



Ganga Utsav 2021-The River Festival

Why in News

Recently, the 5th edition of [Ganga Utsav](#)-The River Festival 2021 has begun which celebrates the glory of the **National river Ganga**.

- Ganga was declared as the **National River of India on 4th November 2008**.
- The event will also comprise, **launch of the Ganga Tarang Portal, curtain raiser on Ganga Knowledge Portal and many more**.

Key Points

▪ About:

- The [National Mission for Clean Ganga \(NMCG\)](#) celebrates the festival every year to strengthen the Public – River Connection.
 - NMCG is the implementation wing of [National Ganga Council](#), set up in 2016, which replaced the National Ganga River Basin Authority (NRGBA).
 - The **NMCG has been registered in the Guinness Book of World Records on the first day of Ganga Utsav 2021** for the highest number of photos of handwritten notes that were uploaded on Facebook in an hour.
- The Utsav **celebrates the mystical and cultural river Ganga through** storytelling, folklore, dialogues with eminent personalities, quizzes, displaying traditional artforms, dance and music performances by renowned artists, photo galleries and exhibitions and much more.
- It highlights the **significance of Jan Bhagidari** (People's Participation) in the revival of Ganga, with a **focus on encouraging stakeholder engagement and public participation** towards the rejuvenation of river Ganga.

▪ Programmes Held During the Festival:

◦ Continuous Learning and Activity Portal:

- Continuous Learning and Activity Portal (CLAP) is a learning portal that will be **buzzing with activities, quizzes, crosswords, discussion forums** to keep children engaged throughout the year.
- The objective of all the activities will be to sensitize and motivate the children and youth for **action to protect and restore our rivers**.

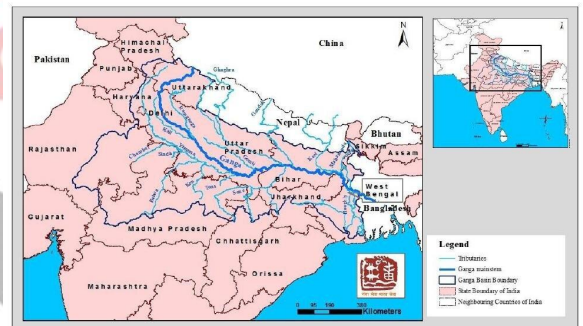
◦ Ganga Mashal:

- It is an expedition led by the **Ganga Task Force (GTF)** that will travel the route including 23 stations along the river Ganga which will help sensitization of the local people and bodies like [Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan](#) and Voluntary groups such as Ganga Mitras, Ganga Praharis, Ganga Doots.
 - Ganga Mitras, Ganga Praharis, Ganga Doots are dedicated voluntary groups formed at the grassroot level, whose resources are channelized **for engagement of the community and public at large**.

- **GTF** is a unit of battalion of ex-servicemen deployed in the services of the Ganga with the approval of the Ministry of Defence for the period of four years till December 2020.
- **Ganga Quest:**
 - It is a [national online quiz on Ganga](#), rivers, and environment that was first conceptualized in 2019 as an educational program to sensitize children and youth towards River Ganga to strengthen the [Namami Gange program](#).
- **Government Initiatives on River Ganga:**
 - **Ganga Action Plan:** It was the **first river action plan** to improve the water quality by the interception, diversion and treatment of domestic sewage.
 - The **National River Conservation Plan** is an extension to this plan, which aims at cleaning the Ganga river under **Ganga Action Plan phase-2**.
 - **National River Ganga Basin Authority:** It was formed in the year 2009 under Section-3 of the [Environment Protection Act 1986](#).
 - **Clean Ganga Fund:** In 2014, it was formed for cleaning up of the Ganga, setting up of waste treatment plants and conservation of biotic diversity of the river.
 - **Bhuvan-Ganga Web App:** It ensures the involvement of the public in the monitoring of pollution entering into the river Ganga.
 - **Ban on Waste Disposal:** In 2017, the [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) banned the disposal of any waste in the Ganga.

River Ganga

- It is the **longest river of India** flowing over 2,510 km of mountains, valleys and plains and is **revered by Hindus** as the most sacred river on earth.



- It originates in the snowfields of the [Gangotri Glacier](#) in the [Himalayas](#) as the Bhagirathi River and is joined by other rivers such as the Alaknanda, Yamuna, Son, Gumti, Kosi and Ghagra.
- The Ganga river basin is **one of the most fertile and densely populated areas of the world** and covers an **area of 1,000,000 sq. km.**
- The [Ganges River Dolphin](#) is an endangered animal that specifically inhabits this river.
- The Ganga widens out into the Ganges Delta in the [Sundarbans](#) swamp of Bangladesh, before it ends its journey by **emptying into the Bay of Bengal**.

[Source: PIB](#)