

INTERESTING FACTS

- Ajay River is believed to be the ancient 'Amystis' River that flowed through the town of 'Katadupa' (present day 'Katwa'), during the time of the ancient Greek historian, Megasthenes.
- The remains of a Chalcolithic civilization that ran parallel to the Harappan Civilization has been excavated at Pandu Rajar Dhibi in the lower Ajay River basin.
- The 12th century Sanskrit poet, Jayadeva, who composed the famous *Gita Govinda*, was born and lived for some time in Village Kenduli, District Birbhum, West Bengal, on the banks of the Ajay River.

DRIVERS OF RIVERSCAPE CHANGE

- The Punasi Dam has altered the flow and ecological integrity of the Ajay River.
- Extensive sand mining, excessive fishing, brick kilns and water extraction for agriculture and industrial purposes have altered the River's hydrology and aquatic habitat.
- Alteration of channel morphology, increasing transport networks, and expansion of urban areas have led to a loss of connectivity between upstream and downstream channels, and have possibly resulted in the ecological impairment of the Ajay River.
- Changes in riparian vegetation from coal mining and sand extraction are believed to be a key cause of habitat degradation in the Basin.
- Rapid urbanization, combined with increased tourist influx, has resulted in increased solid and liquid waste dumped into the River and its tributaries, disturbing the entire ecosystem.

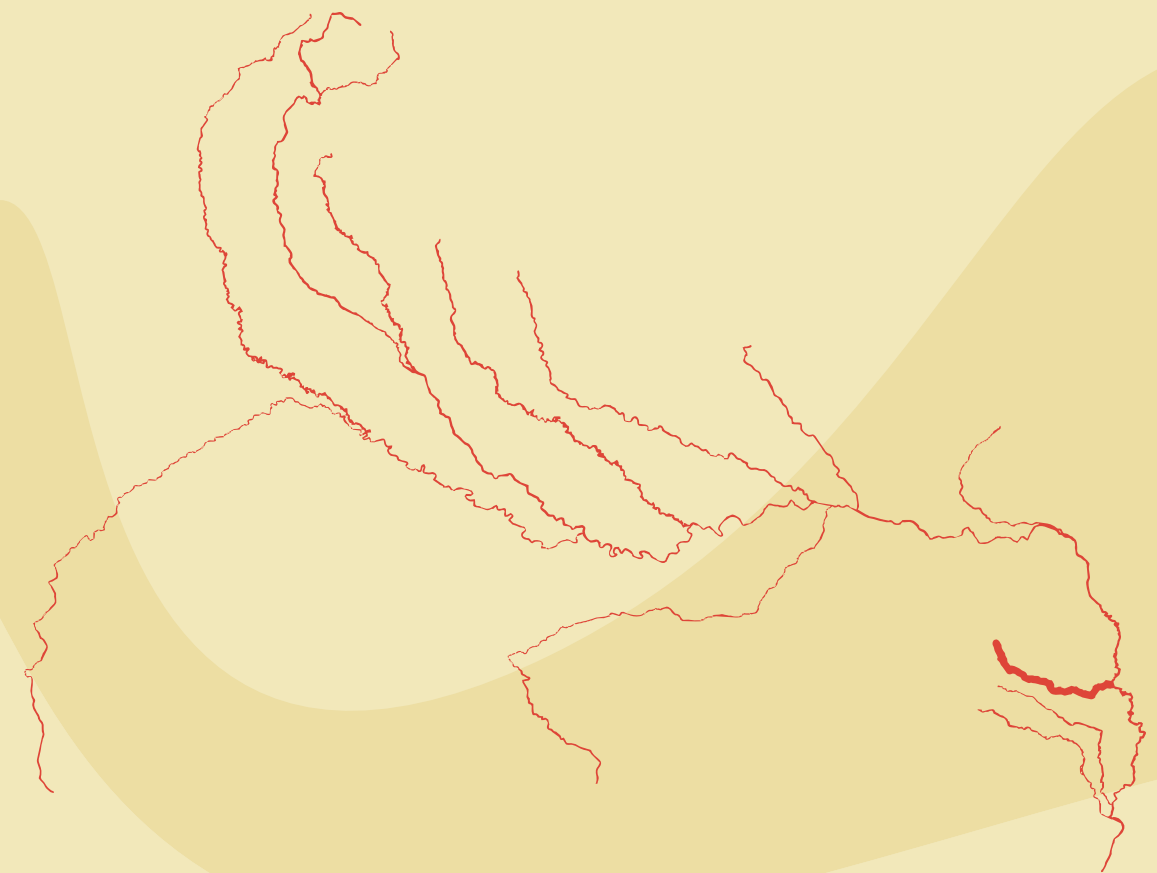


VIBRANT GANGA



Ajay River

THE RHYTHM OF MYSTICISM



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GENERAL INFORMATION

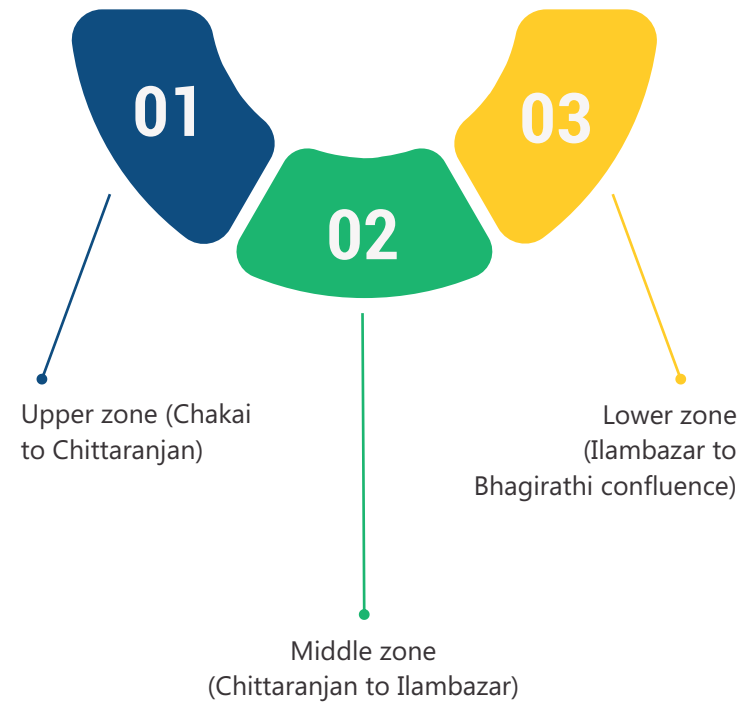
- Ajay River is an east-flowing major right-bank tributary of the Ganga River, which originates from a small hill called 'Chakai' at an elevation of around 300 m asl in the Jamui District of Bihar and traverses through Jharkhand and West Bengal before joining the Bhagirathi River at Katwa.
- Ajay River has a length of 299 km, of which about 152 km lies in West Bengal.
- It flows through two biogeographic zones viz., the Deccan Peninsula and the Gangetic Plains.
- The River has a catchment area of about 6000 km², which lies in the path of tropical depression or cyclonic storms that form in the Bay of Bengal during monsoon and move in a north-west direction, causing heavy rainfall in the Basin.
- Around one-third of the Ajay River basin is under forest cover, with a comparatively higher forest cover in the upper zone than in the middle and lower zones.
- Dudhwa, Partho, Jayanti, Hinglow, Tumoni, Kunur, Kopai and Kana are the major tributaries of Ajay River.

SALIENT FEATURES

- The River basin comprises of three geomorphic units, i.e. the lateritic upland, the succeeding eastwardly sloping upland and alluvial plains.
- The upper zone of the River flows through the Archaean gneissic complex, the middle zone through the Gondwana formation and the lower zone through quaternary sediments.
- 25 waterbird species belonging to nine families and eight orders have been documented from the Ajay River, of which 11 are residents, five winter migrants, four resident winter migrants, four resident local migrants, and one resident with summer and winter movements.



Ajay River can be divided into three zones, viz.



- A 25 km stretch between Chakdaha and Katwa, in the lower zone of the River, has been found to be suitable for waterbirds.
- Common pochard (*Aythya ferina*) and river lapwing (*Vanellus duvaucelii*), have been documented in the River.

KEY PROTECTED AREAS

Ballavpur Wildlife Sanctuary

