary Thora river on the opposite bank of Buxar

The Ganga enters into the district in the extreme south of Paragana Graha and subsequently flows between Korantadih and Buxar. 'The changes effected by the river are extraordinarily great, and a comparison of a modern map with one of fifty years ago shows the most surprising alterations in the southern boundary of the district, the old landmarks having been swept out of existence, and the natural features of the past being wholly unrecognizable' (Neville, 1907, 6). One of the main differences between Ghaghra and Ganga is the fact that Ganga does not form any islands and its channel remains almost single. In 1986, Ganga flowed in the north-eastern direction in the district as far as the town of Ballia and then towards the east into Bihar (Mishra, 1986, 5).

Saryu River is the chief tributary of Ganga in this district. It enters the district in Paragana Bhadaon and effectively separates Ballia from Ghazipur. This river is navigable in the rainy season and in earlier days it was only used for commercial purposes as it was the easiest way to connect with the important business centre of Rasra (Neville, 1907, 9-10). This information points us towards the belief that Ballia district was connected to other cities via waterways, and it also was a flourishing centre of business.

According to the 2011 census Ballia district has a population of 3,239,774. At the time of the 2011 Census of India, 98.97% of the population in the district spoke Bhojpuri and 0.94% Urdu as their first language.



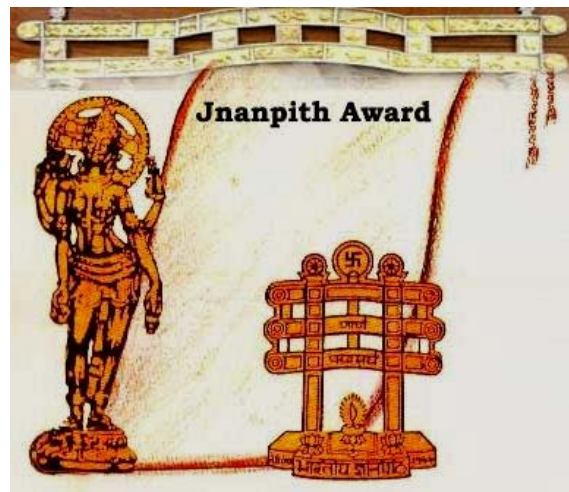
Figure 3 Entrance to Ballia railway station

Languages include Hindi, Urdu and Bhojpuri, a tongue in the Indo-Aryan languages group with almost 51,000,000 speakers, written in both the Devanagari and Kaithi scripts roughly equal to the nation of Mauritania or the US state of Iowa. This gives it a ranking of 108th in India (out of a total of 640). The district has a population density of 1,087 inhabitants per square kilometre (2,820/sq mi). Its population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 16.73%. Ballia has a sex ratio of 937 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 73.94%.

Contribution of Ballia to Hindi Literature is immense as many prominent scholars hail from Ballia, such as Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Bhairav Prasad Gupt and Amar Kant. Other notable persons belonging to the district are the brother duo of Baldev Upadhyaya, Sanskrit critic, and Krishndev Upadhyaya, Bhojpuri scholar with works in Bhojpuri folk literature, and Hindi

litterateurs Doodhnath Singh and Dr. Rambichar Pandey. Ballia is surrounded by two major rivers Ganga and Ghaghra (Saryu) that make this land more fertile.

This district has played an important role in modern History of the Sant tradition. Song, story, novel, essay, literary criticism—all these aspects have been developed by the literary figures of this city. Out of 11 Jnanpitha awards given to Hindi till this date, 2 have been received by people belonging to Ballia—famous writer Amarkant and famous poet Dr Kedarnath Singh. Modern Hindi poets of Ballia include Gurubhakt Singh Bhakt, Shriram Singh Uday, etc.



Bhojpuri poets include Shyam Sundar Ojha, Ram Sevak Vikal, Badri Narayan Tiwari, etc. Hindi story writers include Hazari Prasad Dwivedi, Dr Bhagwat Sharan Upadhyaya, Bhairav Prasad Gupt etc. In the field of Bhojpuri Drama, Kamla Kant Verma, Dr Ram Prasad Mishra, Harihar Ojha Tarun are worth mentioning. Dr Shyam Manohar Pandey got the collection of Lorika singing published in 10 volumes.

Ballia in History

Ancient History

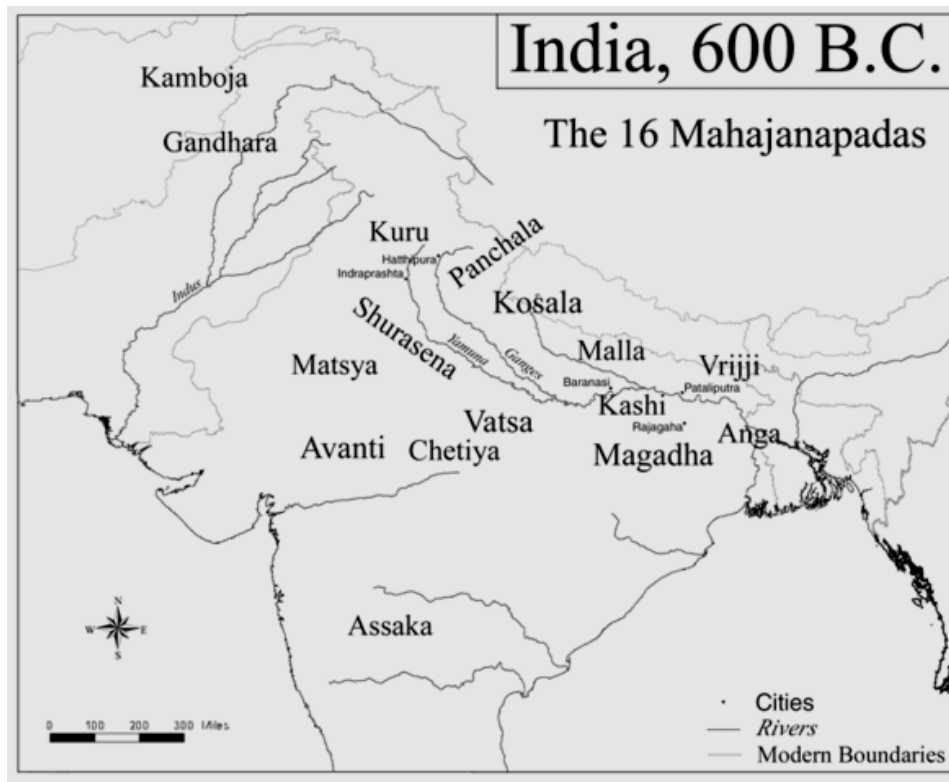
The city of Ballia holds great importance from the time of ancient civilizations. This is evident from a great deal of ruins and remains found from that period in and around the Ballia district. In the area of Barhmain and Hanumanganj, the remains of a large mound known as Miradih are found. Dark-coloured broken pieces of brick and pottery were found indicating the presence of an ancient city. Another ruins site of Khaira Dih is believed to be the ancient city named Bhargavapur, the abode of Rishi Jamadagni (Mishra, 1986,14). The black and redware found at numerous sites points to the existence of settlements which date back to 1450-1200 B.C.

In words of Dr. Ganesh Kumar Pathak, *“This place was sacred among various places, according to Hindu mythology and also a place of Bhrigu Rishi penance who built his Ashram here. At that time this place was divided into two Dharmaranya (Dharma region) and Brihadaranya (densely forested). There was a circumambulation or circular trail of 5 kms known as Panch Koshi Parikrama which even continues today which is the testimony of the sacredness of this place. Dardar Muni the disciple continued the legacy forward and because of him the annual festival of Dadari Mela is organised every year. Lakhneshwar Dih is one of the places which is believed to belong to the Lord Rama period. During their exile they crossed Lakhneshwar Dih to Buxar. Here Lord Laxmana constructed a shiva linga.”*

The district is known to have a close connection with many different stages of the Vedic period. Ballia was known as 'Bhrigu Baba ki Nagri'. Bhrigu baba was one of the Sapta Rishi or Seven Sages in the Hindu philosophy. He is known for Bhrigu Samhita or the compendium on Astrology. The etymology of the name of the district also points to the link with the sages. It is believed that the name has been taken after the sage Balmik or Valmiki who was a famous Hindu poet. He used to reside at this place, and the river supposedly washed away his shrine. An inscription found at an ancient tank named Dharmaranya Pokhara (about 137 kms from Ballia) indicate that several rishis practiced austerity here and the presence of an ancient

Aranya forest in the vicinity is possible (Mishra, 1986, 13). Many legends and mythological stories also surround this district. One such popular legend is about the name of the village Karon which is supposed to be derived from the word 'Kam-anuanya'. It is believed that Shiva got enraged and burned Kamdeo (the god of love) to ashes at this place after he attempted to disturb Shiva's meditation (Neville, 1907, 208).

The first major kingdom that the area of present-day Ballia was situated in was the Kosala kingdom. Kosala kingdom rose to become a Mahajanapada in 6th century B.C. and it flourished under the leadership of King Mahakoshala. He was succeeded by his son Prasenjit, after whose reign the decline of Kosala began. Not much is known about the history of this area after this decline. However, the existence of various ruined forts and their remains point to the control of the Bbars and the Cherus over this area. This information can also be supplemented by their mention in legends and folklore of this area (Mishra, 1986, 16).



Map source: www.ancient.eu

There was a brief rule of the Nandas in the mid 4th century B.C. whom the Mauryas succeeded, and the district came under the rule of Chandragupta. Since Ashoka (the grandson of

Chandragupta) was a patron of Buddhism, we find evidence of a ruined stupa in Ballia and remains of Buddhist monasteries at various places in the district (Mishra, 1986, 17-18). The district came under the rule of all those kingdoms who flourished in this fertile region irrigated by the river Ganga and its tributaries. The Shunga dynasty followed the Mauryas, and Pushyamitra Shunga ruled over almost the whole of the district. Subsequently, the district came under the rule of the Kushanas. The rule of Kushanas over this area is supplemented by a large number of coins of this period found at the ruins of Khaira Dih. There is a brief period of silence about the history of this region after the Kushanas. However, it is believed that the region after being ruled by some minor kings was annexed into the empire of Samudragupta. One of the most significant mentions of this district comes from the account of the Chinese traveller, Fa-hein who visited India during the rule of Chandragupta II. 'He mentions that on his way from Kasi to Patliputra, he came across a Buddhist monastery and a Buddhist temple in Ballia which bore the name of the vast solitude' (Mishra, 1986, 18).

After the Gupta dynasty, the next big political change in Ballia was the ascendancy of the Maukharis of Kannauj. The Maukharis were succeeded by Harsh Vardhan (606-647 A.D.) and Ballia district continued to be a part of his empire. It was during his reign that we find references to a Buddhist monastery in the area from the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang (629-644 A.D.) The repeated reference of the Buddhist monastery in the area solidifies its close connection with the history of the Ballia district. However, after the disintegration of Harshvardhan's empire, there was no concrete political authority in this area for around 75 years. The rule of Gurjara-Pratiharas was the next big change but their rise was stopped in its tracks by the invasion of Mahmud of Ghazni in 1018 A.D.

Medieval History

The second battle of Tarain did not bring Ballia directly into the fold of the Delhi Sultans and the tract to the east of the river Saryu was more or less controlled by the Rajputs. It is believed that the Sikhandarpur Pargana was inhabited by the Muslims. Muhammad Ghauri also passed by the district when he was going to Bihar and he constructed a fort by the Ghagra river in Qutbganj area. There still exists a mound in the Qutbganj area which is believed to be a part of that fort (Mishra, 1986, 21). However, there is no mention of Ballia in the history of this period written by contemporary Muslim scholars because this area was not administered by the Sultnate rulers until 1325 A.D. The nearby areas of Ghazipur, Jaunpur and Saran (in Bihar) were mostly controlled by the Hindus. It was at this point of time around 1325 A.D. that the area came under the control of Mohammad Tughlaq. This area also remained under the rule of Muslim rulers of Bengal for a brief period of time. In the year 1377 A.D., Sultan Firoz Shah Tughlaq gave the seat of Jaunpur to Malik Behroz Sultani and Jaunpur became the seat of a different government for the next 100 years. However, no monument from this period has been preserved. In 1474 A.D. Husain Shah, the ruler of Jaunpur was ousted by Bahlol Lodi and the district again came under the control of the Delhi Sultanate (Neville, 1907, 142-143). Some imperial garrisons were maintained around Sikandarpur area during Lodi's rule, but the importance of this area gradually faded away during the Mughal rule.

An inscription found at a mosque which was built in 1527 in Kharid indicates that the area was under the rule of an independent king of Bengal, Nusrat Shah. Kharid is known to have been a big city extending between Sikandarpur and Turtipur. When in 1528 Babur started his march towards Bengal, 'The Afghans took up their position on the north bank of Ghagra, close to its confluence with the Ganga while Babur proceeded by the river to Ghazipur' (Neville, 1907, 144). Babur pushed the Afghans across the Ghagra and towards Lucknow but soon after Babur's death, the Afghans started to assert their control over the region. Sher Khan taking advantage of Humayun's absence from the region regained control of the whole of Bihar and Jaunpur kingdom. In 1538, Humayun tried to take back the region but was defeated badly at the Battle of Chaunsa on the Ganga, fought very close to the border of this district.

Ballia district remained under the rule of Sher Shah and his successor for a long time until Akbar came to power and the whole eastern part was conquered by him in 1559. We find mention of Ballia in Ain-i-Akbari regarding its contribution of revenue by the various Parganas. 'There were three Mahals (revenue paying units) of the present district of Ballia in the sirkar of Jaunpur, namely Sikandarpur, Kharid and Bhadaon' (Mishra, 1986, 24). The following image shows the records from Ain-i-Akbari where the revenue paying Mahals of Ballia are mentioned.

163

Sarkar of Jaunpūr (North).

* Containing 41 Mahals, 870,265 Bighas, 4 Binsas. Revenue 56,394,107 dāms in money. *Suyūrghāl*, 4,717,654. Castes various. Cavalry 915. Infantry 36,000.

	Bighas and Binsas.	Revenue D.	Suyūrghāl D.	Cavalry.	Infantry	Castes.
Aldiman, ...	46,888-12	3,099,990	88,976	50	3,000	Rājput Bachgoti.
Angli, ...	42,992-14	2,713,551	464,516	50	3,000	Sayyid, Rājput, and Rahmatullāhi.
Bihari, ...	17,703	844,357	12,520	10	100	Anqari.*
Bhadon, ...	4,300	229,315	...	10	100	Saddiki.
Tilhanī, ...	10,983-8	654,363	27,457	10	100	Rājput.
Jaunpur with suburbs, has a fort, the lower part stone, and the upper constructed of brick	65,739-4	4,247,043	807,821	120	2,500	Rājput Kosak, Brahman, Kurmi.*
Chāndīpūr Badhar, (E. Bihar)	22,826-7	1,467,205	157,841	20	400	Rahmatullāhi, Brahman.
Chāndah, ...	17,500	980,286	.....	20	300	Bachgoti.
Chiriyākot, ...	14,153	807,848	13,089	20	300	Rājput.
Jakesar (E. Chakesar)	5,415-10	286,586	.....	10	100	Saddiki.
Kharid, has a brick fort on the banks of the Sarah (S...)	30,914-13	1,445,743	3,140	50	5,000	Rājput Kansik.
Khāspur Tāndah, ...	17,365	986,953	40,189	10	300	Kāyath.
Khānpūr, ...	6,628-10	3,06,020	5,387	...	150	Rājput.
Deogon, ...	44,524-18	2,582,205	196,238	25	1,000	Do. Gautami*
Rāri, ...	24,360	1,326,299	84,502	10	300	Rājput.
Sanjhāuli, ...	46,815-3	2,338,209	334,932	50	100	Sayyid, Rājput, Brahman.

164

	Bighas and Binsas.	Revenue D.	Suyūrghāl D.	Cavalry	Infantry	Castes.
Sikandarpūr, has a brick fort, ...	32,574-10	1,706,417	5,325	10	3,000	Brāhman.
Sagdi, (E. Sagri)	19,792	1,274,721	102,224	10	200	Rājput.
Surharpūr, ...	18,851	1,164,095	7,064	10	20	Do.
Shādābād, ...	30,848-8	1,700,742	10,020	20	400	Do.
Zafarābād, ...	2,822-9	156,926	13,800	...	50	Do.
Kariyāt Mittū, ...	8,991-11	551,410	.....	10	300	Do.
" Dostpūr, ...	8,857	481,524	42,227	...	100	Do.
" Mondah, ...	7,416	394,870	21,269	...	100	Do.
" Sōdāh, ...	2,988-10	205,733	14,224	...	100	Do.
Kōlah, ...	24,231	1,363,332	14,971	10	300	Do.
Ghiswah, ...	30,775	1,241,291	42,365	10	200	Do.
Ghōsi, ...	18,913	1,037,334	69,550	10	200	Do.
Gaswārah, ...	2,191	513,942	2,682	50	5,000	Rājput Bachgoti.
Kāndiyah, (E. Kanpiā)	5,764-12	341,890	.....	...	200	Rājput.
Gopāpūr, ...	3,266-8	18,043	4,948	...	100	Do.
Kasikāt, ...	48,332-14	23,002,748	77,339	20	500	Do.
Mandāhā, has a brick fort (E. Mariabū)	88,893-5	5,259,465	273,788	50	2,000	Rājput Kansik.
Muhammadsābād, ...	56,350-14	3,229,063	220,442	30	1,000	Rājput, Brahman.
Mūngra, ...	9,626-5	529,730	.....	...	200	Rājput.
Majhāura, ...	6,417-6	420,164	14,427	...	200	Rahmatullāhi.
Man, ...	2,645-3	209,067	.....	...	50	Shaikh sādah.
Nizamābād, ...	6,074-30	602,592	478,026	200	4,000	Rājput Gautami, Brahman, Rahmatullāhi.
Nāgn, ...	10,145	758,796	146,350	...	200	Brāhman.
Nathūpūr, ...	4,948-14	273,472	21,239	10	200	Saddiki.

Sarkar of Mānilpūr.

Containing 14 Mahals, 666,222 Bighas, 5 Binsas. Revenue 33,916,527 Dāms in money. *Suyūrghāl*, 8,446,173. Castes various. Cavalry 2,040. Infantry, 2,900.

Source: www.archive.org

Modern History

The nature of administrative control in the area changed after the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 and the local Rajputs began to assert their independence. When Muhammad Shah rose to the throne in 1719, he awarded the jagir of land which constitutes present-day Ballia to his courtier Murtaza Khan (Mishra, 1986, 25). The area came under the virtual control of the Nawab of Awadh around 1728. The Nawab of Awadh had tumultuous relations with the local Rajputs resulting in frequent clashes. The area was held by Balwant Singh from 1758 to 1764 as a feudatory of the Raja of Benaras. The British victory in the Battle of Buxar in 1764 led to the transfer of the Varanasi province, which also included Ballia, to the East India Company.

The treaty of Allahabad signed in 1765 allowed Balwant Singh to retain control of the area till he paid regular tribute and even though he faced tough resistance from Shuja-ud-daula, he held the position till his death in 1770. He was succeeded by his son Chait Singh who continued to run the administration along the lines established by his father (Mishra, 1986, 27-28). The Parganas were leased to Amils who were responsible for the administration and sending the revenue to the Raja. The Amils can be best described as rent assessment and collection officials. The East India Company acquired direct control of the District from 1781 and they also continued with the system of Amils. There was a lot of maladministration in this area by the British officials and therefore in 1794, a major change made by the company was to separate the territories under their immediate control from that of the private domains of the Raja. There was some redistribution of territories and after 1837, the tehsil of Ballia included the Parganas of Ballia, Doaba and Kharid, which formed a subdivision of the Ghazipur district.

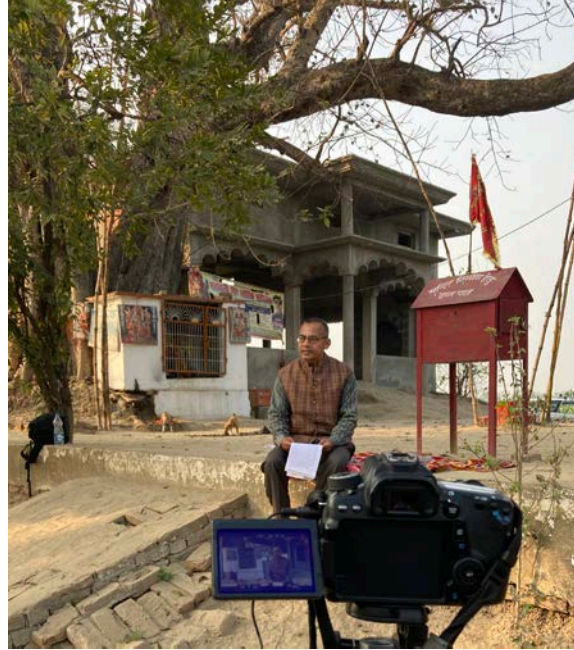


Figure 4 Treasury house at Korantadih, Ballia

उत्तर सरयू दक्षिण गंगा,
दो नदियों की घाटी,
बीच बसा बलिदानी बलिया,
जिसकी पवित्र माटी

If we look at the cultural aspect of this place, this area has very fertile soil. Ballia has been the origin of the Vedic culture and this place was not left untouched by the Buddhist influence also. We get to know from the Chinese traveller Huein Tsang that when Buddha was travelling from Bodhgaya to Sarnath, he rested in "Korashtvana" which is in the south of Ballia. A large number of Shiva temples from the Ancient period can still be found here. A large number of Devi temples can also be found in various parts of the district. The Bhawani Temple in Sona-dih and Shankarpur, Lorik and Barmain Bhawani, Mangala Bhawani, Kapileshwar Bhawani are worth mentioning.

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The 1857 Uprising in Ballia

Ballia had a significant contribution to the mutiny of 1857. The district at that time had no individuality of its own, and the events which are in any way connected with Ballia belong more properly to the history of Azamgarh and Ghazipur (Neville, 1907, 154). At the beginning of May, no major incidents happened in the area. However, on 1st June 1857, the news of mutiny and disarmament of Benaras regiment reached Azamgarh and the 17th Native Infantry stationed at



Figure 5 Mangal Pandey, Hero of 1857 Uprising

Azamgarh went into disorder. 'The Sepoys behaved exactly as they chose, and became the terror, instead of being the safeguard of the European inhabitants' (Malleeson, 1857, 82). Many landholders and villagers joined the chaos and tried to take back their ancestral holdings. The police were also rendered helpless and the whole area remained disorganised for some time. The stability was regained after the arrival of a hundred soldiers from Benaras.

Mangal Pandey was one of the Indian soldiers who played important role in the outbreak of the Indian rebellion of 1857. He was sepoy in the 34th Regiment of Bengal Native infantry of British East India Company. He is regarded as the hero of Indian Mutiny of 1857. He was born in Nagwa, a village of upper Ballia district, Uttar Pradesh.

Since the area remained peaceful for several months, most of the British army was stationed around Lucknow in March 1858. At this time, Kunwar Singh was in open rebellion and he had captured almost the whole of the Shahabad district except for Arrah. He took advantage of such a situation and 'marched through Ballia into Azamgarh where he was joined by a large number of freedom fighters' (Mishra, 1986, 30). His small force included many rebels like Abhilakh Singh, Madho Singh, Ram Bhairoo Singh, Randulaar Singh, Sheerbarat Singh, Thakur Singh and Yuddoobeer Singh who joined Kunwar Singh at Azamgarh (Ministry of Culture, Government of

India, 2019). They all fought together but soon retreated after realising that they had no chance against the British on 15th April 1858. Kunwar Singh was constantly engaged with the British troops as they followed him for several days in and around the area of Ballia district. The retreat of Kunwar Singh from the Ballia region did not disappoint the freedom fighters, most of whom belonged to Ballia. They continued to show their disagreement with the British and disorder prevailed in the district till July. Peace was restored in the region when Douglas finally crushed the followers of Kunwar Singh in the Kaimur hills (Neville, 1907, 159). Many of the rebel friends of Kunwar Singh were captured in May 1858 and charged with murder and rebellion against the British. They were sentenced to death and executed by hanging from a mango tree (Ministry of Culture, Government of India, 2019).

*गोलियां कम पड़ गयी थीं लेकिन सीने कम नहीं पड़े
(in context of August Kranti of 1942 at Ballia)*

If you see the pillar at Bairiya (a town in Ballia), it has the names of 22 people who were killed by the British. This is the place with the second most violent incident in British times. The first one being the famous Chauri-Chaura. Ballia became independent in 1942 and there is one man responsible for it. It was the Chittu Pandey because of whom the then District Magistrate, Mr JC Nigam, supported the local rebels and let them flutter the Indian tricolour.

Shri. Ram Vichar Pandey, Veteran Freedom fighter, Ballia





Figure 6 Raja Kunwar Singh

Raja Kunwar Singh was an important freedom fighter of the region. During the rebellion, his army had to cross the Ganga River. Douglas' army began to shoot at their boat. One of the bullets shattered Singh's left wrist. Singh felt that his hand had become useless and that there was the additional risk of infection due to the bullet-shot. He drew his sword and cut off his left hand near the elbow and offered it to the Ganga.¹

अब छोड रे फिरंगिया! हमार देसवा! लुतपत कैले तुहुँ,
मझवा उडले कैलास, देस जुलुम जोर।
सहर गाँव लुटि, फुनकी, दिहि फिरंगिया,
सूनी सूनी कुंवर के हरदा मेरे लागल अगिया!
आब छोड रे फिरंगिया! हमार देसवा!

O British ! Now quit our country ! For you have looted us, enjoyed the luxuries of our country and oppressed our countrymen. You have looted, destroyed and burnt our cities and villages. Kunwar's heart burns to know all this. O British ! Now quit our country!

A Bhojpuri Song mentioning Kunwar Singh

Source: (Badri Narayan (1998). "Popular Culture and 1857: A Memory against Forgetting". *Social Scientist*. 26 (1/4): 86–94. doi:10.2307/3517583. JSTOR 3517583)

¹ Sarala, Śrīkṛṣṇa (1999). *Indian Revolutionaries: A Comprehensive Study, 1957-1961, Volume 1*. Bihar: Prabhat Prakashan. p. 73. ISBN 978-81-87100-16-4.

1942: August *Kranti*, Baaghi Ballia and Chittu Pandey

As the entire country was under protest and resentment against the British and demanded freedom from them, at Ballia the public already swung into action. In the Revolution of 1942 known as August Kranti of Ballia, a new history was created daily in Ballia from 9 August to 19 August. Gandhiji decided to launch a decisive struggle against the British, in view of which the Congress met the All India Congress Committee on 7 and 8 August in Mumbai and gave a slogan



Figure 7 Statue of Chittu Pandey at Chittu Pandey Chauraha, Ballia

to the British to leave India and called on the countrymen to be prepared for a protest under the cry 'do or die'.

Gandhiji had prepared the draft for Quit India Movement on the morning of August 7, before the meeting started. However, before the sunrise of 9 August, before the draft reached the people, the British government arrested all the senior leaders of the Congress including Gandhiji and declared the Congress an illegal organization. This gave a tremendous push to the revolutionaries. Initially, the movement was cold, but within a week, the country-wide movement against the British broke out.



Figure 8 Chittu Pandey, hero of August Kranti of 1942 at Ballia

The first phase of the Ballia movement started on 9 August 1942, which spread from Bhojpur region to Midnapore on the same day. On the same day, 15-year-old courageous activist Suraj Prasad approached Umashankar Singh with a Hindi newspaper even after censoring and informed about the arrest of Gandhi ji along with Bhompa and other leaders. In the second phase, the movement caught on and made the British realize that now they would have to leave India. One prominent figure who played a crucial role in August Kranti of Ballia was Chittu Pandey. He was described as the "Tiger of Ballia" by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose because of his impeccable leadership during the Quit India Movement. He was born in Rattuchak, a village in Ballia District.



Figure 9 Postage stamp in commemoration of August Kranti at Ballia

Nagwa Village: Peepul Trees and Mangal Pandey



Figure 10 Heritage Trees and a college at Nagwa, the birth place of 1857 Uprising star Mangal Pandey

Letter by Dr. Ganesh Kumar Pathak to Local Administration

Subject: Heritage status for 150 years old Peepul (Sacred Fig) trees at Nagwa Village

बातें गाँव- गिराँव की- बलिया जिला के नगवाँ गाँव में स्थित है लगभग डेढ़ सौ वर्ष पुराना देव वृक्ष "पीपल"

13 जनवरी, 2021 को 84 वर्षीय मेरी बड़ी भाभी द्वारा इहलोक से परलोक में प्रस्थान के पश्चात इधर लगातार 12-13 दिनों से अपने पैतृक गाँव नगवा के पैतृक आवास पर रहना हुआ। इस दौरान गाँव के महत्वपूर्ण स्थानों पर भी गया, जिसमें से एक पवित्र स्थान है "चित्रसेन बाबा" का, जो गाँव ही नहीं, क्षेत्रीय लोगों के लिए भी अतीव श्रद्धा एवं आस्था से ओत- प्रोत है। गाँव के बुजुर्गों के अनुसार इस स्थान पर जो देव वृक्ष पीपल है, वह लगभग डेढ़ सौ वर्ष पुराना है। जो अपने-आपमें एक मिशाल है। इस प्राचीन धरोहर का अब धीरे- धीरे क्षरण हो रहा है। आवश्यकता है इस अमूल्य धरोहर को बचाने की, जिसके लिए जिला प्रशासन एवं वन विभाग को पहल करनी चाहिए।

~ डॉ. गणेश कुमार पाठक

Environmentalist and Former Principal,
Amar Nath Mishra P.G. College, Dubey Chapra, Ballia





Figure 11 J.C. Nigam, ICS Officer at Ballia, was sacked as the British officials held him responsible for allowing the protest of 19th August 1942 or 'August Kranti' by his fellow countrymen

On the morning of August 19, when a crowd of more than 5000 people reached the district magistrate's compound they were greeted by their leader Chittu Pandey and JC Nigam. Amid slogans and songs of freedom, the Union Jack was lowered and the Tricolour unfurled. Ballia became the first Indian city to declare its independence from British rule, at least for a few days. A popular government was formed, led by Chittu Pandey. It took less than 10 days for the British to unleash the most brutal reprisal. The colonial government killed more than a 100 leaders by hanging them from trees. Others were shot or tortured or simply imprisoned in overcrowded jails. JC Nigam was sacked by the British on the allegations of supporting the Indians.²

² <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/independence-day-2017-daughter-of-ups-british-era-magistrate-looks-back-at-1942-august-kranti-1737890>

Khairah Dih³

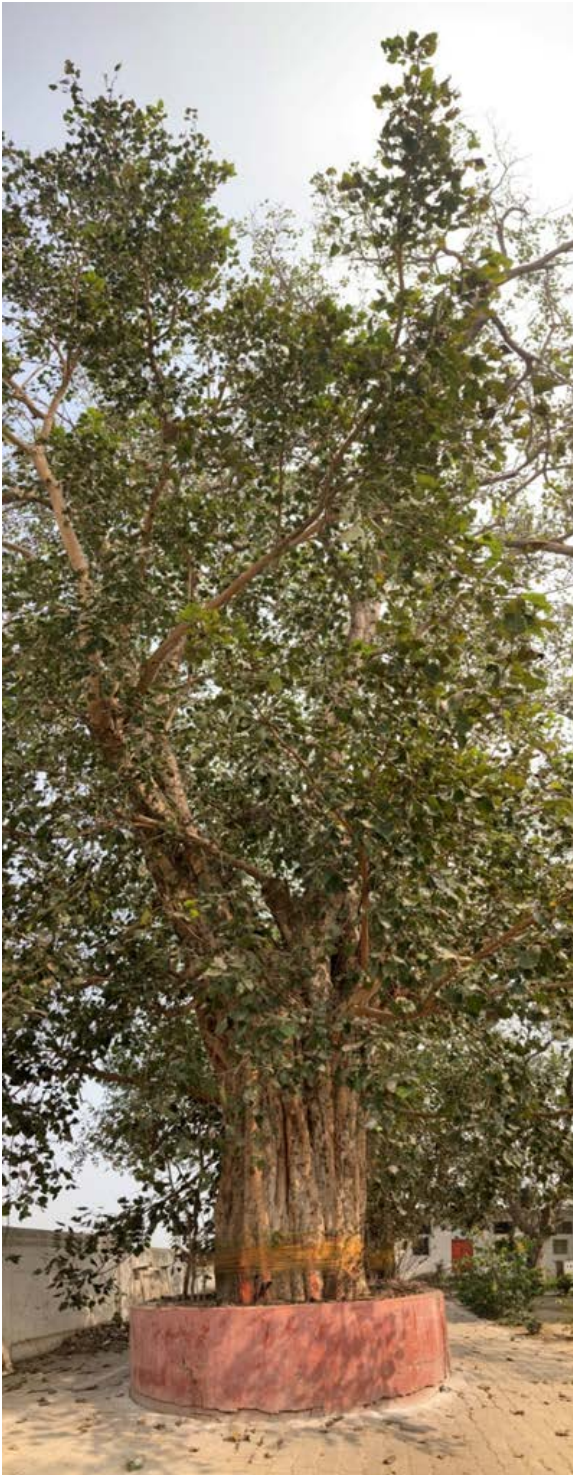


Figure 12 A peepul tree, Sankirtan Nagar

It is not just the Peepul tree at Nagwa and the oral histories around it. There are other areas as well within the district, where these humongous trees used to protect its inhabitants from natural calamities such as earthquakes and floods. Khairah Dih was one such place. As Dr. Pathak says, “Khaira Dih in Rasara tehsil, which is also a ruined site of a very ancient city named Bhargavapur, is presumed to have been the place where the rishi Jamadagni lived. It is near Ghagra river, belongs to Kushana period and was a very important commercial place for trade. At Khaira Dih, excavations carried out under the auspices of the Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, have brought to light relics of the black and red ware civilization (1450-1200 B.C.) at various sites such as Bhumapardih, Bijulipur, Godabirgarh, Lovika-katopa, Maira Dih, Pakka Kot and Vainagadho, indicating that the tract enjoyed settled life and civilization from this early time.”

³ Dih means a small village

There was a huge Peepul tree there which is believed to have held the entire village with its strong roots during natural calamities like earthquakes and floods; about which a local popular saying goes:

चाक डोले चक्र बम बम डोले

खैरा पीपर कबहुँ ना डोले।

In other words; during earthquakes everything will shake be it the chaak or the potter's wheel, but not Khaira (village) because of Peepar or Peepul tree. The tree used to save the village from floods of Ghagra as well as its roots ensured that the soil erosion was contained.

Lakhneswhar Dih

Lakhneshwar Dih is one of the places which is believed to belong to the Lord Rama period. During their exile they crossed Lakhneshwar Dih to Buxar. Here Lord Laxmana constructed a shiva linga.



Figure 14 Fort at Lakneshwar Dih



Figure 13 Idol of Lord Vishnu found during an excavation in 1954

The image shows the front cover of a book. The cover is a solid light grey color. In the center, the title 'DICTIONARY OF MARTYRS' is printed in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Below the title, the subtitle 'INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE (1857-1947)' is printed in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

DICTIONARY OF
MARTYRS
INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE
(1857-1947)

Mangal Pande: Hailed from Ballia, the North-Western Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh); Brahmin; a young sepoy of the 34th infantry stationed at Barrackpore near Calcutta (now Kolkata) and had a good record of about seven years in service. He was aware of the mutinous behaviour of his compatriots at Berhampore and learnt about the greasing of cartridges with pigs and cow fat, an idea most repugnant to the sepoys' religious feelings. He also heard the rumour that the Government suspected the sepoys of treachery and had called for European troops to disarm them. On 29 March 1857, Mangal Pande created a commotion by appealing to his comrades in arms to oppose the use of the greased cartridges. The Sergeant-Major ordered for his arrest but the Indian soldiers refused to carry out the order. It was at this point that Mangal Pande struck a blow at the Sergeant-Major and wounded him and one Lieutenant Baugh in a fight. Pande was immediately surrounded by the guards and other European officers, in the presence of the Commanding Officer, General Hearsay, and he came to realize that his end was near. Mangal Pande then called upon his comrades to come to his aid and, seeing that nobody was responding, he tried to commit suicide by shooting himself. But the wound was not fatal and Pande was sent to the hospital. He was court-martialled on 6 April 1857 and hanged at Barackpore on 8 April 1857. He was the first martyr of the Revolt of 1857.

[Mil/Deptt, Regarding Execution of Mangal Pande (Letter to Court), No 119 of 8 April 1857; Mil/Deptt. Trl Proc of Mangal Pande, Nos. 527-28 and 535 of 7 April 1857, NAI; MOM, p.16]

Balliyag, Ballua: Etymology and Sant Nagari Ballia



Figure 15 Shri Baba Ram Udardas ji Mahant Mahatya Math, Udaseen Akahada, Ballia

The origin of the name of the district, Ballia, has long been a matter of dispute. It is locally said to have been derived from the name of the sage Valmiki, the celebrated Hindu poet and the author of the epic *Ramayan*, whose having resided here was commemorated by a shrine which has long been washed away. Another belief about the origin of the name is that it has been derived from the sandy nature of the land of the place, locally known as "*Ballua*" ('balu' meaning sand). There are many stories behind the name of this region. River Ganga and River Saryu meet near Ballia making it a significant religious place for the followers of Hinduism (Neville, 1907, 180-182).



Figure 16 Ballua (sand) on the banks of the Ganga, Ballia name believed to be derived from it

Balliyag

The other belief behind the etymology of Ballia as Balliyag revolves around the episode of Raja Bali and the Vaman avatar of Lord Vishnu; this was the exact spot where Bali put his head as an offering in front of Lord Vishnu to put during his 'teen pag' demand. Shrutis and evidence are available in the context of the temple and the amazing Shivalinga installed in it, according to which this Shivalinga Deity is worshiped by Danavir Raja Bali. According to mythological texts, Lord Vishnu had to come himself as a Vamana Brahmin in a yajna performed by King Bali under the auspices of Shukracharya, the priest of Daityakul, son of Maharishi Bhrigu. During this period, a temple was built along with an installation of a Shiv Linga by Bali which is believed to exist even today. Perhaps this is the reason that the programme of worship and havan goes on at this temple twenty-four hours throughout the year.

The number of sages that have had their connection with Ballia is a topic which requires independent research on its own. But it can be said that after hitting Lord Vishnu with his feet, this was the place where Lord Bhrigu chose to regret his actions. In Ballia district, Vishram Bhagat, Sant Bhika Sahib, Sant Keenaram have had some connection or the other to this land. The Sant tradition has been continuing since ancient times. According to Dr Pitambar Dutt Barthwal, this stream of consciousness and spirituality which flows in the Indian way of life has its origins shrouded in the dark



Figure 17 Lord Vishnu in Vaman avatar rests his foot on the head of Raja Bali, Source: ArtnIndia

clouds of antiquity. The main tradition of Ballia is that of devotion which has not been broken since the 17th century. The first saint of this land was Saint Sivaram who was the disciple of the Saint Keenaram of Benaras. There is not a lot of information known about the Saints and the established saints don't consider it appropriate that something should be written about them. Even Tulsidas has said "kavit vivek ek nahi more, Kah likhdu jas Kagaj kore." Kabir has also said, "Kabira kutta Ram ka, Motiya mera naam, Gale Ram ki Jewari, Jit khenche tit jaun."

Saint Keenaram's guru, Baba Sivaram was commemorated by constructing 4 mathas in his name. *Baba Sivaram's shrine is found in the village of Karo. He wrote the treatise named Bhakt Jaimal* which is still unpublished. Dr Shobhanath Lal has done research on Baba Sivaram. Sant Chainram Baba was born in the village Baghav in a Brahman family in the year 1683. He was a very well reputed saint of Dharmeshwari tradition. He died in the year 1788. His shrine is in Sahatwar. There is an Inter College named after him and he is still revered in the Ballia Janpad. Sant Maharaj Baba, who was the disciple of Sant Chainram Baba, was born in the village Milki. It is considered that he was born around 1708 A.D. and established an ashram in the village Milki. It was a 25 feet high structure made of mud but now it has been constructed into a "pucca"

construction. He took a samadhi here purportedly at the age of 125. Harlal Sahab was a saint of the Bawri tradition. He was born in the village Chitpada in the year 1723 in a Kaushik family. Because of customs followed in this village, no one ate any animal meat products in this village and these products were also not sold here.

Sant Shiv Narayan Swami was born in the village Chandwar in Ballia. The followers of Shiv Narayani sect exist in places as far as Sri Lanka, Aden and Balochistan. He wrote 16 works which include *Shabda granth*, *Sant akshari*, *Sant wajan* etc. Dr Ramchandra Tiwari researched on the Shivnarayani tradition. According to Shivnaryan ji, God exists in each atom of the universe. In his practice, he gave special emphasis to aspects like yoga and meditation. Sudisht Baba was born in the Goniha Chhapra village of Ballia. He was a disciple of Maharaj Baba of the Dharmeshwari tradition. The fair started by him is still held on Aghan Sudip Panchami. There is a college named after him in Sudishtpuri, Raniganj.



Figure 18 A giant door on the road mentioning Maharishi Bhṛigu Dwar

Raghunath

Sahab was born in the village Kanaila in 1760. He was a disciple of Bhika sant of the Bawri tradition. The ashram started by him in Kanaila is still running. He was a very well reputed saint.

Swami Ramchandra was the founder of the Sitarami sect. He was born in 1763. He has described the Ram-katha beautifully in his treatise *Ramchandrika*. He died in 1833 A.D.

Ramkumar sahab was born in the village Talimpur of district Ballia. He was placed as the head of Bharkuda seat in 1850 and passed away in 1863.



Figure 19 Suvachan Daasi, Image Source: Dr. Shripath Kumar Yadav

Saint Suvachan Daasi, Ballia's Meera: She is the only Saint poetess of Ballia. She was born in 1870 in the village Dehma of Ghazipur district. Her Guru clan was "Udaseen". She was inducted into the fold of saints in the Udaseen tradition. She meditated for years on the banks of the Ghaghra and made an ashram in Yusufpur. That is where her samadhi exists. Her student tradition is still going on. She wrote works like *Premtarangini*, *Vigyaan sagar*, *Bideh mokshprakash*, *Apurvavilas* and *Anubhavprakash*. Her language was Bhojpuri.

Ballia's Gandhi: Sadafal Maharaj was born in the Pakdi village. He made a cave in the ashram and meditated in that cave for 17 years. He also worked for the freedom movement and also served jail time of 2 years because of this. He always wore Khadi clothes and boycotted foreign goods. He established ashrams in four places, Pakdi, Ballia, Jhusi, Prayagraj, Gaya, Bihar and Uttaranchal. He was a great devotee of Kabir. His primary written work is *Swara-bheda*.

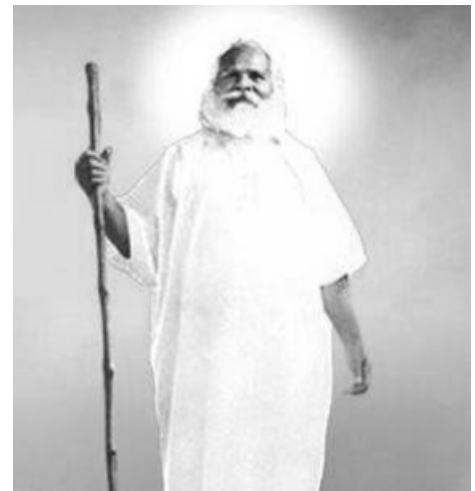


Figure 20 Sant Sadafal Maharaj

Saint Hareram bhramchari's samadhi is in Siwan, Bihar.

Raghupati Das was born in the Kewra village. He accepted the discipleship of Bacchudas in Milki.

Jangli baba was born in 1836. He practiced in Kathua and Garhwal. There is an inter-college in Garhwal in his name.

Swami Haridas Ji was the first chairman of Sangeet Martandya Hindu Mahasabha and also the first chairman of Udaseen Nirmaan Parishad. He constructed Bholaghat in Buxar.

Khapariya Baba Munishwaranand: According to his devotees, he was born in Bengal. He belonged to a rich family and while he received higher education, he was also posted as a Judge. He turned from materialism to spirituality and established an ashram in Kirtan Nagar in Ballia. At this place, he is said to have attained Salvation.



Figure 21 Khapariya Baba

Saint Chiraiya Baba was a very famous saint and he was also very compassionate towards animals. He was born in Jannadi village of Ballia. He was a devotee of Lord Rama and Gangaji. His ashram exists in Ramghat.

Sant Pashupat Nath was born in Doab in the year 1910. He studied Sanskrit very deeply and with his parents' permission accepted Brahmcharya and then wandered on the banks of the Ganga. He taught the lesson of brotherhood and lived in Patna for a long time. He died in 2004.

Ishwar das ji Brahmchari Mauni Baba: Currently he resides in Maunieshwar Dham, Duhara, Ballia. He has taken a vow to remain silent and have been so for more than 40 years.

Rambarak baba: His guru Gharan is in Chitrakut. He may be around 85 years old. Because of local people's request, he opened an ashram here. He also fasts for the month of Kartik every year on the banks of the river Ganga.

Hariharanand Swami is a student of Khapariya Baba. He has written a lot of spiritual books. He only resides where the name of Rama is revered.

The Sant tradition of Ballia is so long that it is impossible to mention all of them here, but some names are: Shrinath Baba Rasda, Santosh Das Milki, Lamptu Baba Bhopalpur, Karan Gosain

Bhairiya, Kapildev Gosain Bairiya, Sevadas, Jayaprakash Nagar, Thakuridas, Chuthar Acharya Dharmdeva Chandra Pakdi, Vigyan dev ji Maharaj Pakdi, Sudamaji Maharaj, Rameshwar Das Chitbara. Ballia has played an important role in the development of Sant literature.

The main tradition of Ballia is that of devotion which has not been broken since the 17th century. The first saint of this land was Saint Sivaram who was the disciple of the Saint Keenaram of Benaras. There is not a lot of information known about the Saints and the established saints don't consider it appropriate that something should be written about them. Even Tulsidas has said:

*कबित बिबेक एक नहिं मोरें।
सत्य कहउँ लिखि कागद कोरें॥*

(In other words, 'I do not have knowledge of a single thing related to these poems, I write this on blank paper (oath) to tell the truth'.)

Kabir has also said:

*कबीर कुत्ता राम का, मुतिया मेरा नाऊं।
गलै राम की जेवड़ी, जित खेंचे तित जाऊं॥*

(In other words, 'I am Ram's dog, and my name is Mutia. Ram's chain is lying around my neck, I go wherever he leads. In such a bond of love, there is pleasure'.)

So, all the great saints passed on their knowledge and philosophy orally.

Dr. Shripath Kumar Yadav,
Associate Professor, Satish Chandra College, Ballia
(During field documentation of Sant Parampara of Ballia)



Ujjiyar Village: The trail of Rama's Exile

भोर भरोलि उगे उजियार,

बक्सर जाए ताड़का मार।



Figure 22 A view of Ganga and Buxar from the heritage building of Pandit Gorakhnath Upadhyay

When lord Rama, Lakshmana and Sita along with sage Vishwamitra came to Ujjiyar village, a magical dawn emerged. Ujjiyar and Bharoli are two villages which find mythological references for Lord Rama's exile route.

Ujjiyar is located between the bank of watercourse of the Ganga and National Highway-19. This village is separated from the province by the Ganga. It is a very old village and encompasses a variety of special features. The population of this village is about 3000. A local expression within the Ballia space means Lord Ram together with Lakshman and Sage Vishwamitra took the route of Bharauli and Ujjiyar village within the wee hours to wipe out demon Tadaka.

Accompanied by Rama and Lakshmana, Viswamitra reached the hermitage of Kama at the confluence of Sarayu and Ganga. When the night turned into daybreak, the eminent ascetic Viswamitra, addressing the descendants of Kakutstha (Rama and Lakshmana), who were lying on a bed of leaves, said:



Figure 23 A stall selling the epic *Ramayana* near Ujjiyar Ghat on Mauni Amavasya

प्रभातायां तु शर्वर्या विश्वामित्रो महामुनिः।

अभ्यभाषत काकुत्स्थो शयानो पर्णसंस्तरे॥1.23.1॥

The people of this village have always been hardworking and have been in various prestigious posts; even during British rule some of them served as City Magistrate and Additional district judge and such coveted posts. During that period when Ballia was a Tehsil of Ghazipur district, Pandit Raghunandan Upadhyay was a city Magistrate in Ghazipur. When Ballia was a Tehsil and it was submerged in the Ganga at that time the headquarter was shifted to Ujjiyar.

Historically, Ujjiyar village was one of the important trading spots. According to the District Gazetteer of 1907, the chief riverside marts on the Ganga were at Ballia, Kotwa, Ujjar, Jauhi, and on the Ghagra at Belthara, Maniar, and Parbodhpur, though neither can compare with the large business centre of Revelganj on the Bengal side of the river. The traffic on the waterways has been supplanted to a large extent by the various railway lines which traverse the district.



Figure 24 Google map screenshot showing the trail of Rama and companions from Bharauli to Buxar (above) Ramrekha Ghat, Buxar opposite the bank of Ujjiyar ghat

The people of Ujjiyar also contributed to the freedom struggle and the written proof of this can be found in the book written by Professor Jaspal titled *Teri Meri Uski Baat*.

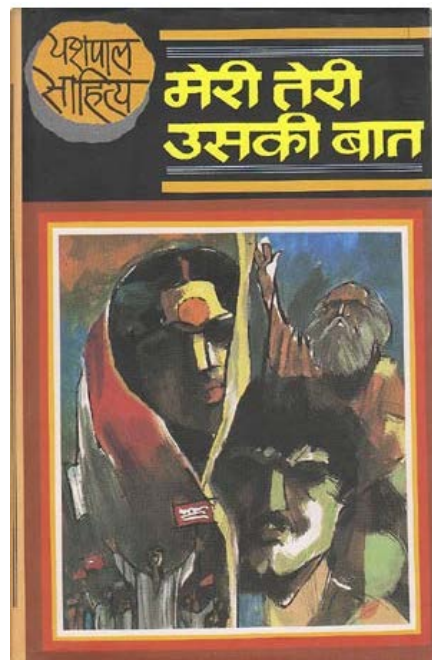


Figure 25 Cover of *Teri Meri Uski Baat*



Figure 26 Ancestors of Upadhyay family, Ujjiyar village. Pandit Raghunandan Upadhyay (centre) was a City Magistrate during the British rule.



Figure 27 Sh. Rajeev Upadhyay (politician) along with Sh. Jai Prakash Upadhyay (Sarpanch) at the residence of Pandit Sh. Gorakhnath Upadhyay

The Upadhyay family is one of the renowned families which have an ancestral Haveli near river Ganga. Late Kameshwar Upadhyay Ji, Rabindranath Upadhay Ji, ancestors of this family have been awarded with the Padma award and Kabir Puruskar. There was a female fighter for Independence named Smt. Shail Kumari who is also mentioned in the book of Prof. Jaspal. She stayed here in this village during the freedom struggle.

The Panchayat head of Ujjiyar, Shri Jai Prakash Upadhyay, a member of the Upadhyay family, considers himself fortunate to be born at Ujjiyar and is forever indebted to Mother Ganga. In his own words, *'This Ujjiyar is so close to Ganga but due to the blessing of Gangaji, this place doesn't get affected by floods and the people living near the river are also blessed with good health because of the water and air of Mother Ganga. It is believed if a person dies and his ashes are scattered in the river Ganga, his soul goes to heaven. I am fortunate to be born here and forever indebted to Mother Ganga as because of her blessings in our village, the natural calamities have not struck. Ujjiyar is a village but is modern in all aspects; all facilities are*

available here like a telephone exchange, roads, banks and a roadways depots which help the people living in this area. Farmer are beneficiaries of Ganga because the floodwater leaves behind fertile soil which helps the farmer to grow pulses and vegetables. The people from this place have achieved national and international fame. For example, the late Bhagwat Sharan Upadhyay Ji was a commissioner, Rabindranath Upadhyay Ji was felicitated by the Padma Shri, Professor Jagannath Upadhyay Ji got the Nehru fellowship, Professor Uttamchand Upadhyay was the Vice-Chancellor of the Narendra Dev Agricultural University. It was because of his efforts that an agriculture centre was established in the nearby village which helped the local people. Regarding the local economic activity in this area, there was a famous figure called Pandit Gorakhnath whose business was spread out to areas as far as Nepal. His businesses such as toll collection and other activities were spread out in eastern Uttar Pradesh. He gave employment to thousands in his construction business. This village is so close to Ganga but the locals believe that due to the blessing of Gangaji, this place doesn't get affected by floods and the people are also blessed with good health due to its location near river Ganga."



Figure 28 Street view of Ujjiyar village; the Ganga can be seen in the distance



Figure 29 Documentation of the Sarpanch at Pandit Gorkahnath Upadhyay heritage building



Figure 30 Ladies and children from Nasirpur Math village going towards the Ujjiyar Ghat during Mauni Amawasya

Sacred Complexes

Bhrigu Ashram



Figure 31 Idols of Maharishi Bhrigu (left) with his disciple Dardar Muni at Bhrigu Ashram

The temple was constructed to commemorate saint Bhrigu. To this date, he is a famous and respected saint in Ballia and its surrounding areas. The temple is enshrined with the idols of Bhrigu Baba and his disciple Dardar Muni. This temple has both religious and ritualistic importance. 'The existing shrine is the third at least of that name and stands further inland than its predecessors, near the Dharma-Vanya tank, an ancient excavation where thousands of Rishis are said to have performed their yajna' (Neville, 1907, 180-182). Many people believe that 'thousands of rishi munis have performed pooja at this location making this place divine. Additionally, it is believed that Bhrigu Muni has written *Bhrigu Samhita* which is supposed to be a document pertaining to future predictions of humans.' (Anonymous, n.d.) The premises of Bhrigu temple also contain the Bhrigu Ashram. It was the residence of Saint Bhrigu. This temple

complex is also famous for the Dadri festivals that take place in Ballia every year. Bhrigu Samhita written by saint Bhrigu is considered an important document in the field of astrology. This place is also mentioned in the *Mahabharata* as Bhrigutirth (Dwivedi, 2015). A lot of information about the Bhrigu Ashram is also found in the 1907 Gazetteer of Ballia. The fact that almost a hundred-year-old document also mentions this place in great detail is a testament to its antiquity.

भृगु ब्रह्मा, भृगु विष्णु, भृगु महेश्वरा,

भृगु साक्षात् परम ब्रह्मा, तस्मै श्री नमो नमः।

My family has served Bhriguji for generations. I will tell you a little bit about Bhriguji. He is first introduced in the Bhagvat Purana. He is the "Manas Putra" of Lord Brahma. On Kartik Purnima, there is a very big fair organised here. Lakhs of people attend it and offer water as an offering to Bhriguji. It is said that taking a bath on Kartik Purnima destroys all your previous sins and even Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh descend from the heavens to receive the blessing of Bhriguji. People come from far off places to ask for their wishes to be fulfilled and their wishes get fulfilled also.

Next to the idol of Bhriguji, there is the idol of his disciple Dardar Muni. It is after his name that Dadri fair is held. Dadri fair is held across a span of many kilometres and it is the second-largest fair in India in my opinion ranking behind the Sonapur fair. All sorts of cattle and draft animals are traded in the Dadri fair. Wrestling competitions are also organised. There is also a large variety of cultural programmes in the fair.

Sh. Virendra Kumar Mishra,
Head Priest
Bhrigu Ashram



Mangla Bhawani Mandir



This temple is very old. Mangla Bhawani is one of the nine avatars of Durga. Huien Tsang, the Chinese traveller who visited this area has also mentioned the idol present here. Later the officials of East India company threw this idol into the Ganga river; after that our ancestors brought this idol here and established it.

Sh. Vidya Sagar Pandey,
Head Priest Mangla Bhawani Mandir



Surah Taal



Figure 32 Surah Taal, the mythical lake, finds reference in various Hindu religious texts. The fish caught by implementing indigenous techniques and tools is in popular demand in the daily evening market

In Surah Lake a number of traditional indigenous fishing techniques are used by the fishermen. During the field investigation the team came across a few of these indigenous fishing techniques which are employed by the fishermen for the commercial utilisation of Surah Lake. It includes a wide variety of fishing gears like gill nets, cast nets and traps. The plank-built boats are used in the fishing. These fishing crafts and gears are locally prepared by the fisher folk. Fishing is the main occupation for those living around the vicinity of the lake. The cast net is used throughout the year and widely operated in the entire lake. The net is cast either from the boat or the banks of the lake. The fishermen manage to catch fish only after several attempts throughout the day.

Kurela or Kurel: an indigenous fishing trap, Surah Taal



Figure 33 Fishermen preparing the Kurela net, a typical indigenous method to catch fish in large quantities



It is an efficient and most popular indigenous gear for fish trapping. It is operated from the fishing boat during the daytime hours and throughout the year in the lake. Kurel is dome-shaped and made up of six to eight bamboo sticks, arranged in circles and tightened to each other with the help of nylon rope. Bamboo rods are covered by nylon mesh measuring 2.0 to 3.0 cm. After assembly, the circumference of the dome is 5-10 feet and the height 10 feet. The top of the gear is provided with a circular opening of about 1 to 2 ft in diameter for the entrance of the fish into the trap. The catch of the gear includes major carps like *Labeo rohita*, *Catla catla* and *Cirrhinus mrigala*. The operation of the trap is very interesting during fishing. The fishermen carry the Kurel on boat and they drub by the wooden oar (patwar) on the surface water and quietly observe the water movement to determine the presence of big fish. If the fishes move very fast they cover the area by Kurel in the water. The fishermen enter into the Kurel from the top mouth and collect the catch.⁴

⁴ Srivastava, P.K. (n.d.). Indigenous fishing gears in Suraha Lake, Ballia, Uttar Pradesh, India.



Figure 34 Boat-making near Nasirpur Math village. According to local boatmen, boat-making is a costly affair; an average of Rs 3 lakhs

Purain ke Patte or Pattal (Lotus Leaves) plates of Surah Taal

The Pattal or plate-making out of Purain ke Patte or Lotus leaves is also one of the major indigenous traditional livelihood activities of 10-15 villages near Surah Taal. These environment friendly plates could be used as an alternative to curb the growing plastic waste. The leave of the lotus are so huge that a plate can be made without binding two leaves. The lotus and leaves of it is considered sacred during weddings and other events.

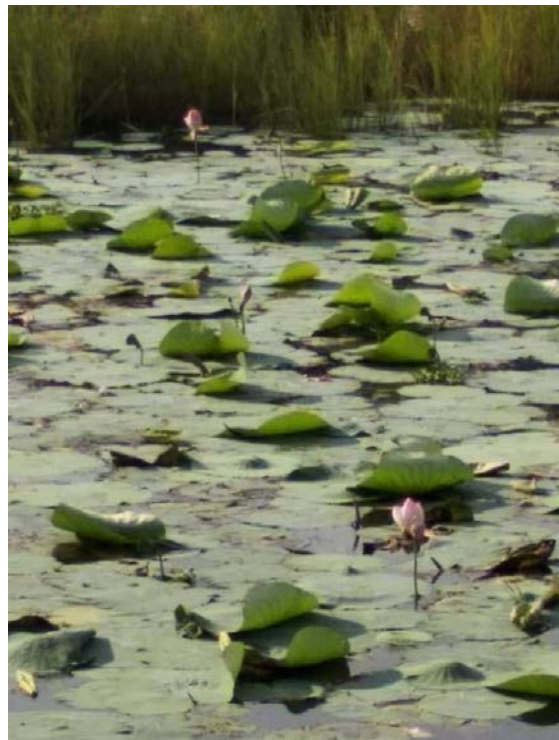


Figure 35 Purain ke Patte or Lotus at Surah Taal, Image Courtesy: Dr. Ganesh Kumar Pathak, Environmentalist, Ballia



निश्चित तौर पर यह पत्ता इतना बड़ा होता है कि इसमें दूसरे पत्ते को जोड़े बिना ही एक ही पत्ता पत्तल का काम करता है। स्थानीय लोग इसे सुरहा ताल में कमल की डण्ठल से तोड़ लेते हैं और शादी विवाह में पत्तल के रूप में बेचकर अपनी आजीविका चलाते हैं। इस पत्तल को अति पवित्र माना जाता है।

-डॉ. गणेश कुमार पाठक

Baleshwar Mandir



Maa Brahamani Mandir

The ancient temple of Maa Brahamani Devi situated on the Brahmine village on the Ballia-Sikandarpur main road, five km north of the district headquarters, remains the centre of faith among the devotees. It is believed that whoever asks for something with a true mind, his wishes are definitely fulfilled. Not only during Navratri, but also on other occasions, people come here from far and wide to worship.



Figure 36 Devotees at Maa Brahamani Devi Mandir; Next image: Idol of Maa Brahamani



According to the temple priest, there is a folklore about Raja Surath and Surah Taal which is also described in Durga Saptashati and Markandeya Purana that after a fierce battle with his rivals, a deeply wounded King Surath along with his hungry soldiers went out on in the jungle hunting with some soldiers and during the hunting he got injured. Today, where the village of Brahmine is located, earlier the area used to be a dense forest. A thirsty and wounded Raja Surath stopped there and asked the soldiers to bring water. When the soldiers walked some distance, a lake appeared. They fetched water from there and gave it to the king. The king was wounded in the battle and pus was coming out from many places of the body. When the king touched that water, the wound got cured. Astonished by this incident, the king asked the soldiers to take him to the place from where they had brought water. When he reached there he jumped into the Taal and all his wounds got healed. Raja Surath met Rishi Medha about how to attain peace who suggested him to do penance for three long years of Ma Shakti or Ma Brahmani. The latter blessed him and this place. Since then the temple, the Kashthar or Kathal Naala's religious significance has been established.

Sideshwarnath Temple



'Kashthar' or Kathal Naala



Shri Khapariya Baba Ashram



Shri Khapariya Baba Temple in Ballia district is located in the village of Shripalpur in Bairia Tehsil. The distance from Ballia district headquarters to Khapariya Baba Ashram is about 37 kilometres. This place is very famous among the various sacred sites of Ballia. The Ashram is the *Tapo Bhoomi* of Swami Khapariya Baba and Swami Hariharanand Ji Maharaj. It is very famous in Purvanchal region. It is said that Khapariya Baba was a saint who used to walk very fast with a 'khappar' for begging and whoever wanted to feed him would chase him and put alms in his khappar hence the name Khapariya Baba.

According to local belief he was a disciplined yogic sage. He didn't believe in a materialistic life and never advocated it. After his death, his Samadhi was built by devotees here which has now taken the form of a temple. At present several auspicious social and religious functions and events like Havan Yajna, mass marriages etc. are organized from time to time. A big fair is also organized here on the birth anniversary of the Baba.



Figure 37 Khapariya Baba Ashram complex

Kameshwar Dhaam

Kameshwar Dham is located in Karon Village in Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh. It is believed that this shrine is the same place mentioned in the *Shiva Purana* and *Valmiki Ramayana* where Lord Shiva incinerated Kamdev, the commander of the gods. Here, even today, there is a half-burnt, green mango tree hidden behind the idol of Kamadev. It is believed that Lord Shiva too did meditation at this place.⁵



⁵ Valimiki Ramayana 1/23/9 to Manas 1/205 doha to 1/208/2

Gangatiri cow of Ballia



Figure 38 A Gangatiri cow at Nasirpur Math, Village, Ballia

During field documentation the INTACH Team came across an indigenous breed of cow, reared in Ballia district, known as Gangatiri cow. Gangatiri rearing is the mainstay of the economy and sustenance of life of the people engaged in Gangatiri cattle rearing in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Gangatiri is additionally known as Eastern Haryana or Shahabadi. The breeding tract incorporates Bhojpur area of Bihar and Varanasi, Mirzapur, Ghazipur and Ballia districts of Uttar Pradesh. The creatures of this breed are medium drain makers and have great draft ability too. The colour is either totally white (Dhawar) or dark (Sokan). The horns are medium measured and rise from side behind and over eyes in outward, and bending upwards and inwards, finishing with pointed tips. The brow is unmistakable, straight and broad with shallow groove within the centre. Eyelids, gag, hooves and tail switch are by and large dark in colour. The normal drain abdicate in a lactation is around 1050 Kg, shifting from 900 to 1200 Kg with an normal fat of 4.9 %, shifting from 4.1 to 5.2 %.⁶

⁶ Sustainability of Gangatiri cattle rearing; ICAR-National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, Haryana 132 001 India

Estimated population of Gangatiri cattle

Table 1: Estimated number of Gangatiri cattle

Breed	Total (no.)	Percentage of total cattle population
Gangatiri	3, 75, 154	0.188 %

Source: Livestock census, 2007 ^[2].



Figure 39 An illustration chart showing indigenous breed of cows inclusive of Gangatiri

Foodways



Figure 40 Balls of Litti being baked on coal

Majority of the Hindus follow a simple staple vegetarian diet of North India which includes pulses, cooked vegetables and chapattis. Rice is also quite popular in this part of the state. The poorer section of the society used to eat Sattu made out of barley, gram or pea. Another favourite of the people is parched gram, pea or wheat which is eaten along with rab (molasses) or jaggery (Mishra, 1986, 62). The use of condiments, especially chillies, is prevalent and often the chutneys and pickles are used as an alternative to vegetables. Jackfruit is one of the favourites of the people of Ballia.

Litti Chokha is the most famous dish of Ballia. Badi poori or Haathi Kaan poori is also a special dish of Ballia. Although it is also like normal poori, it has the shape of an elephant's ear. Chotha is like chilla, but it is sweet. Some people also call it Meetha Chilla. Girvach is a salty snack made with Arbi leaves. Arbi leaves are wrapped with gram flour and made into rolls. It is then cooked. Currently, the most cherished local food of the people is Baati-Chokha.

In the District Gazetteer of 1907, we find the mention of some local alcoholic drinks which were quite popular in Ballia. Tari and Sendhi were the two fermented liquors largely consumed in the district chiefly by the lower castes (Neville, 1907, 128). Tari was obtained from the tar or Palmyra palms while the Sendhi was derived from the Khajur or date palm. However, these drinks rarely find mention in current times.





Figure 41 Girvach

Girvach is a salty snack made with Arbi (Taro root) leaves. Arbi leaves are wrapped with gram flour and made into rolls. It is then cooked. Girvach is then chopped and fried to make it crispy. People eat it with tea or with other beverages with great fervour.



Figure 42 Badi Poori

Badi poori or elephant ear poori is another speciality of Ballia. Although it is also like normal poori, it has the shape of an elephant's ear. This poori is very soft to eat. This type of food is found in marriage celebrations or other functions. Especially if one goes to a village or a traditional wedding, then one will definitely be served this.

Language, Literature and Luminaries of Ballia

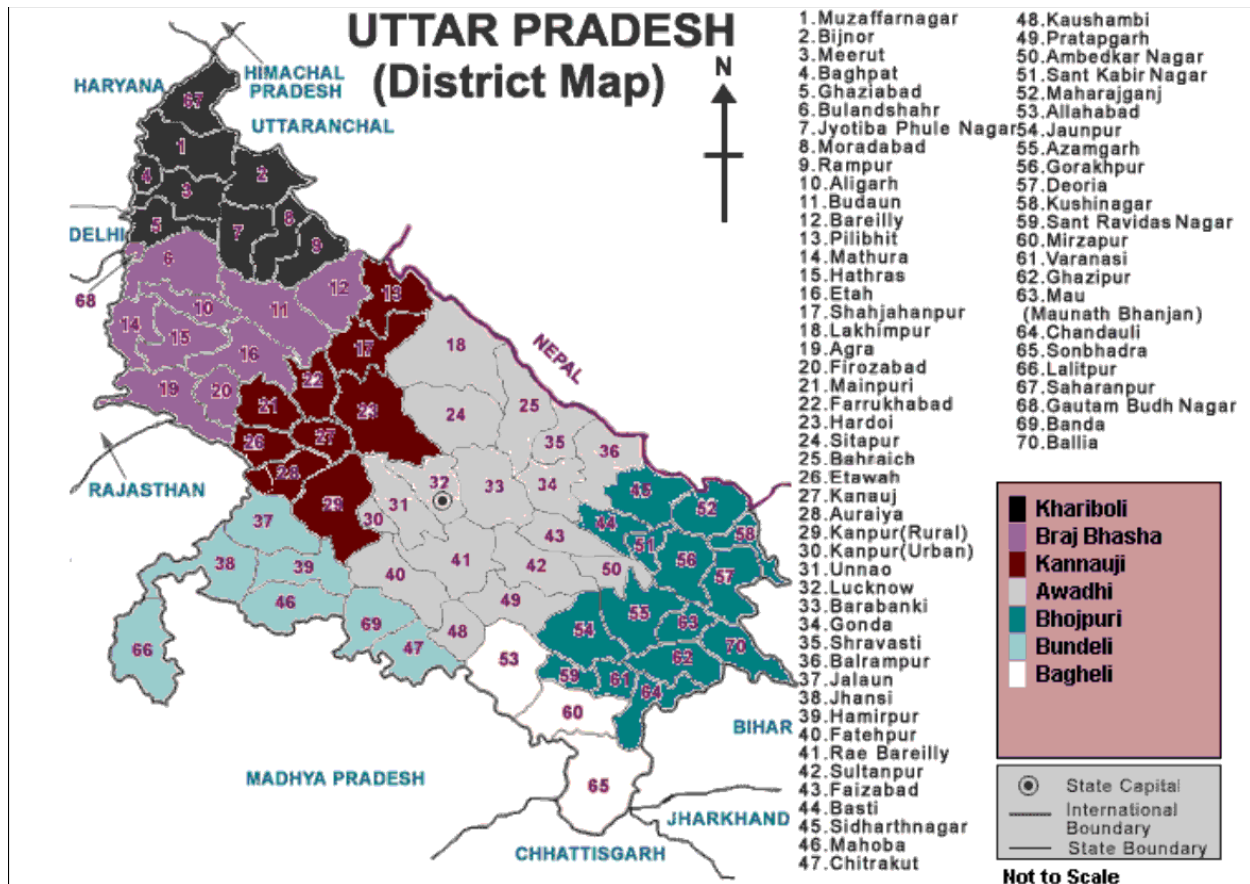


Figure 43 A map showing various languages and dialects spoken in Uttar Pradesh

The local language of the people is Hindi with a dialect of Bhojpuri, which is marginally different from the dialect spoken in Bihar. The result of the last census of 1971 shows that the languages Hindi and Bhojpuri were spoken by 97.17% of the total population while Urdu was spoken by just 2.81% (Mishra, 1986). The main communities that reside in the Ballia district include Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains and Buddhists. However, in 1971 Hindus were the largest community comprising 94.2% of the total population of the district (Mishra, 1986, 45).

Ballia has been famous for literary activities as well and has given the nation some great personalities of which India will always remain proud. Some of them include Dr. Hazari Prasad

Dwivedi, Vishwanath Tripathi, Dr. Krishna Bihari Mishra, Sh. Tribhuvan Singh, Dr. Shiv Prasad Singh and others.

Bhojpuri is a very simple language that aids in the expression of feelings and eases communication and it is pleasing to the ears. The people of Ballia even if they reach Mauritius or Suriname they don't stop speaking in Bhojpuri. Even if some person of Ballia is settled in South India and calls home, he starts by saying

का हो, तोहर का हाल बा, कोनो दिक्कत में न ?

then the person from this side replies by saying

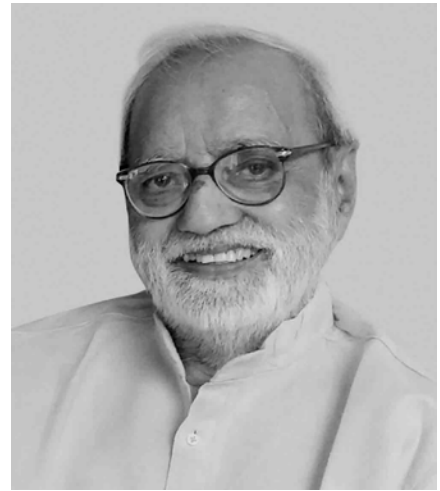
पाव लगत अणि, न ठीक बनी, और सब अपन हाल चाल बताई

Shri. Jai Prakash Upadhyay (Sarpanch, Ujjiyar Village)



Doodhnath Singh

Doodhnath Singh (17 October 1936 – 12 January 2018) was an Indian Hindi language writer, critic and poet. Born in Ballia district of Uttar Pradesh, Singh studied Hindi at the University of Allahabad and served as an assistant professor there until 1994. In 2014, the government of Uttar Pradesh honoured him with their Bharat Bharti Samman. Some of Singh's well-known works were *Sapaat Chehre Wala Aadmi*, *Aakhri Kalaam*, *Nishkaasan*, *Bhai Ka Shok Geet*, *Dharmakshetra-Kurukshetra* and *Surang se Lautate Huye*. He was also a literary analyst and critic, poet and playwright.



Dr. Kedarnath Singh

Kedarnath Singh (7 July 1934 – 19 March 2018) was an Indian poet who wrote in Hindi. He was also an eminent critic and essayist. He was awarded the Jnanpith Award (2013), Sahitya Akademi Award (1989) in Hindi for his poetry collection, *Akaal Mein Saras* (Cranes in Drought).





Figure 44 Books written by Dr. Janardhan Rai

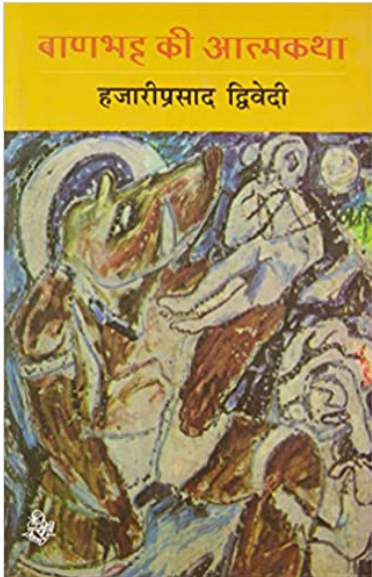
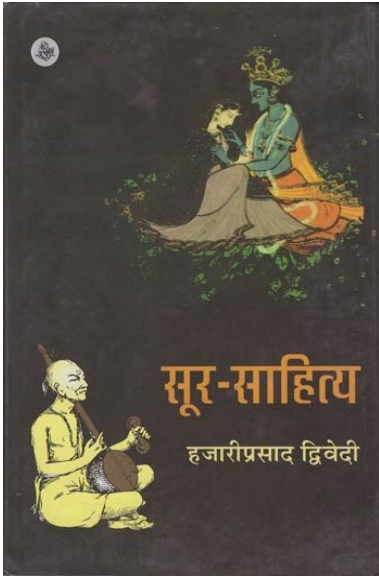
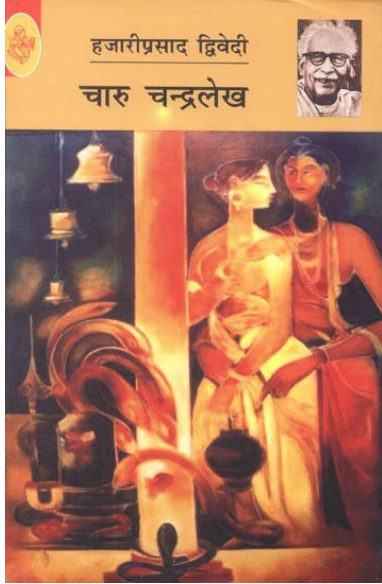


Figure 45 Some of the finest works of Acharya Hazari Prasad Dwivedi



Figure 46 Dr. Janardhan Rai, Writer

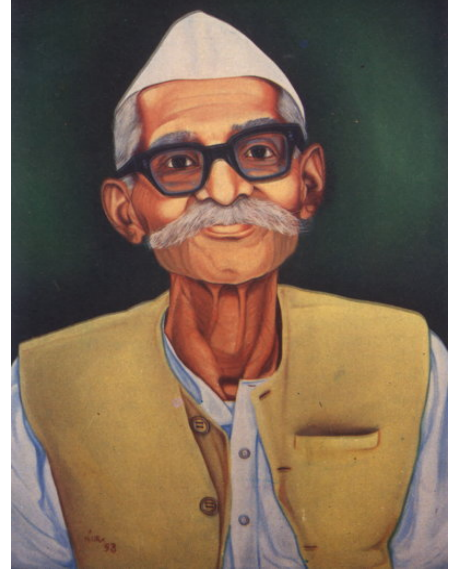
In the literary tradition of Ballia, if we talk about intellectuals of this area, the most talked about and famous personality is Acharya Hazari Prasad Dwivedi. Dwivediji became such a pioneer of progressive literature that he became an Acharya under the guidance of Rabindranath Tagore... I would like to mention about Pandit Radha Mohan Upadhyaya ji. He has over a dozen literary creations apart from Bharat Vijayan, Bhartayanam and Shahri Pataka which compel us to think. He has written a lot about Ganga in Sanskrit literature. In this tradition, there is Dr Lakshmi Shankar Trivedi. He was a spokesman, journalist and a freedom fighter. He was a great voice of Hindi and regional literature. You must have heard about the village Chitpara which is the land of Sufi saints. Near Chitpara, there is a village called Ashapur. In Ashapur, Pandit Mukteshwar Tiwari "Besudh" was born who is also known as 'Chaturi Chacha' because of his work which was called "Chaturi chacha ki chitthiyaan". He has written a lot in Bhojpuri. His letters were published every week in large newspapers of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. He wrote extensively both in Bhojpuri and Hindi Khari Boli. We had Sh. Viveki Rai ji under whom over 100 students completed their PhD on the subject of Viveki Rai and that includes me as I obtained the degree of D.Lit.t on him.

Dr. Janardhan Rai, Writer, Ballia



Acharya Parshuram Chaturvedi

Acharya Parshuram Chaturvedi, born on 25 July 1894 (died on 3 January 1979), was a diligent scholarly research critic. He was born in Ballia, Uttar Pradesh. He was educated at Allahabad and Varanasi University. He was a lawyer by profession but had a keen interest in spiritual literature. He was a proficient of many languages of Sanskrit and Hindi.



‘नव निबंध’ (1951)

‘हिन्दी काव्यधारा में प्रेम प्रवाह’ (1952)

‘मध्यकालीन प्रेम साधना’ (1952)

‘कबीर साहित्य की परख’ (1954)

‘भारतीय साहित्य की सांस्कृतिक रेखाएँ’ (1955)

‘संत साहित्य की परख’

उत्तर भारत की संत परम्परा

उत्तरी भारत की संत-परंपरा

(संशोधित तथा परिवर्धित)

आचार्य परशुराम चतुर्वेदी



सहारे हम उनके जन्म-काल के लिए भी, सं० १४५५-२० = सं० १४२५ दे सकेंगे और वैसे होने पर कबीर साहब मैथिलकालि विद्यापति (सं० १४१७-१५०५) अथवा (१४०७-१५०७)^१ के समसामयिक हो जायेंगे। ऐसी दशा में संभवतः इस जनश्रुति की भी पुष्टि होती हुई दीख पड़ेगी कि असम के प्रसिद्ध भक्त शंकरदेव (सं० १५०६-१६२५) ने अपनी उत्तरी भारत की द्वादशवर्षीया तीर्थ-यात्रा (सं० १५४०-१५५२)^२ के अवसर पर कबीर साहब की समाधि के भी दर्शन किये थे।

(ख) महात्मा गांधी की जीवन-निर्माण कला

विशेषता

महात्मा गांधी को अपने जीवन-काल में अनेक प्रकार के शारीरिक कष्ट झेलने पड़े, उनके सामने कई बार पारिवारिक उलझनें आयीं जिन्हें सुलझाते समय उन्हें मानसिक पीड़ा हुई। इनके सिवाय उन्हें प्रतिदिन उन सामाजिक, आर्थिक तथा राजनीतिक समस्याओं का भी सामना करना पड़ता रहा जो हमारे देश की विचित्र परिस्थिति के कारण बराबर उठ जाया करती थीं। परन्तु वे इस प्रकार की किसी भी कठिनाई से कभी भागते नहीं दीख पड़े। उन्होंने सदा पूरे धैर्य के साथ वस्तुस्थिति का अध्ययन किया और प्रत्येक समस्या को हल करने की चेष्टा में वे निरंतर रहे। उनके मानसिक क्षितिज पर विविध चिन्ताओं की घनघोर घटा धिर जाया करती थी। उनके हृदय पर कर्त्तव्यों का बोझ सदा लदा-सा रहता था, किंतु वे उनसे कदाचित् ही कभी विचलित हुए देखे गए होंगे अथवा उन्हें किसी प्रकार टाल देने के यत्न में लगे होंगे। उन्होंने अपने सामने आयी हुई बातों की वास्तविक स्थिति जान लेने की चेष्टा सदा यथाशीघ्र आरंभ की और उसके संबंध में कुछ-न-कुछ करने की ओर भी प्रवृत्त हो गए। फलतः अपने जीवन-काल की अवधि में जितना काम वे अकेले कर गए, उतना कई महापुरुषों ने कदाचित् मिल कर भी नहीं किया होगा। उनकी यह विशेषता स्पष्ट थी, किंतु इसके कारण बहुत कुछ रहस्यमय थे।

जीवन का प्रयोग

महात्मा गांधी की उक्त सफलता का रहस्य सर्वप्रथम इस बात में निहित था कि उन्होंने अपने जीवन को कभी मार-तब्बरूप नहीं समझा, प्रत्युत उसे किसी अंतिम उद्देश्य के लिए एक नितांत आवश्यक साधन माना। मानव-जीवन के

१. विद्यापति पदावली, पटना, सं० २०१८, 'भूमिका', पृ० ३३।

२. एच० एम० दास : शंकरदेव ए स्टडी, गौहाटी, सन् १९४५ ई०, पृ० २४।

<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.484303/page/n887/mode/2up?q=महात्मा+गाँधी>

This book was published in 1951. In this research book, Acharya featured saints of Sanatan sect as well as Sufis, worshipers of Saguna and Nirguna Bhakti Dhara, saints belonging to the sect of Nath cults and Jangam-Jogads. In this book, Acharya Chaturvedi considered Mahatma Gandhi as the last saint.



Pandit Mukteshwar Tiwari "Besudh" is known for his work called "Chaturi chacha ki Chitthiyaan".

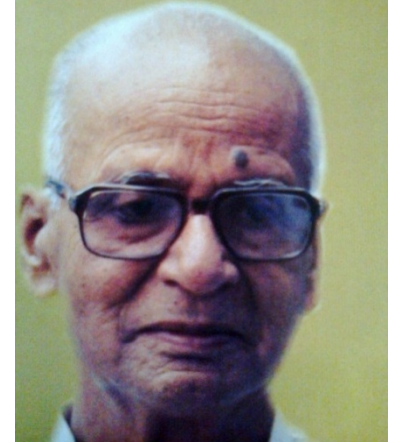


बम्बई में का बा
इहवाँ का बा ना
त बम्बई में का बा
इहवाँ का बा..
दू बिगहा में घर बा
लेकिन सुतल बानी
टेम्पू में जिनगी ई
अझुराईल बाटे नून
तेल और शैम्पू में मनवा
हरियर लागे भइया
हाथ लगौते माटी में
जियरा अजुओ अटकल
बाटे घर में चोखा
बाटी में का बा.. इहवाँ..

- Dr. Sagar (lyricist)

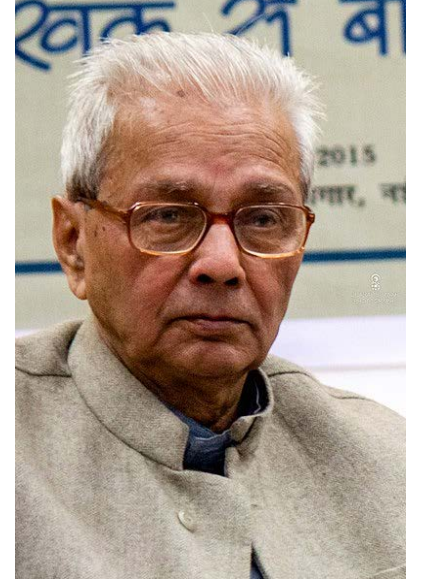
Viveki Rai

Viveki Rai was an Indian writer who penned over fifty books. He was a famous literary figure of Hindi and Bhojpuri literature. He belonged to the Bhumihaar Brahmin community of Sonwani village in Ghazipur. He was a well-known Hindi Lalit Nibandhakaar. He received numerous awards from the government of Uttar Pradesh.



Dr. Kedar Nath Singh

In a seminar, BHU professor and editor of *Sakhi* magazine, Sadanand Shahi addressed Dr. Kedarnath Singh's words in his own words by addressing the audience in Bhojpuri. The editor-in-chief of this magazine was Dr. Kedarnath. He not only concentrated life in his creations but also thought of conserving nature. He was a true devotee to goddess Saraswati and nature. He expressed his views intensively on Nature. Shahi recollected some of Dr. Kedarnath Singh's compositions in Bhojpuri. Kedar was a poet of totality.



It is said that Kedarnath kept writing poems on the river, well, pond, field and barn without name. He wrote a poem in Bhojpuri called *Bhagad Naala Jagran Manch... Bhagad Dada Uth, Ho Gayle Bihan* ('animals, birds, cows, bulls, farmers, drink water in the Bhagad, drink water and thirst').

It is said that there was a thought in his works on what is the reason that water came out of the well, river, pond and came into the bottle. He also wrote on the water crisis of the country towards which awareness needed to be awakened. His compositions were based on many similar problems related to nature and to awaken people.

पाँव में सर झुका के रुकल बानी हम

कहियो बर्दान हमरा की मिलबे करि,

भोला अपना टोला में बुलाइबा कि ना?

गंगा मईया के दर्शन करियबो कि ना?

This means that the devotee prays to Shiva in this hope that even if he doesn't bless them, but along with and in presence of Ma Ganga he will bless for sure.



Dr. Krishna Bihari Mishra

Dr. Krishna Bihari Mishra, a resident of Balihar village under Haldi Thane, was awarded the Padma Shri, the country's prestigious civilian honor. He was born on November 5, 1936 in Ballihar village of Doab region. Dr. Mishra, who also works in journalism, received D.Litt in the first convocation by Makhanlal Chaturvedi Journalism University and was conferred with an honorary title. He wrote the book *Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, Journalism: History and Questions*. At the same time, in the Fine Essay collection *Behaya*, there are expressions, thoughts and impulses of rural life.



परिचय

कृष्णबिहारी मिश्र साठे हिन्दी शोध में पैदा हुए, लेकिन राष्ट्रीय सेवा बचक वि. साहित्य-पुस्तक के लिए उन्होंने कोलकाता को ही चुना। उमर प्रवेश के बरिखा दिने में मिश्र साहित्य रस में आत पनबी स्तुति शोध में। यह बाल जगह-जगह बगानी पर चढ़ा है कि वे सन् 1936 में पैदा हुए। इस विस्तार से 82वें साल में प्रवेश कर रहे हैं। हिन्दी साहित्य जगत में उन्होंने अपनी सार्वकालिक विद्व को है।

एक बचपन के ही धर्मग्रन्थ मिश्र को वे दृक्काली साजस है। चढ़ाई के दौरान कृष्णबिहारी जो बचक में हिन्दी साहित्य में अधिक रूप। वे काली हिन्दू-विश्वविद्यालय में अर्थात् इन्टरमिडियट डिप्लोमा और अर्थात् विभागाध्यक्ष प्रोफ मिश्र के लिए शिष्य रहे। इसी अवधि के साहित्य में कृष्णबिहारी मिश्र ने काली हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय को गया शिक्षा प्राप्त की। इसके बाद सागर (पत्रक प्रकाश) प्रोडक्शन के कोलकाता चले गए। इस संस्था में सबसे पहले ही कि 'विद्या' के सफल को जगहों के लिए बचक चढ़ाई-पढ़ाई कोलकाता आए थे। इसके बाद कोलकाता से जो संस्था स्थापित हुए वे बने हुए हैं। मिश्री कोलकाता के उमर ही हैं, फिरने हिन्दी गयी को।

कोलकाता विश्वविद्यालय से हिन्दी पत्रकारिता विषयक अनुष्ठान पर डॉक्टरेट की उपाधी प्राप्त की। इसी दौरान साहित्य की विभिन्न विधाओं पर अपने विचार प्रस्तुत किया। अखिल विश्वकार के रूप में जगदी ही अपनी पहचान बन गई। प्राचीन-कथा बचने वाली अपनी भाषा शैली में अपनी अनुष्ठान बचने हैं।


इसदिने वे साठेवर्षीय दिने के दृक्काली साहित्य में, लेकिन विद्यार्थीसमूह जीवन का शोध सागर कर साहित्य-साधना में जुट गए। सब कहे तो मिश्री ने साहित्य लेखन के अतिरिक्त उमर को कुप और उमर उमर ही। पत्रकारिता के क्षेत्र में साहित्य के अतिरिक्त साहित्य साहित्य साहित्य पत्रकारिता एवं साधना विश्वविद्यालय में टी-टिटर की मन्त्र उपाधी से सम्पन्न किया। इसी उमर में अमरीक के मूड्रीके प्रोफेसर और टी. इन्गेवर्ग प्रोफेसर से भी सम्पन्न किया गए। वे यह मानते हैं कि प्रोफेसर का अपना महत्व होता है, लेकिन लेखक की पूजा उसकी उमर ही होती है।

इ सागर के अतिरिक्त साहित्य साहित्य बचक साहित्य है। जिनके विभिन्न क्षेत्रों के साहित्यिक साहित्यों और साहित्यिक प्रश्नों पर सागर साहित्यिक होता है। इस साहित्य में अब तक जो जगह मिश्र, साहित्य साहित्यिक, एक एक साहित्यिकी, लेकिन बचक, यों ही ही सागर एवं साहित्यिक जगहका साहित्य पर अतिरिक्त साहित्य साहित्यिक कि, जो बचक है। इस साहित्य को टीवीटी एवं पुस्तक के साहित्य से जन्मनाम तक साहित्यिक जाता है।

संस्मरण शैली साहित्यिक कला केंद्र
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 वेबसाइट: www.facebook.com/GMCA, ट्विटर: [gmcaidk](https://twitter.com/gmcaidk)

संस्कृति संवाद शृंखला-7:कोलकाता

इन्दिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय कला केंद्र का
एक दिवसीय कार्यक्रम 11 फरवरी, 2018



सांस्कृतिक साहित्य
कृष्ण बिहारी मिश्र

Theatre: Sankalp Sahitiyik Samajik evam Sanskritik Sanstha, Ballia



Figure 47 Sh. Asish Trivedi acting in a play by Sankalp Sanstha, Source: Sankalp website

With a plethora of rich history, art and culture, the one area in which Ballia lacks formally is the lack of government-aided theatre and performing art centre but the untapped, existing raw talent of Ballia somehow compensates it and can match any talent in the respective field not just in India but across the world. The endeavour of 'Sankalp Sanstha' in this regard is highly praiseworthy and Shri. Asish Trivedi too deserves praise. Shri Trivedi, a native of Ballia, made his career in theatre after taking MA degree in Philosophy from Kashi Hindu University and Hindi from Purvanchal University.



The 'Sankalp' literary, social and cultural institution was formed in December 2004, keeping in mind the creation of a better society integrated with healthy and beautiful cultural values. This institution founded by young cultural activists has been active for the last 11 years. 'Sankalp', who has participated in many important drama festivals in the country, has enacted nearly a hundred performances of more than a dozen plays under the direction of Asish Trivedi. These include Bikhari Thakur's play 'Bidesiya', 'Gabbar Ghichor', Habib Tanveer's 'Charandas Chor'



Figure 48 Sh. Asish Trivedi performing along with other local artists. Source: Sankalp page

based on Parsai ji's satire, 'I am speaking from hell', 'I am contesting', 'The return of lovers', Gurusharan Singh's 'Inquilab Zindabad', Bhartendu ji's 'Andher Nagri',

Premchand's story 'Mantra', 'Sadgati', 'Idgah', Piyush Mishra's 'Gagan Damama Bajyon' written by Rahul Sankrityayan, 'Meharoon ki Darsa' and Hindi's representative poems colour presentation of 'Rang Kavita' etc.

'Ballia Natya Mahotsav' is organized every year by 'Sankalp'. It has participated in dozens of national level institutions.⁷



Figure 49 The 'Sankalp' building

During interaction with Shri Asish Trivedi, he told the INTACH team about the institution, its achievements and challenges faced by them.

⁷ <http://www.sankalpcultureballia.com/index.html>

Traditional Crafts of Ballia

Ballia city is the district headquarters and the commercial market of this district. Rasara is the second major commercial town. Sand is the major mineral that is found here. It is believed that the name of the district is also derived from this mineral. The area of Ballia is considered rich from an industrial point of view. The major industry at Ballia is of Bindi-making. 'The product is supplied in Uttar Pradesh as well as across the country. This industry plays an important role in the revenue generation of the district. The Bindi (Tikuli) industry is active in Maniyar block of the district. A number of bindi cottage industries have been operating here for several years. The product is traded locally as well as in different parts of the country' (Department of MSME and Export Production, U.P., n.d).



Figure 50 Baskets made of *Moonj* on display near Bhrigu Ashram

Sinhaura

In every North Indian wedding, women sing the following auspicious folksong:

*'कहवां से आवेला सिन्होरवा-सिन्होरवा भरल सेनुर हो,
ए ललना कहवां से आवेला पियरिया-पियरिया लागल झालर हो'⁸*

The above song mentions the significance Sinhaura. Many of the singers probably do not know where and how this symbol of Suhag, 'Sinhaura' i.e. Sandurouta, is made.



Figure 51 Semi-finished Sinhaura

Sinhaura is a popular traditional craft of Ballia. A majority of the craftsmen and their families are concentrated at Hanumanganj area of Ballia. Sinhaura (a vermilion wooden container given

⁸ A Bhojpuri song

to brides on the wedding night by her in-laws; the sindoor in this container is orange in colour and is used during wedding ceremonies, during 'sindoordaan'. The groom takes sindoor/vermilion from this pot to adorn the bride with sindoor. Various woods have been used for the processing of these Sinhaura. Mango and eucalyptus wood is extensively used to make these. Dark red or colourful ones with fancy cords tied to them are a particular variety of Sinhaura.

As a craftsperson relates, "We began this business in 1958. By streamer, we go to different places to get the wood as per our requirement. There is a suitable Sinhaura-making unit. This is our age-old tradition; without giving Sinhaura to the bride, a marriage could not happen.

This is a very significant item that is obligatory in any rite of marriage. In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar customs, this Sinhaura is common, with almost every community in this region buying Sinhaura for wedding ceremonies. It is a people's belief that the married woman has to apply sindoor from her Sinhaura, which she feels is auspicious.

There are approximately 40 factories producing Sinhaura, and at least 15-20 people work daily in these factories. Per piece, we offer 30/30 as wages. This is the only way their households are run by them. As such, we don't have any government funding as it is difficult to get the wood most of the time. The government also bans the cutting down of the trees so that the raw material is difficult to get."

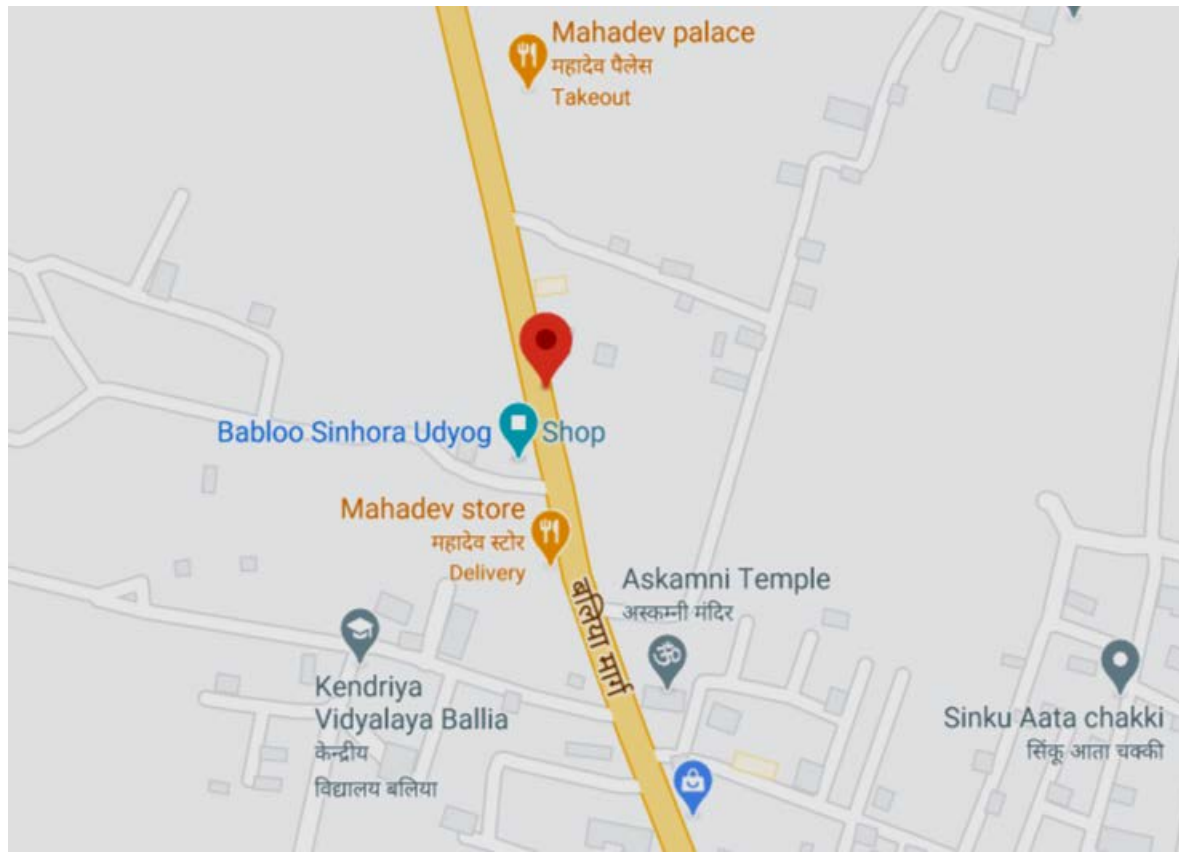


Figure 52 Google Map screenshot of Babloo Sinhora Udyog at Hanumanganj, Ballia

There was a time when Hanumanganj was identified with Sinhaura. At that time, the finished Sinhaura used to go from Mumbai to Kolkata. The businessmen were also very happy then and the business was booming. When Sinhaura was short in supply, outside traders had to wait for months. Now the condition is that this industry is languishing due to lack of support from the government at an institutional level.



Figure 53 Wooden blocks cut in round shape and a tablet of lacquer—for Sinhaura-making



Figure 54 A Sinhaura workshop at Hanumanganj

Usually, Mango wood is used as a raw material in the manufacture of Sinhaura, which in the Vedas has been called the Deva tree. Two-and-a-half-foot-long mango wood blocks are first dried in the sun. After this, after peeling off the bark, a lathe⁹ machine gives the appearance, and texture to Sinhaura. After re-drying, the lathe is cleaned on a machine and coloured with a spatula, and prepared for sale. Mainly used tools are Rukhani, axes and electric or diesel motors. For this, traditionally trained artisans come from Bihar's districts of Katihar, Motihari, Begusarai etc., who work all year round. An artisan manufactures 40 to 50 Sinhaura in a day.

⁹ A lathe is a machine tool that rotates a work piece about an axis of rotation to perform various operations such as cutting, sanding, knurling, drilling, deformation, facing, and turning, with tools that are applied to the work piece to create an object with symmetry about that axis.



Figure 55 A craftsman giving the final touches to the Sinhaura



Figure 56 A worker carrying the finished batch of Sinhaura for packaging

We have been making this since 1998. It is made from the wood of mango. We go to the rural areas to buy this wood and then cut it into small pieces. Around 10 days before the Lagan period starts we start colouring it. It is used in wedding ceremonies as a Sindoor daan (Vermillion Box). It is a custom in our area that the wedding ceremony cannot be complete without Sinhaura. Its usage is more prevalent in the state of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. There are around 100 families engaged in this craft here in Ballia. The Sinhaura is made from the wood of Mango, or Eucalyptus. There are a lot of problems regarding wood. The government says that don't cut the green trees. So there is a lot of police interference and checking while transporting the wood. There is no benefit from the government to us. There is no loan facility given to us. There is corruption in the processing of getting the loans as well. In the modern era, the usage of Sinhaura has remained till the ritual performance. Hence, we suffer from reluctance of customers too.

Sh. Babloo Gupta,
Babloo Gupta Sinhaura Udyog,
Hanumanganj, Ballia



Tikuli (Bindi)

The Bindi (Tikuli) industry is active in Maniyar block of the district. A number of bindi cottage industries have been operating here for several years. The product is traded locally as well as in different parts of the country. According to Sh. Ahmed Javed, businessman, there is an average business turnover of 25 to 30 crores in Ballia every year, but the problem is that due to the non-cooperation of banks, this business is not able to grow as per the intention of the government. People associated with this industry say that raw material has to be sourced from Delhi and Mumbai. After the Bindi is ready, it has to find the market itself to sell.



ONE DISTRICT ONE PRODUCT

UTTAR PRADESH

Department of MSME and Export Promotion, U.P.

Figure 57 Tikuli samples from Ballia, Source: ODOP



Figure 58 Google screenshot showing Maniyar area where the Tikuli workers are concentrated



Maniyar Bindi has a large hub in Ballia. Earlier, the Bindi used to be made of glass. This included the glass being smelted out of which the Bindi was made. Gold and silver water layers were also applied on it. Around the year 1975, the practice of glass Bindi came to an end and new types of Bindi started coming in the markets. This industry has been selected for Ballia on behalf of the government but due to lack of requisite cooperation from the authorities at the local level, the expectations are not matching the aspirations of the craftsmen.

Palki-Doli (Palanquin) of Sikandarpur, Ballia



Figure 59 Kahaar (labourers) carrying a traditional Palki at Sikandarpur, Ballia, Source: Dainik Jagaran

With development and modernisation, several new practices and new means of living come into existence. The old ones die. Their memories remain in memories, in songs, in idioms and proverbs. The same has happened to the Doli, the medium of transportation for the rich, nobles, zamindars and grooms. In the past, villages were without resources. The cities had streets but there were no means of transportation. In such a situation, the doli was the most common and all-purpose means of transportation. Doli was the most comfortable ride for everyone in the village footpaths and the streets of the city as well. Sikandarpur area was the famous area where the workers, craftsmen making Doli were concentrated. Unfortunately, with the passage of time this traditional craft is on the verge of extinction. The craft could be revived

as it is one of the cultural identities of India. If not on mass scale, then at least on sacred occasions like weddings, it can be used as a symbolic gesture.¹⁰

There are various types of Cottage industries existing in Ballia: Gur industry, different types of pickles, Bindi, Sindaura and Palki-doli. All these products of Ballia are famous. The traditional or indigenous products of Ballia went to Assam and Bengal so we can say that they went mostly to the eastern states and not to the western states. People from Ballia went to work in Assam, Bengal and even in Sikkim and Bhutan. I think this is because the river flows east, most of the trade and human migration was towards the East.

Dr. Ganesh Kumar Pathak

¹⁰ <https://www.jagran.com/uttar-pradesh/varanasi-city-palanquin-bearer-are-job-less-in-india-17985784.html>

Folklore of Lorik and Lorik Dih



Figure 60 Temple of Goddess Durga at Lorik Dih. It is believed Lorik was a devotee of Goddess Durga

Lorik is remembered as a great ancestor of historical heroes and of Ahirs. His story is also called the 'Ramayana' of the Ahir caste. This story is famous in Chhattisgarh under the name Lorik-Chanda; it is a love story of Lorik-Chanda. The saga is based on the love affair of a married princess Chanda and married Ahir, Lorik. The saga is very popular and has several versions to it. The prominent one is that Lorik was born at Ballia and there is a place called Lorik Dih here which is testimony of the great saga.



Figure 61 Lorik Dih

The place is just two kms from here and is known as Sohrubandh village which is named after Lorik's brother Som. Another village in close proximity to this one is known as Akhar which has been derived from the word 'Akhada'. The Lorik Dih was the place where Lorik worshipped Goddess Durga and also meditated. It is also believed that his brother Sohru used to live here. When we study Lorikayan, in its last part, before Som's death, this is the area that has been mentioned. The position that Lorikji should have had in literature, society and history, he didn't get it. So it is the initiative of people like us to bring it forward and in my research, I have tried to do that.

Dr Kalika Prasad Yadav
(Research Scholar)



Fairs and Festivals



Figure 62 Children enjoying a joy ride on a swing at Ujjiyar village, Ballia

As Ballia is a part of a diverse state like Uttar Pradesh, all the festivals celebrated by the people of different faith are also celebrated in Ballia district which include Diwali, Eid, Sankranti, etc. Several fairs are organised in the district on account of festivals like Ram Navami, Shivratri, Durga Puja and so on (Mishra, 1986, 67-68). The close proximity of Ballia district with Bihar has made Chhat Puja a popular festival among the people of Ballia. However, the most important festivals exclusive to Ballia have always been the cattle fairs organised in various parts of the district. The most famous one is the Dadri Festival.

Mauni Amawasya at Ujjiyar Village



Figure 63 Glimpses of Mauni Amavasya at Ujjiyar Ghat, 2021



Dadri Mela

Dadri Festival is also popularly called the Dadri Fair as it holds both religious and cultural significance. It is the second-largest cattle fair in the country, and it is held annually to honour Dardar Muni, the disciple of Maharishi Bhrigu. The fair is usually held around the land of the original Bhrigu Ashram which is considered to be a sacred place, as the river Ganga and river Sarju meet there (Neville, 1907, 56).

There are usually two parts to the fair, one being the sale and purchase of cattle by the traders and the second part is when the cultural programmes are held. This fair is held at the onset of Kartik Purnima which mostly falls in October or November. The festival is supposed to have attracted a footfall of around five lakhs people in 1986 (Mishra, 1986, 233). This fair is also mentioned in detail in the Gazetteer of Ballia, published in 1907, making it an important cultural asset of the district Ballia which has been relevant for definitely more than a century now.



The festival is held at a place called Dadri. Dadri is about five kilometers from Ballia railway station. The main starting point of this fair is the well known Bhrigu ashram, which is built in honour of Dardar Muni, one of the disciples of saint Bhrigu.

Dadri Mela is an annual event and is a month long fair. Ideally, the fair starts ten days before Kartik Purnima and the first phase of exchanging the cattle happens in this phase. On the day of Kartik Purnima the fair is open for all to enjoy. Many cultural activities and festivities take place

during the day. The second phase of the fair is mostly enjoyed by the people of Ballia and nearby villages.



Figure 64 A trinket seller at Ujjiyar Ghat on Mauni Amavasya, 2021

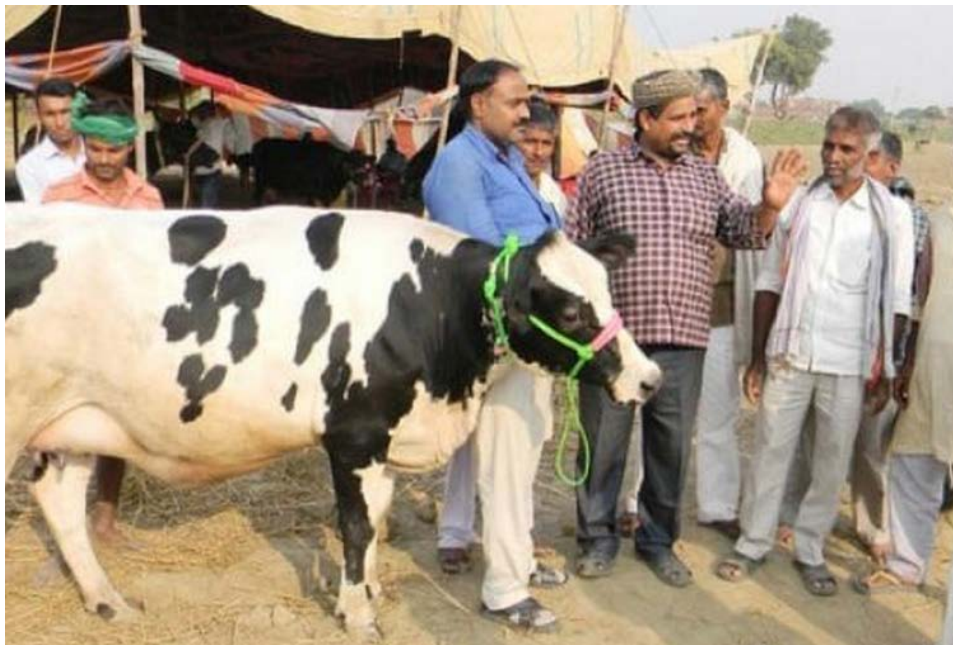


Figure 65 Glimpses of Dadri Mela, 2019 Source: Amar Ujala





Chhat Puja

Chhath is an ancient Hindu Vedic festival historically native to the Indian subcontinent, more specifically, the Indian states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh and the Madhesh region of Nepal. The Chhath Puja is dedicated to the solar deity (Surya) in order to thank him for bestowing the bounties of life on earth and to request the granting of certain wishes. This festival is observed mostly by Bihari people and the Nepalese along with their Diaspora. The festival is celebrated with great enthusiasm in Ballia district as well.



Figure 66 A woman offering water to the early morning sun, Source: INTACH

Hindi Tithi Calendar 2020-21: Ballia

<p>January</p> <p>10th Jan - Paush Purnima</p>  <p>शिव पूर्णिमा 2019</p>	<p>Paush Purnima is a significant day in the Hindu calendar. The full moon is the lunar phase when the moon appears fully illuminated from Earth's perspective. In lunar calendar, Magha month starts from the next day of Paush Purnima. During Magha Mahina, people take a holy dip in the river; this is considered highly auspicious and important on Paush Purnima day. It is believed that the holy dip on the auspicious day of Paush Purnima liberates the soul from the continuous cycle of birth and death.</p>
<p>15th Jan - Makar Sankranti</p> 	<p>Numerous rituals are followed during Sankranti. These rituals vary from state to state and within a state, region to region. The following rituals are celebrated all over the country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ritualistic bonfire a day before Makar Sankranti• worshipping of rising Surya Deva, the Sun God• holy dip in sacred water bodies• making Pongal and distributing it as Prasad (in Tamil Nadu)• performing charity by giving alms to the needy• flying kites especially in Gujarat• worshipping livestock• preparing sweets with sesame and jaggery• taking oil bath, mostly in South India.
<p>24th January - Mauni Amavasya</p> 	<p>It is believed that the water of the most sacred and holy river in Hinduism, the Ganga, turns into the nectar on Mauni Amavasya day. Due to this belief Mauni Amavasya day is the most important day in Hindu calendar to take holy dip in the Ganga. According to the beliefs, Mauni Amavasya falls in the middle of Magha month and is also known as Maghi Amavasya.</p>
<p>29th January - Basant Panchami</p> 	<p>Vasant Panchami day is dedicated to Saraswati, the Goddess of knowledge, music, arts, science and technology. Goddess Saraswati is worshipped on this day. This ritual of initiating education to children is known as <i>Akshar-Abhyasam</i> or <i>Vidya-Arambham/Praasana</i>, which is one of the famous rituals of Vasant Panchami.</p>

February

9th Feb - Magh Purnima



Magha Purnima is an important day in the Hindu calendar. Religious texts describe the glory of the holy bath and austerity observed during Magha Purnima. It is believed that every single day in the month of Magha is special for doing charity.

21st February - Mahashivratri



Shivaratri is a great festival of convergence of Shiva and Shakti. Chaturdashi Tithi during Krishna Paksha in the month of Magha is known as Maha Shivaratri.

March

9th March - Holika Dahan



Holika was a demoness in Hindu Vedic scriptures, who was burnt to death with the help of God Vishnu. She was the sister of King Hiranyakashipu and aunt of Prahlad. The story of Holika Dahan (Holika's death) signifies the triumph of good over evil. It is believed that all sorts of fears can be conquered by doing Holika Puja on Holi. Holika Puja bestows power, prosperity and wealth.

10th March – Holi



Holi is a religious festival celebrated by Hindus all over the world. Holi is considered the second biggest festival in the Hindu calendar after Diwali. Holi is also known as the festival of Colours. The second day is known as Rangwali Holi, the day when people play with coloured powder and coloured water. Rangwali Holi which is main Holi day is also known as Dhulandi or Dhulendi.

16th March - Sheetala Ashtami



Basoda Puja is dedicated to Goddess Sheetala and is celebrated on Krishna Paksha Ashtami after Holi. Basoda is also known as Sheetala Ashtami. Usually it falls after eight days of Holi but many people observe it on first Monday or Friday after Holi. Sheetala Ashtami is more popular in North Indian states like Gujarat, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. According to Basoda customs, families don't light a fire for cooking. Hence most families cook one day before and consume stale food on Sheetala Ashtami day. It is believed that Goddess Sheetala controls smallpox, chickenpox, measles, etc. and people worship her to ward off any outbreak of those diseases.

APRIL

8th April - Hanuman Jayanti



Chaitra month: Hanuman, who is also known as Vanara God, was born on this day and Hanuman Jayanti is celebrated to commemorate the birth of Hanuman. Celebrations at Lete Hanuman and Gore Hanuman temple at Prayag are very famous. Rituals during Hanuman Jayanti:

- Shodashopachara Hanuman Puja
- visiting Hanuman temple
- offering Sindoor i.e. red vermilion to Lord Hanuman.

30th April - Ganga Jayanti



Ganga Saptami day is dedicated to Goddess Ganga. This day is also known as Ganga Pujan and Ganga Jayanti as Ganga was reborn on this day.

According to Hindu Mythology Ganga descended to the Earth on Ganga Dussehra day. Lord Shiva took her in His locks to break Ganga's descent. Later Lord Shiva released Ganga.

JUNE

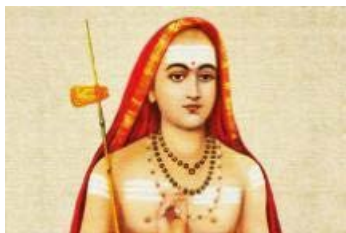
1st June - Ganga Dussehra



Ganga Dussehra falls during Dashami Tithi of Jyeshtha Shukla Paksha and falls in the months of May or June. Ganga Dussehra is also known as Gangavataran which means the descent of the Ganga. This festival is dedicated to Goddess Ganga and this day is commemorated as the day when Ganga descended to the Earth to accomplish her mission to purge the cursed souls of Bhagiratha's ancestors. Before coming to the Earth, the Goddess Ganga was residing in Kamandal of Lord Brahma and along with her the Goddess Ganga brought the purity of heaven to the Earth. On Ganga Dussehra devotees worship Goddess Ganga and take a dip in the Ganga. Taking dip in the Ganga and offering charity or Daan-Punya on Ganga Dussehra day is considered highly auspicious. It is believed that holy dip in Ganga on Ganga Dussehra day can purge all types of sins.

JULY

05th July - Guru Purnima



During the Ashadha month, full moon day is celebrated as Guru Purnima or Vyasa Purnima. Traditionally this day is reserved for Guru Puja or Guru Worship. On this day disciples offer Puja or pay respect to their Gurus. Guru refers to spiritual guide who enlightens disciples by his knowledge and teachings.

This day is commemorated as the birth anniversary of Veda Vyasa. Veda Vyasa was the author as well as a character in the Hindu epic *Mahabharata*. Devout Hindus observe Guru Purnima as one of the main festivals.

AUGUST

3rd August - Hariyali Teej



Teej festivities are celebrated by women in states like Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Jharkhand. Hariyali Teej is celebrated by women during Sawan month. Hartalika Teej Vrat is observed during Shukla Paksha Tritiya of Bhadrapada month. On this day, makeshift statues of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are made with the sand and worshipped for marital bliss and progeny.

Hartalika Teej is known by this name due to the legend associated with it.

5th August - Nag Panchami



Nag Panchami is a significant day and it is observed on Shukla Paksha Panchami during Shravana month. Nag Panchami falls in the months of July or August and women worship Nag Devta and offer milk to snakes on this day. Women also pray for the wellness of their brothers and family. Nag Panchami is a traditional worship of serpent Gods observed by Hindus throughout India.

3rd August - Shrawan Purnima / Rakshabanadhan



Rakhi, which is also known as Raksha Bandhan, is a Hindu festival which is celebrated across India. Raksha Bandhan is recognized and celebrated among Hindus for its symbolic significance. Raksha Bandhan draws its significance from a sacred thread which is known as Rakhi. It is believed that the thread protects the one who wears it, especially during the auspicious time of Shrawan Purnima.

11th August - Janamshtami



Devotees, who observe fast on Janmashtami, should have only a single meal a day before Janmashtami. On fasting day, devotees take Sankalpa to observe a day-long fast and to break it on the next day when both Rohini Nakshatra and Ashtami Tithi are over. Rituals performed during Janamashtmi:

- a day-long fast
- worshipping Bal Krishna at midnight
- visiting Krishna temple
- cooking sweet dishes specially made of milk products.

23rd August - Rishi Panchami



Rishi Panchami is not a festival, but a fasting day observed by women to pay homage to the Sapta Rishis, i.e. the seven sages, and to get purified from Rajaswala Dosha.

Hinduism gives highest priority to purity and there are strict guidelines to maintain purity of the body and the soul. Rishi Panchami fasting is advised to get rid of Rajaswala Dosha.

OCTOBER

25th October - Dusshera



Vijaydashami is celebrated as victory of Lord Rama over the demon Ravana and also victory of Goddess Durga over the buffalo demon Mahishasura. Vijaydashami is also known as Dussehra and the Prayagraj Dusshera is famous across the country. Apart from Magh Mela, Dusshera is a famous and popular festival in India. Huge crowds gather to pay obeisance to the gods and watch the burning of the effigies of Ravana.

NOVEMBER



8th
November
- Ahoi-
Ashtami

Traditionally, on Ahoi Ashtami, mothers used to keep fast from dawn to dusk for the wellbeing of their sons. The fast is broken during twilight after sighting stars in the sky.

Women offer prayers to the Goddess Ahoi Bhagawati, an incarnation of Goddess Parvati. They observe fast and perform puja for the Goddess Ahoi as She is believed to be the protector of offspring of all living beings.

13th November - Narak Chaturdashi



Narak Chaturdashi is a festival celebrated in the month of Kartik, on the 14th day of the waning moon. It is also known as Narak Chaudas, Roop Chaudas or even Kali Chaudas. As per ancient Indian mythology, people revere the Lord of death 'Yamraj' with utmost devotion and adoration. As it is celebrated a day before Diwali, it is also known as Choti Diwali. On this day, people light up diyas at their homes after dusk. By lionising the god of death, people make sure that they are absolved from the clutches of untimely death, as well as pray for better health.

14th November –Deepawali



Diwali is the most significant religious festival among Hindus. The festival spiritually signifies the victory of light over darkness, knowledge over ignorance, good over evil and hope over despair. In India, Diwali is celebrated all over the country.

Being Amavasya day, people also perform Shradha for their ancestors at Sangam. Traditionally, most Puja is performed after keeping a day-long fast. Hence, the devotees observe a day-long fast on the day of Lakshmi Puja. The fast is broken after Lakshmi Puja in the evening.

20th November - Chhatt Puja



The Sun God, Surya, the god of energy and of the life-force, is worshipped during the Chhatt Puja to promote well-being, prosperity and progress.

Chhatt Puja is also known as Surya Shashti, Chhath, Chhathi, Chhath Parv, Dala Puja and Dala Chhath.

26th November - Tulsi Vivah



Prabodhini Ekadashi, also known as Devotthan Ekadashi, is the 11th lunar day (ekadashi) in the bright fortnight of the Hindu month of Kartik. It marks the end of the four-month period of Chaturmas, when god Vishnu is believed to sleep. It is believed that Vishnu sleeps on Shayani Ekadashi and wakes on Prabodhini Ekadashi, thus giving this day the name '*Prabodhini Ekadashi*'. The end of Chaturmas, when marriages are prohibited, signifies the beginning of the Hindu wedding season. It is also known as Kartiki Ekadashi, Kartik Shukla ekadashi and Kartiki. Prabodhini Ekadashi is followed by Kartik Purnima, which day is celebrated as Dev Diwali or Diwali of the gods.

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17. Field Documentation and Interview Transcriptions

Newspaper Coverage of INTACH Field Investigation



उजियार में गंगा का निरीक्षण करने पहुंची नमामि गंगे की टीम • जागरण

दिल्ली की टीम ने देखा उजियार घाट

जागरण संवाददाता, नरही (बलिया) : नमामि गंगे परियोजना के तहत भारतीय सांस्कृतिक निधि दिल्ली की चार सदस्यों की टीम ने रविवार को उजियार घाट का निरीक्षण किया।

परियोजना का उद्देश्य गंगा नदी के गोमुख से लेकर गंगासागर तक गंगा के किनारे पांच किमी के दायरे में मौजूद प्राकृतिक धरोहर, परंपरा, रीति रिवाज व तीज-त्योहार आदि का दस्तावेजीकरण है।

इसके तहत टीम ने गंगा भवन

पर राजीव उपाध्याय के सहयोग से कोटवा नारायणपुर, नसीरपुर मठ, उजियार व भरौली के गांव घाटों का निरीक्षण किया। टीम इन सबका एक विस्तृत लिखित एवं वीडियो डॉक्यूमेंट्री बनाकर नमामि गंगे (एनएमसीजी) जल शक्ति मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार को सौंपेगी। टीम में डा. सुमेश दुदानी, हरीश बेंजवाल, साजिद इदिसी एवं तृप्ता सिंह, निरूपमा मोडवेल, मनु भटनागर आदि लोग शामिल थे।

इंटेक के दल ने गंगा घाटों का किया निरीक्षण

भरौली। केन्द्र सरकार के नमामि गंगे परियोजना के तहत भारतीय सांस्कृतिक निधि (इंटेक) दिल्ली की चार सदस्यों की दो टीमों इन दिनों यहां आयी हैं। परियोजना का उद्देश्य गंगा नदी के उद्गम (गोमुख) से लेकर गंगासागर तक गंगा के किनारे पांच किमी के दायरे में मौजूद मूर्त-अमूर्त व प्राकृतिक धरोहर, परंपरा, रीति रिवाज, तीज त्योहार आदि का दस्तावेज तैयार करना शामिल है। टीम ने रविवार को कोटवा नारायणपुर, नसीरपुर मठ, उजियार, भरौली के घाटों का निरीक्षण किया। पूरे नदी क्षेत्र का निरीक्षण करने के बाद इंटेक लिखित एवं वीडियो डॉक्यूमेंट्री नमामि गंगे केन्द्रीय जल शक्ति मंत्रालय को देगा।



सोहांव विकास खंड के कोरेंटाड्रीट ड्रक बंगला के पास गंगा तट पर जांच करने के बाद खड़े नमामि गंगे दस्तावेजीकरण परियोजना के सदस्य।

दिल्ली की टीम ने गंगा घाटों का किया भ्रमण

संवाद न्यूज एजेंसी

नरही। नमामि गंगे परियोजना के तहत भारतीय सांस्कृतिक निधि (इंटेक) दिल्ली की चार सदस्यों की दो टीमें बलिया आई हैं। परियोजना का उद्देश्य गंगा के उद्गम से लेकर गंगासागर तक गंगा के किनारे पांच किलोमीटर के दायरे में मौजूद मूर्त, अमूर्त एवं प्राकृतिक धरोहर, परंपरा, रीति-रिवाज, तीज त्योहार आदि का दस्तावेजीकरण उनके मौखिक रूप में शामिल करना है।

एक टीम रविवार को उजियार स्थित गंगा भवन पहुंचने के बाद राजीव उपाध्याय के सहयोग से कोटवा नारायणपुर, नसीरपुर मठ, उजियार, भरौली के गांव घाटों का गहन निरीक्षण किया। भारतीय सांस्कृतिक निधि (इंटेक) को जिम्मेदारी भारत सरकार की

नमामि गंगे सांस्कृतिक दस्तावेजीकरण के लिए टीम ने किया निरीक्षण

सहायता, दस्तावेजीकरण एवं सुझाव प्रदान करना है। इसके साथ ही एक विस्तृत लिखित एवं वीडियो डॉक्यूमेंट्री नमामि गंगे (एनएमसीजी) जल शक्ति मंत्रालय को सौंपना है। इसके लिए यह टीम पूरे मनोयोग से अध्ययन करने में जुटी है। गंगा के साथ सांस्कृतिक धरोहरों को जोड़ने पर दल का विशेष जोर है। टीम में डॉ. सुमेश दुदानी, हरीश बेंजवाल, साजिद इदिसी एवं तृप्ता सिंह रहे। इस मौके पर सत्य प्रकाश उपाध्याय, प्रदीप यादव, ब्रह्मानंद गिरी, मनीष उपाध्याय, अरपनी उपाध्याय आदि ने सहयोग किया।

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