



*"In this land of the Ganga, there was education of culture.
But, more importantly, there was a culture of education."*

-PM Narendra Modi



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सत्यमेव जयते

**GNAMAMI
GANGE**

The Ganges Children Handbook

Module 1 Introduction to Ganga



Indian Institute of Public Administration
New Delhi

NATAMI
GANGE



NAME OF PROJECT

BLENDED CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM
FOR STAKEHOLDERS OF RIVER GANGA

PROGRAMME

NAMAMI GANGE PROGRAMME

PREPARED FOR

NATIONAL MISSION FOR CLEAN GANGA

PREPARED BY

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

SPECIFIC FOCUS

STUDY MODULE FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS

PROJECT TEAM

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The Ganges

Children Handbook

Module 1

Introduction to Ganga



सत्यमेव जयते

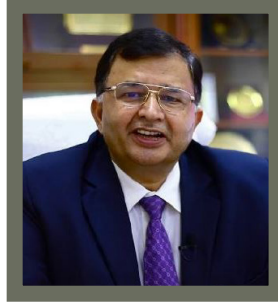


Indian Institute of Public Administration
New Delhi



MESSAGE

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL



My young Companions,

"Children are the hands by which we take hold of heaven"

The above quotation by Henry Ward Beecher has inspired me to join hands with you in rejuvenation and conservation of our holy river Ganga. I consider your role in the society and believe that your participation in this herculean task can improve the present state of our River.

To make the descent of Ganga worthwhile, you are being made a part part of the project - Blended Capacity Building Programme for Stakeholders of River Ganga under Namami Gange Programme. Ganga lies at the core of our culture and it is our firm belief that your awareness of the complex challenges faced by our national river can bring about behavioural change in the society at large.

Through this booklet, you will be taken to a journey along the Ganges and its basin. We want to create an imprint on you and mould each one of you into responsible adults. This learning process has been tailored for your effective engagement with inclusion of maps, quizzes and puzzles.

We consider the potential of a child in contributing towards a cleaner, breathable future. It is our hope and expectation to meet with your feelings, thoughts and awareness to foster a sense of belonging for River Ganga. We have faith in your tremendous curiosity and capacity & hope that together we can change mindsets and take it to practical application.

S. N. TRIPATHI
Director General, IIPA

PREFACE

Universally and religiously, water is considered a purifying natural symbol. Indian rivers, besides being the lifeline for many are considered as manifestations of the divine. They connect state to state, past to present. The Ganges is our sacred river with a culturally significant history. It is not just a river but a deity, a cleanser of sins; It is our mother.

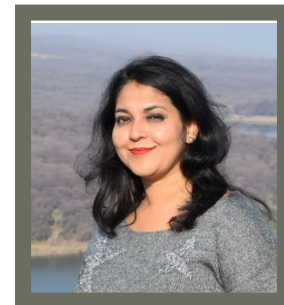
Ganga is a part of India's rich past. It is a symbol of purity and sanctity. It occupies a central space in the collective consciousness of the country, which is why Gangajal is considered the holy water. River Ganga, not only fosters exceptionally rich biodiversity, but it also contributes heavily to the livelihood of India

It is unfortunate that despite the admiration and reverence invoked by the river, it has become a dumping junkyard at innumerable points. Human greed and misconduct have degraded the river quality. It is indeed a matter of concern that the river has altered its flow over the years; with that, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) has stepped in to keep the river clean, pure and healthy for the benefit of existing and future generations. It is a matter of pride for IIPA to be entrusted by the project "Blended Capacity Building for Stakeholders of River Ganga" under the Namami Gange programme.

With the aim of conserving and rejuvenating River Ganga, The 'Ganges -Children Handbook' has been prepared to make children interact with our national river. The book encompasses a holistic view of the river Ganga by posing the challenges and opportunities in and around Ganga basin.



V . K . S H A R M A
Senior Professor, IIPA



S H Y A M L I S I N G H
Assistant Professor, IIPA



"I am convinced that everything has come down to us from the banks of the Ganga - astronomy, astrology, spiritualism, etc. It is very important to note that some 2500 years ago at the least Pythagoras went from Samos to the Ganga to learn geometry."

- Francis M. Voltaire



Imagine you go to Rishikesh, all excited and packed up to raft. Water splashes on your face. You sit in your life jacket feeling safe and comfortable. Now, imagine the toxins in the river contaminating your breath and your skin.

And ...your trip is ruined, so is your face and your insides too!?

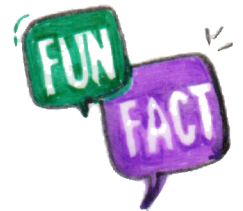
The horror, The horror!!!

Where were you rafting just now? Yes, you're right. In the **largest river of our country- Ganga.**

The Ganges river was declared the **National river of India** on 04th November, 2008.

It binds five states namely- **Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal** and drains eleven states namely- Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Delhi.

- People across the country directly or indirectly depend on the river.
- The Ganga basin is home to almost **450** million people of India.
- The river provides spiritual sustenance to many believers
- River water is drying up at some places



Splashing cold and clean water on your face slows down your heart rate and helps you feel calmer. Now you know what to do when your sibling steals your food !

GANGA IN THE HISTORY

4th century B.C. Meghasthenes (Ambassador) noted that many rivers drain into Ganga in his work, Indica.

7th century B.C.

Strabon (Geographer) mentions Ganga as the largest known river

2nd century A.D.

Arrian (Historian) states "all the many rivers in Asia even if united would not be fit to be compared in volume of water with an ordinary Indian river and much less with greatest of them all, the Ganga, with which neither the Nile (Egypt) nor the Danube (Europe, can for a moment be compared"

627-643AD

Hsien Tsang (Chinese traveller) mentions Ganga river of religious merit, which could wash away countless sins

7th century AD

Banbhatta (Litterateur) describes the scenery around Ganga in his play as 'Flamingoes descend on the waters of the Ganga in such a way that its entire surface turns white.

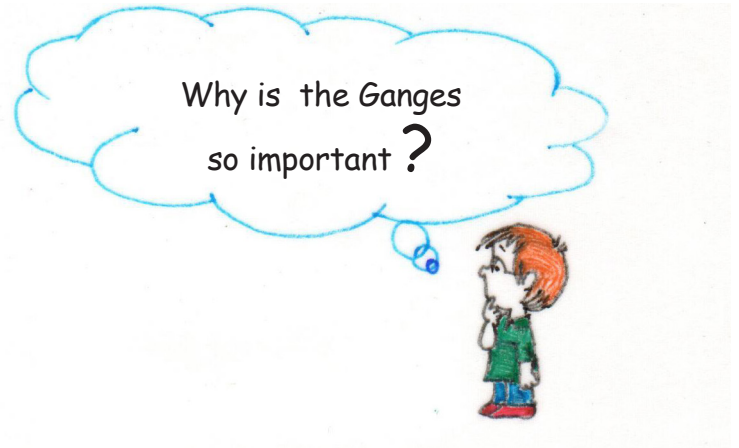
1526-1520 AD

Babur (Emperor) in his autobiography describes banks of Ganga as dense in vegetation. Also notes Ganga water full of crocodiles and Ganga dolphins.

16th century AD

Abu Fazl (historian) mentions Ganga water as 'Water of Immortality'

CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE



"Among things that purify, I am the wind; of the wielders of weapons, I am Rama; of the water creatures, I am the Crocodile; and of rivers, I am Ganga"

-Bhagavad Gita, Verse 31, Chapter 10

In Hindu Mythology, Ganga is a Goddess, the cleanser of sins. A holy bath in Ganges is believed to remove the sins of several births. The water from river Ganga, **Gangajal**, is also known as the water of immortality.

Tirthas and melas held on the river ghats are considered as holiest of pilgrimages. For the dead to achieve eternal salvation, ashes are cast into the river.

You must be wondering , Why Ganga? Why not Yamuna or any other river for that matter?

To answer this, Let's take you back in time.....

THE LEGEND OF DESCENT OF GANGA

LONG AGO IN AYODHYA, LIVED KING SAGARA. HE HAD TWO WIVES— QUEEN KESHINI AND QUEEN SUMATI. WITH THE BLESSINGS OF LORD SHIVA, THEY BORE PROUD AND HEROIC SONS.

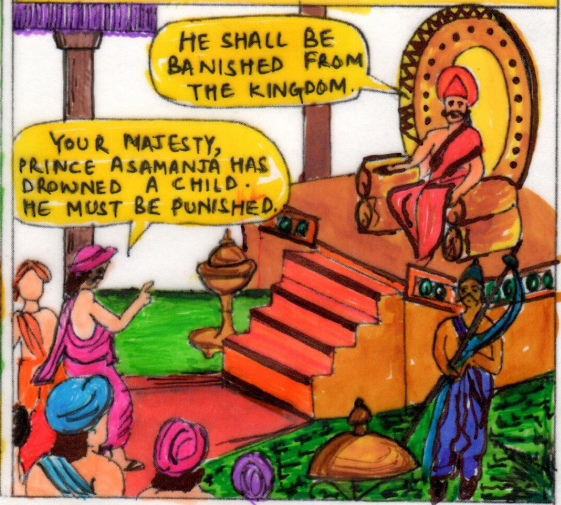


SUMATI BORE 60,000 SONS WHO GREW UP BRAVE AND STRONG. THEY WERE CONSCIOUS OF THEIR ROYAL STATUS.

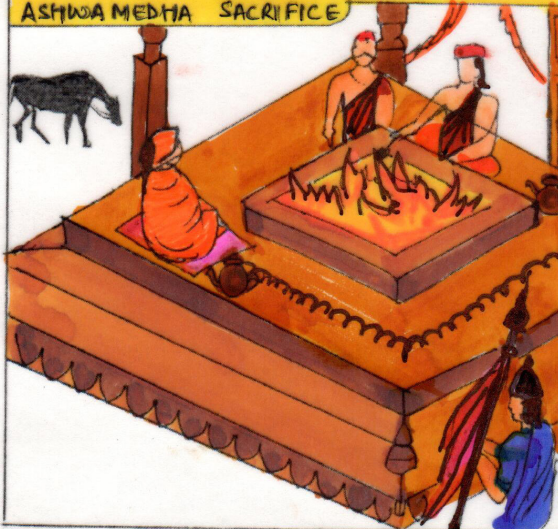
QUEEN KESHINI'S SON, HOWEVER, GREW UP TO BE A WICKED PRINCE.

HE SHALL BE BANISHED FROM THE KINGDOM.

YOUR MATESTY, PRINCE ASAMANJA HAS DROWNED A CHILD. HE MUST BE PUNISHED.



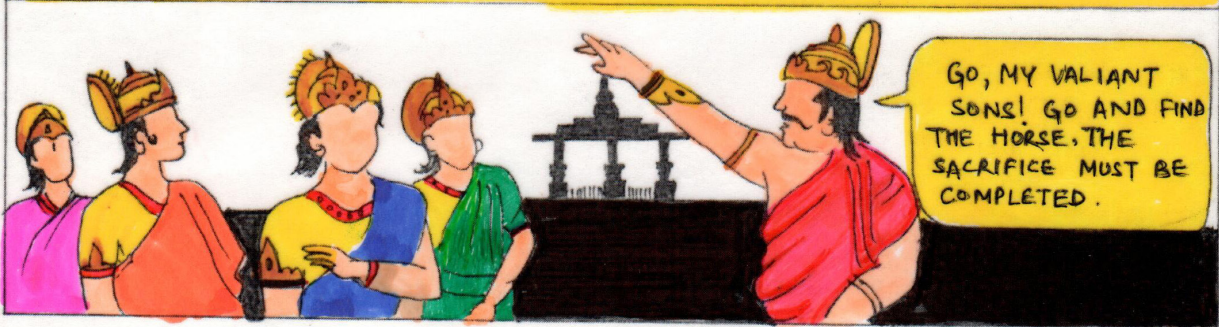
TO ESTABLISH THE BOUNDARY OF HIS EMPIRE, KING SAGARA PERFORMED ASHWAMEDHA SACRIFICE



...INDIRA, THE KING OF GODS, STOLE THE SACRIFICIAL HORSE AND HID IT.



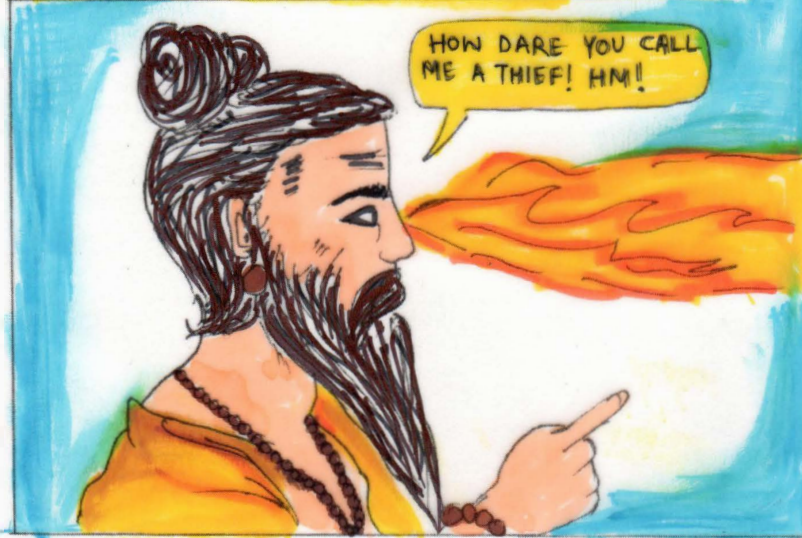
WHEN THE KING DISCOVERED THAT THE HORSE WAS STOLEN, HE CALLED HIS 60,000 SONS TO GO AND FIND THE HORSE.



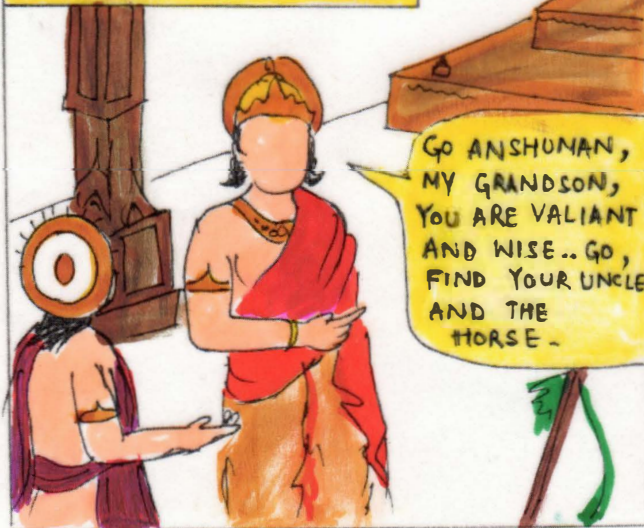
THEY LOOKED EVERYWHERE BUT COULDN'T FIND THE HORSE. FINALLY, THEY CAME ACROSS A MEDITATING SAGE



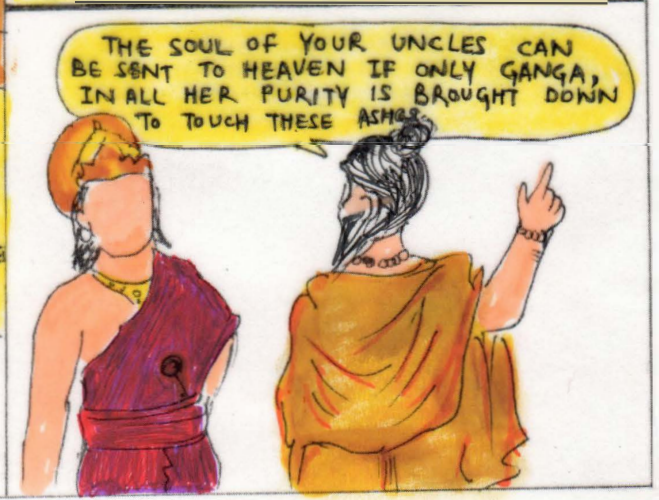
KAPILA MUNI WAS DISTURBED IN HIS PRAYER- ANGERED BY THEIR AUDACITY, THE SAGE BURNED THE 60,000 PRINCES TO ASHES.



THE KING DID NOT HEAR FROM HIS SONS FOR DAYS. HE WAS WORRIED.



ANSHUMAN FOUND THE SACRIFICIAL HORSE NEAR THE SAGE. ON HEARING ANSHUMAN'S CRY OF ANGUISH, THE SAGE GAVE HIM A SOLUTION



NO ONE COULD FIND A WAY TO BRING THE GANGA DOWN. THE TASK WAS LEFT UNACCOMPLISHED UNTIL BHAGIRATHA, ANSHUMAN'S GRANDSON, TOOK A VOW IN HIS FATHER'S PRESENCE TO BRING GANGA DOWN TO EARTH.

HE LEFT FOR THE FOREST ENTRUSTING HIS KINGDOM TO THE MINISTERS. FOR YEARS, HE CONTINUED HIS PENANCES & MEDITATION.

PLEASED BY BHAGIRATHA'S DEVOTION, BRAHMA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.

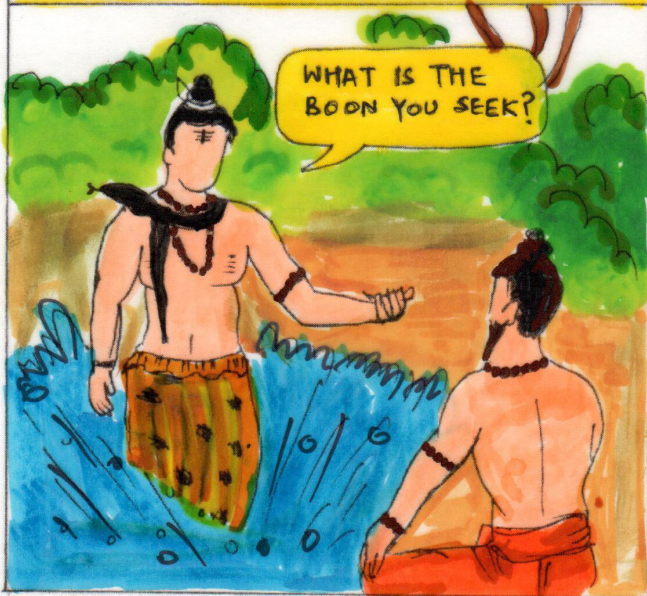
O STEADFAST ONE!
ASK FOR A BOON,
AND IT SHALL BE
GRANTED TO YOU.

ONLY SHIVA CAN
WITHSTAND THE
FORCE OF GANGA'S
FALL.

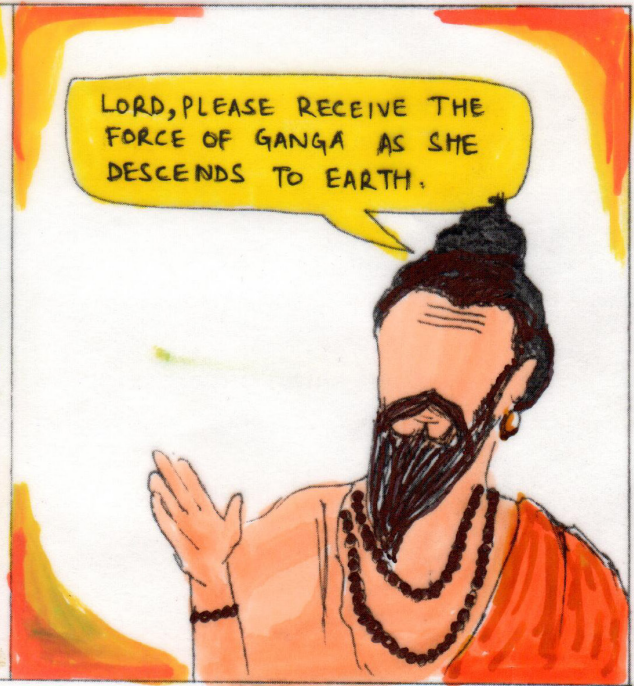
LET GANGA FLOW DOWN
TO EARTH FROM THE
HEAVEN AND DELIVER
THE SOULS OF MY
ANCESTORS.

Adapted from Amar Chitra Katha by Imrana Akthar

FOR A YEAR, BHAGIRATHA WORSHIPPED SHIVA. AT LAST, SHIVA APPEARED BEFORE HIM.



LORD, PLEASE RECEIVE THE FORCE OF GANGA AS SHE DESCENDS TO EARTH.



LORD SHIVA KNEW THAT THE EARTH WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ENDURE THE FORCE OF GANGA. AS GANGA DESCENDED, FROM THE HEAVENS, HALFWAY DOWN, SHIVA LOCKED HER IN HIS MATTED HAIR TO SLOW DOWN HER FLOW. GANGA WITH ALL HER NOTORIETY AND FIERCENESS, KEPT SWIRLING IN SHIVA'S LOCKS FOR MANY A YEAR.



Adapted from Amar Chitra Katha by Imrana Akthar

BHAGIRATHA ONCE AGAIN ADORED SHIVA AND THE LORD APPEARED BEFORE HIM.



AT LAST, BHAGIRATHA AND GANGA REACHED THE OCEAN. GANGA FLOWED OVER THE ASHES OF THE SONS OF SAGARA. FROM THAT DAY ONWARDS, THE OCEAN CAME TO BE KNOWN AS SAGARA.



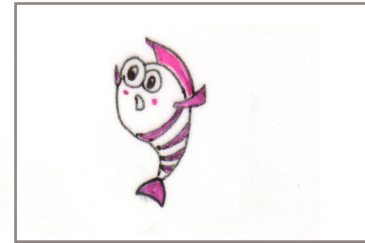
THE SONS OF SAGARA WENT TO HEAVEN AS GANGA FLOWED GENTLY ON THE EARTH. AFTER THIS ACCOMPLISHMENT, BHAGIRATHA RETURNED TO HIS KINGDOM, ASCENDED THE THRONE AND RULED WISELY FOR MANY YEARS.

ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE



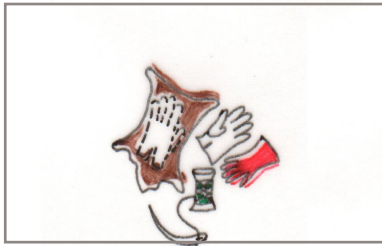
FARMING

Prime occupation. Ganga basin most fertile plain. River Water is used for irrigation



FISHING

Important activity in the delta region. Fish is major source of food for many people in the area



LEATHER INDUSTRIES

River water is used in more than 400 leather industries in Kanpur



ADVENTURE TOURISM

Rishikesh and Haridwar are known for white water rafting and other adventure activities.



ARTISANS

Sculptures, miniature paintings, decorative and utility items associated with the river are crafted for rituals and practices.



SAND MINING

Important occupation in the upper regions of the Ganga. Helps in maintaining silt balance



SPIRITUAL TOURISM

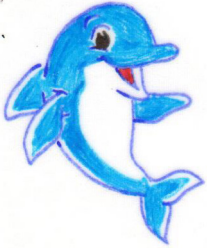
Main revenue in holy cities/ towns. Exploration of religious and spiritual facets of Ganga. River banks sprinkled with numerous Ghats and temples



WASHERMEN

Washermen work on the river's edge. One such famous Dhobi ghat on the Ganges River is in Varanasi.

LET'S DIVE IN



From the **icy glaciers of Gaumukh**, The river Ganges, flows to the plain at Haridwar. It stretches out to become one with the Yamuna and Sarwaswati rivers at Allahabad. Then, it finally fuses with the ocean in a tender embrace.

Meanwhile, some portion of land is drained by the river and its tributaries. That portion of land is called a **river basin**. The river basin **encompasses a network of drainage streams and creeks** that sooner or later flows into the river.

THE SAGA CONTINUES

River has five major headwaters that are snowmelt streams from the Himalayas

Two headstreams of Ganga are **Bhagirathi** and **Alaknanda**.

Bhagirathi river originates in the Himalaya Mountains at Gomukh, while Alaknanda originates from Satopanth glacier.

Both meet to form at **Devprayag** town.

From Devprayag, it flows to Rishikesh and reaches Haridwar. It heads down passing the city of Bijnore and reaches Narora.

From joining **Ramganga** at Kusumkher and the **Kali river** at Kannauj in the South-East, it enters the industrial belt of Kanpur, Allahabad and Varanasi.

It merges with **River Sone** and **River Gandak** near Patna.

From Bihar, it travels to West Bengal to split into **Hoogly River** and the **Ganga Brahmaputra** complex.

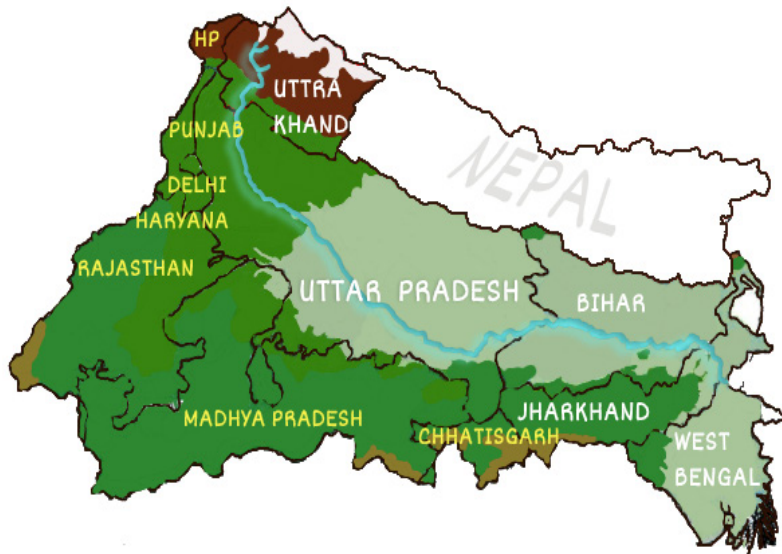
Hoogly river terminates in the Bay of Bengal while forming the world's largest delta- **The Sunderbans**.

The important tributaries of Ganga are **Mahakali**, **Karnali**, **Koshi**, **Gandhak**, **Ghaghra**, **Mahananda**, **Gomti**, **Ramganga**, **Yamuna**, **Tons**, **Son** and **Punpun**.

The **Yamuna** is the largest tributaries of all.

DID YOU KNOW?
Ganges River Dolphin is
National Aquatic Animal of India

WALK ALONG GANGA



The Ganga rises from **the Himalayas** and drains one-fourth of the territory of India into the **Bay of Bengal**. From the **Shivalik Range**, the Ganga emerges from the mountains at **Rishikesh** and then flows to the plain at **Haridwar**. Then it joins other principal tributaries at **Allahabad**. After this, the river flows through the state of Bihar and then enters West Bengal. The banks of river Ganga is spread over **thirty cities**, seventy towns and thousands of villages.

LANDMARK PLACES OF THE GANGES



GANGOTRI

Pilgrim town on the banks of the river Bhagirathi and origin of river Ganges



RISHIKESH

In the Himalayan foothills besides the river Ganges. Also known as Yoga Capital of the World.



HARIDWAR

Located on the right bank of Ganga. Gateway to several prominent places of worship



FARRUKHABAD

A historical city with a rich culture defined by the traditions of Ganga-Jamuni tahrzeb



ALLAHABAD (PRAYAGRAJ)

Located on the right to several prominent





DEVPRAYAG

One of the Panch Prayag of Alaknanda River where Alaknanda and Bhagirathi rivers meet



KANPUR

Located on the west bank of river Ganga. Famous for its leather industry



VARANASI

Located on the right bank of Ganga. Gateway to several prominent places of worship



PATNA

Situated on the southern banks of the river Ganga. Loknayak Ganga path, planned expressway across Ganga



KOLKATA

Spread north-south along the east bank of the Hooghly river, Kolkata sits within the lower Ganges Delta

AGRAJ

bank of Ganga. Gateway places of worship

MAJOR GHATS ALONG ALONG THE GANGES



Assi Ghat

It is the 80th Ghat
The Ghat used to lie at confluence
of now dry river Asi and Ganga.



Dashashwamedh Ghat

Main ghat in Varanasi
Most spectacular Ghat



Triveni Ghat

Biggest ghat in Rishikesh
Devotees perform last rites and
rituals of their loved ones



Manikarnika Ghat

Central cremation site in Varanasi
Oldest and most sacred ghat



Har Ki Pauri

Believed to be the place of
exit of holy River Ganga from
the mountains Kumbh and Ardh
Kumbh celebrated in this Ghat



Armenian Ghat

Built in 1734, along the River
Hoogly. Currently, storage place
of the Calcutta port Trust



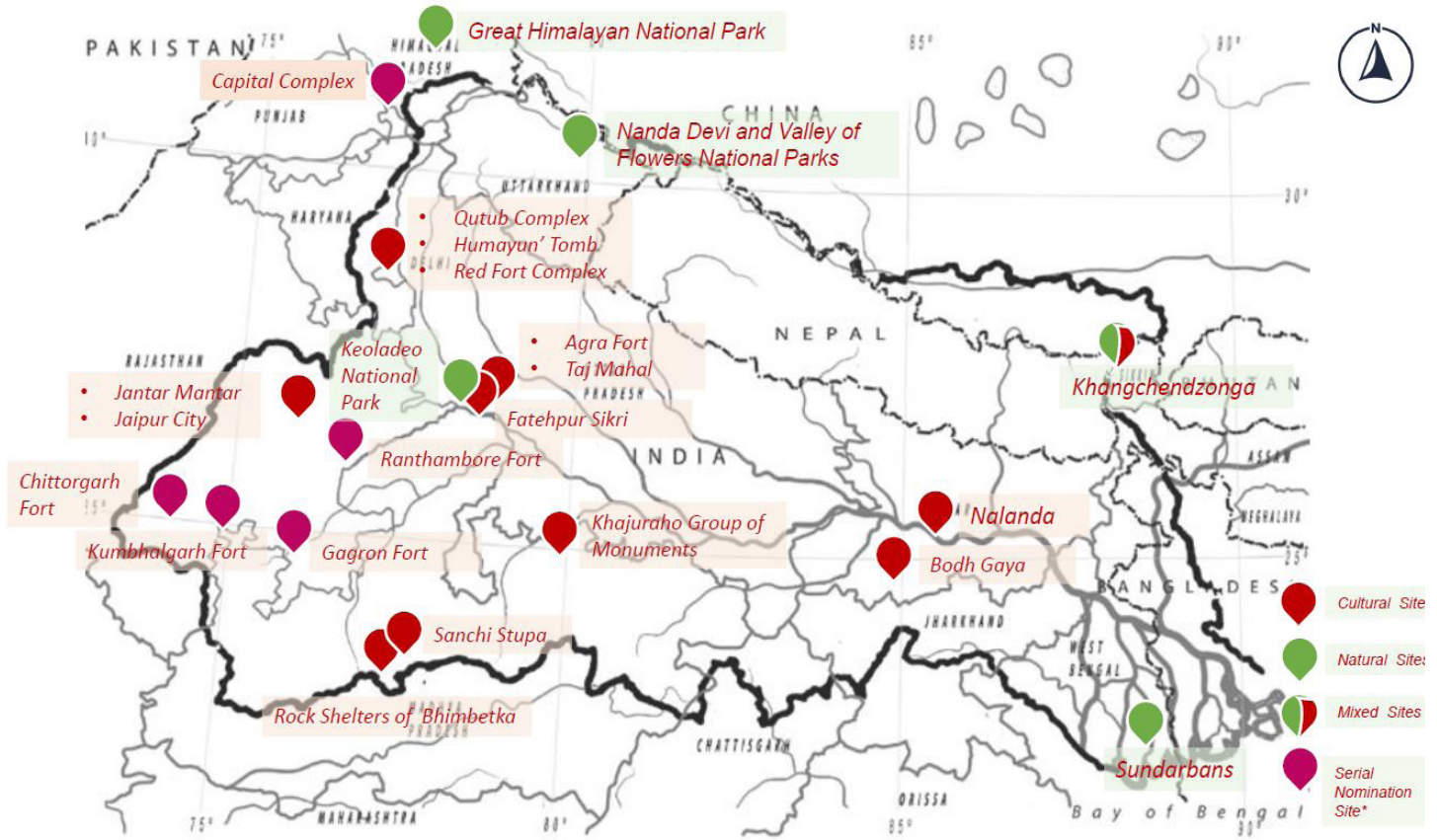
Princep Ghat

Greek style monument dating
back to the mid-19th century kite
festival organised by State tourism
Department across the river

GANGA RIVER BASIN

Ganga River Basin is one of the most fertile basins. It is the largest living river system in the World, spread across 11 states. It provides habitat to 177 bird species, more than 2000 aquatic species including dolphins, turtles and crocodiles. Since, it is home to some of the most endangered and threatened species of the world, it is worthy of our attention and immediate action for conservation. Some sites along the basin have been declared as UNESCO world heritage sites for better conservation of fauna and flora.

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN GANGA BASIN



SUNDERBANS



Sunderbans is the world's largest river delta, which empties into the Bay of Bengal. It mostly lies in Bangladesh and India & approximately 40 % is in West Bengal, India. This delta is one of the most fertile regions of the world and is also known as *Green delta*. Sundarbans mangroves form the world's largest mangrove ecoregion. It has also been declared as UNESCO World Heritage Site.

CAN YOU RECALL?

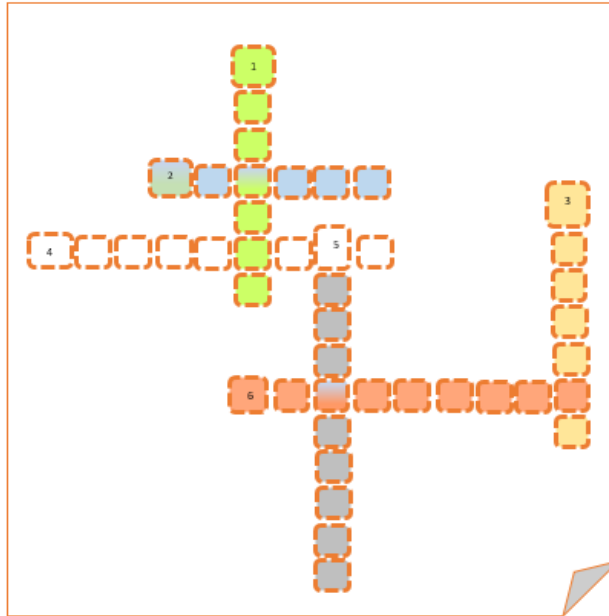
Activity:1 Solve the puzzle

Across

- 2. Largest tributary
- 4. Yoga capital of the world
- 7. Headstream of Ganga

Down

- 1. Ganga origin
- 3. National aquatic animal of India
- 4. Largest Delta



Activity:2 Mark the correct order of the course of River Ganga (1, 2, 3,...). First has been done for you

Devprayag

1

Allahabad

Farakka

Patna

Calcutta

Sundarbans

Rishikesh

Narora

Varanasi

Kanpur

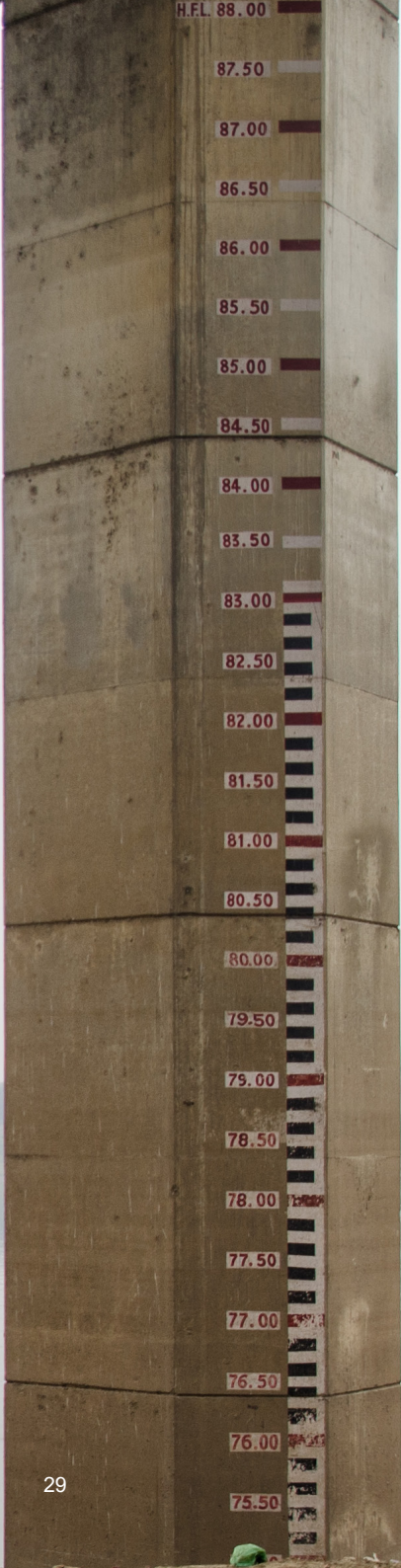
Haridwar



गा घाट
DARBHANGA GHAT







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