INTACH is undertaking a project on the Cultural Mapping of the River Ganga from Gaumukh to Gangasagar for the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India. The ICH Division has been working on the intangible cultural heritage aspect of this project in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar; a study of the 2019 Kumbh Mela at Prayag was also undertaken as a part of this mandate. Each documentation report contains research—primary and secondary—of the history, mythology, sacred complexes, fairs and festivals, arts and crafts, oral traditions, languages, foodways, and notable personalities of the culturally significant locations along the course of the river Ganga. The following are some of the completed reports submitted to the NMCG.

Allahabad (Prayagraj), Uttar Pradesh (38 records)
The report on Prayagraj covers the foremost topics related to intangible heritage, with the research comprising a mythological and historical overview, the city in antiquity, a look at Shringverpur, Pratishthanpur and Jhunsi, and the later impact of colonialism. The recognition of Prayagraj as Tirtharaj or the ‘king of pilgrimage’, its deep connection with the philosophy of Sanatan Dharma, the history of the Kumbh Mela and it

The famous Ganga Jamuni tehzeeb, and the impact of the literature and language of the city on the rest of the country has been documented; as also various communities residing near the river. The numerous sacred complexes and ghats, the fairs and festivals, crafts like moonj basketry, performing traditions like the Pattharchatti Ramlila, and foodways unique to the region have also been recorded, along with interesting traditions like that of gehrebazi, a form of horse racing, and the well-known Sufi Daire of Allahabad.

Divya Kumbh
Traditional art of Allahabad
Sculpting God, Allahabad
Bhardwaj Ashram, Prayagraj
University of Allahabad
Kalpavaasi
Rituals with coconut
Vedi, a sacrificial altar, Allahabad
Flute Sellers
Ram Pyaari
Nishad Boatsmen
Street Art in Allahabad
Swachata ki sawari
Veni Daan
Akhada Area
Tools for Sculping Idols
Foreigners at Kumbh
Ganga Aarti
The Sacred Cow
Naga
Snacks at Kumbh
Adi Shankaracharya
Moonj Baskets
Polluted Ganga
Sunset at the Ganga
Boat with pilgrims
Giant ferris wheel
A Maulvi with the holy text
Prayagwal pandas dictating rituals
Procession of shahi akhada
Lending Hand
Besan treats during Kumbh festival, Allahabad
Street Food Vendor
Khusro Bagh - Tomb of an almost Emperor
A devotee blowing the Shankha
Shiva linga
A meal before the Shahi Snaan
A man after holy snaan

Balia

Begusarai, Bihar (14 records)
The Begusarai report details the history of the region, the various sagas related to the epical and mythological stories of the Ganga and the different empires that played a crucial role in contributing to the imagery of the Ganga, both as an imperial symbol and as a sacred element. The language and literary traditions of Begusarai, festivals like the Ardh-Kumbh, Kartik Purnima Snan, and Simariya or Kalpvas Mela have an interwoven narrative with the Ganga.

Along with the prevalent Saktah traditions of Ugratara Temple at Mahishi, the many contributions of local folk music, theatre, and art-craft traditions of this region have been highlighted in the report, especially Mithila painting and Sujni embroidery work. Mithila painting, depicting various milestones in people's lives, was traditionally done on freshly plastered mud walls of the hut but is today also done on cloth, handmade paper, and canvas. Patna Kalam art has also been documented with details of its techniques and forms.

- A wall representation of Mithila painting of Sita and Ram at Darbhanga
- Sujni making tradition, Samastipur
- Basket Makers of Samastipur
- Clay models of Sama and Chakeya, Samastipur
- Depiction of Gangavatara
- Devotees chanting the songs and tales of the festival
- Devotees listening to the narration (Katha)
- Mithila artists at work with nibs and colours
- Shradhalus (devotees) cooking their meal
- Swami Chidamand narrating the tales of Kalpavas to devotees
- The entrance and view of the Kartik Kalpavas Mela, Simariya
- The Ghats of Simariya during Ardhha Kumbh
- Cremation ground at Simariya
- A view of Simariya Ghat

Bhagalpur, Bihar (15 records)
- Manjoosha painting
- A colourful Manjoosha painting
- The ruin state of Karngarh
- The interiors of famous bengali author Sh. Sharat Chandra's house
- A view of Aggaivinath Temple
- Devotees gathered for the Holy dip
- Women performing the rituals during Chhath celebrations
- A gathering of devotees for the holy dip
- Vikramshila University
- A view of Kuppaghat
- Kanwariyas on their way to Babadham
- Kali puja celebrations
- Holy dip in the river Ganga
- Celebrations during Durga puja
- A view of Bateshwar Shtan Kahalgaon

Farukkhabad, Uttar Pradesh (11 records)
The project looks at the intangible heritage of the district, which includes the history of the ancient Kampilya/Panchal kingdom along the Ganga. In 1714, Nawab Mohammad Khan Bangash unified 52 villages of Bisen Kshatriyas (Bumtelas) and named them as Farrukhabad. In ancient times, Kampil reached its highest glory as the capital of the Panchala Kingdom. The presence of numerous Shivalayas has given it an exalted religious status of Aparakashi. The report covers the country's freedom movement and the involvement of local freedom fighters of Farukkhabad in the struggle. The report also documents other luminaries of Farukkhabad which include famous poets like Mr. Mahadevi Verma and Dr. Shiv Om Ambar, and music composer mr. Anwar Farrukhabadi. The history of wooden boat-making in the district is believed to be about 250 years old.

- Yakhni Manda of Kaimganj
- A view of Vishrant Ghat
- Urmila Devi ji practicing Ayurveda
- Tree of life, traditional motif used by the Sadh community
- The ritual of Pahravan on the river Ganga
Beautifully embellished structures of Shah ji Vishrant
Idol depicting Ganga and Bhairav
Aksharalok, a local publication of farukkhabad
A bust to honour Smt. Mahadevi Verma
A boat under construction
A bird's eye view of the amazing ghats and vishrants of Farukkhabad

Garh Mukteshwar, Uttar Pradesh (42 records)
Garh Mukteshwar is an ancient place mentioned in the Bhagwat Purana and Mahabharata. The name of the town is derived from the temple of Mukteshwar Mahadeva, dedicated to the goddess Ganga who is worshipped here in four temples. Many Hindus come here (instead of Haridwar, Varanasi or Gaya) for asthi visarjan (immersion of ashes in the Ganga after cremation) of their deceased family members.

It was one of the main centres of trade on the Ganga water route. The place is also famous for its Mudda industry (which uses the locally grown grass), with exports to many countries. This collection of images provides a glimpse into the sacred complexes, shrines, rituals, ghats, and other cultural traditions associated with the place.

Ganga Abhishek
Donations made in the name of the Ganga
Ghats of Garh Mukteshwar
Sunset on the ghats of Garh Mukteshwar
Commercialization through Ganga
View of the Ghats of Garh Mukteshwar
Preparing Sarkanda mats
Dried Sarkanda grass
Sacred Scriptures
Mundan ritual being performed, Garh Mukteshwar, Uttar Pradesh
Newly married woman performing ritual
Devotees performing rituals during Ganga Dussehra
Devotees performing Ganga Snan
Students of Gurukul
Doorway at Sita-Ram Temple
Statue of Goddess Ganga
Essential items for a ritual
Interview with Kapil Sharma
Hindu Genealogical Registers
Interview with Pt. Shiv Kumar Shankar
Devotees performing Deep Daan ritual, Garh Mukteshwar, Uttar Pradesh
Interview with Acharya Vineet Pandey
Temple with a statue of Vishnu's Vishwa Roop
Students at a Gurukul
Temple priests, Brij Ghat
A local Mudda seller
A shop selling Mudda
Meera ki Reti
Traditional Sarkanda mats
Doorway to Ganga Temple
Ritual preparations
Ghats and the ferry rides
An appeal to make Ganga Ghat green
Diya for Ganga Aarti
Ram Parivar
An idol of Lord Brahma
Preparation of traditional food items
An idol of Goddess Ganga
Making of a Mudda
A ‘figurine’ of quartzite stone
Manuscript of a Hindu Genealogy Register
Interview with Pt. Santosh Kaushik

Kannauj, Uttar Pradesh (8 records)
Kannauj Archaeological Museum Building
Annapurna Devi Temple
Baba Gauri Shankar Temple
Munger, Bihar (21 records)

This report on Munger/Bhagalpur area charts the history of the region, from its ancient past to its modern avatar, highlighting the strategic advantages of its location on the banks of the river Ganga.

Long-established spiritual beliefs and ritualistic traditions are seen through the documentation of the Kanwar traditions of Bihar which initiate from Sultanganj. The continuing silk traditions of Bhagalpur, with the weaving of fine tussar, that proclaim its own cultural importance; as well as the heritage of Angika or Manjusha art form that is lesser known than its famous neighbour, the Madhubani style, but equally unique.

It also delves into the references to Munger in Bengali and English literature, and details some of the notable personalities from this region, like Nandalal Bose, Niranjanananda Saraswati, Tilka Majhi and Ramdhari Singh ‘Dinkar’.

Tomb of Pir Saheb at Pir Pahari, Munger
The temple of Baba Dham at Deoghar, Jharkhand
The sanctum of Deoghar Temple
The ghats of Munger shot at Kashtaharni Ghat
Aged long generational making of Bhagalpuri silk, Bhagalpur
One of the participant of the pilgrimage taking his early morning bathe in Ganga
Kanvarariyas resting in their tents during the Sravan Mela
Narrative scroll procedure method of Angika art
Patna, Bihar (23 records)
The river Ganga is not just a geographical entity here but inhabits many legends of its own and their deep connections with the region's history and culture are palpable. The illustrated report outlines this history of Patna District and its arcane links with the river Ganga, as witnessed in the settlement over the centuries, and of several great empires along its banks. It establishes that even when Patliputra was in ruins, Magadha was the peaceful home of Buddhism, full of great shrines and splendid monasteries, chief among them being Nalanda.

Patna represents a cultural space of much linguistic diversity. In contemporary times, a few languages like Bhojpuri, Magahi, Maithili, and Angika have been established as the vernacular majors of the region. The report looks at this linguistic plurality and complexity. It also documents boatmen communities like the Mallah and the Navik. Ritualistic fairs such as Chhath Puja, the famous Sonepur Cattle Fair and other important festivals which take place through the year are covered. The various Shaktipeeths have also been listed.

Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh (45 records)
Varanasi reflects a unique identity that has resulted from the combined living memory of the communities settled here, and the multi-dimensional cultural influences accommodated by the city over the years. One of the most ancient cities of the world, it is a repository of heritage, with a series of invasions and inhabitations informing its secular and spiritual nature, each carrying with it a plethora of both intangible and tangible properties, social contracts and related norms of knowledge, traditions and customs.

The steadfast river Ganga, the famous gali, the magnificent ghats, the countless temples, the kunds and places of religious interest, the historic Banaras Hindu University, the sadhus and varied cults, the profound theories of life and death, the commerce, the craftsmanship and culinary flavours, and the vitality of the Banaras gharana and its exponents in the field of music and dance, make the intangible cultural heritage of Varanasi truly exceptional. These intangible inheritances have been listed and documented in this report. The report also highlights the connection of the river Ganga with the city and its people. From the daily Ganga aarti to the last rites and rituals, the river plays a very
crucial part in the lives of its residents and the millions of tourists and pilgrims that arrive here for its darshan.

- Ganga Aarti
- Ganga performed early morning at the Assi Ghat
- Rituals at the Ghats
- Marriage Performed by the Ghat
- Ganga Snaan
- A priestess narrating the story of Tulsi Vivah, Varanasi
- Ladies gathered to perform Chath Puja at the ghats
- Priests performing the Ganga Aarti on the occasion of Dev Deepawali festival, Varanasi
- Aakashdeep Festival being Celebrated on the Banks of Holy Ganga in Varanasi
- Hand-made altar for Chhath Puja in Varanasi
- Preparation of Sesame oil diyas for Aakashdeep celebrations in Varanasi
- Juttiya thread being sold for Jivitya puja in Varanasi
- Characters from Krishnalila at the Tulsi Ghat
- A young boy dressed as Sita for Ramlila celebrations at the Asi crossing, Varanasi

Flavoured Lassi
- View of the ghats from a boat
- Swimming lessons in the river
- A girl selling diya and flower offerings
- Ganga Snaan on Kartik Purnima
- Ghats of Varanasi
- Hanuman Ghat, Varanasi
- Bamboo Umbrellas form an integral part of the ghat scene
- Students at a Ved-Vidyalaya
- Malviya Bridge, Rajghat, Varanasi
- Construction of a boat at the ghat
- Musicians consult the text and recite verses from it for the Ramila at Manikarnika Ghat
- Pind Daan rituals at the ghats
- Flute players at the ghat
- Water is offered during tarpana
- Crescent formation of the flow of the river
- Boats of different shapes and sizes are plied on the river
- The boats and the boatmen are crucial elements of the city
- Morning rituals and yoga sessions at the ghats
- Varanasi Chaat is the most famous street food of the city
- Morning scene at the ghats
- Subah e Banaras at Asi Ghat, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
- Ganga Aarti at the Dashashwamedh Ghat
- Tulsi Vivah ceremony in Varanasi
- Kanhaiyalal Mishra playing the Sarangi, a Traditional Musical Instrument, Varanasi
- Chandrakant Mishra, A Shehnai Artist from Varanasi
- Padma Vibhushan Pt. Chhannulal Mishra, renowned Hindustani classical singer from Varanasi
- Bow used in Ramlila
- An Akhada in Varanasi
- Pehelwans wrestling in the Tulsi Akhada, Varanasi
- Pt. Puran Maharaj, a renowned Tabla player with his students