

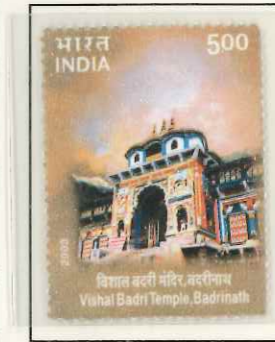
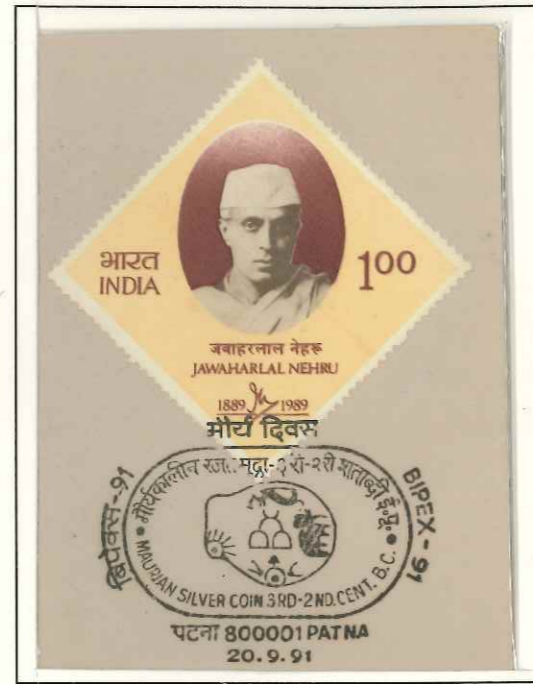
6. CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF GANGES

Historically the Gangetic Plain has constituted the heartland of Hindustan and its successive civilizations. *Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb*, (Ganga-Yamuna Culture) is a term used for the culture of the central plains of Northern India, especially the doab region of Ganges (Ganga) and Yamuna rivers, which is regarded as a fusion of Hindu and Muslim elements.

River Ganges is called Vishnupadi. When Vishnu came as a dwarf at Bali's Yagna to demand a piece of land that would cover his three little steps, he after placing two steps, lifted his legs, being so enormous, the legs reached to Brahma Loka, the abode of God Brahma. Brahma was so enchanted and mesmerized to see Vishnu's feet that he did 'abhishekam' of his feet with the water contained in his pot. This pot had the water of Ganga, which was contained there to wait for the apt time for her descent on earth. Thus, the waters of Ganga came to earth after washing Vishnu's feet and hence came to be known as Vishnupadi, the river which descends from Vishnu's lotus feet.

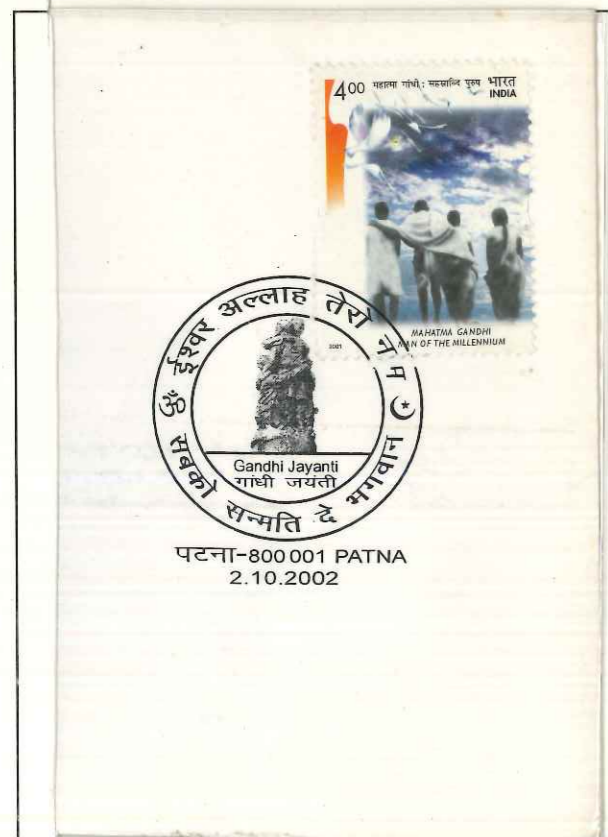


River Ganges and Tajmahal



The centre of the Mauryan empire of Ashoka was Patna (ancient Pataliputra), on the Ganges in Bihar. The centres of the great Mughal Empire were at Delhi and Agra, in the western Ganges basin.

Badrinarayan Temple is located on the Alaknanda bank which is major tributary to river Ganges and is dedicated to Vishnu, in particular to his incarnations — sages Nara and Narayana. Mahabharata tells that they have spent many years in austerity at this holy place.



Kedarnath Mandir (Kedarnath Temple) is a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. It is on the Garhwal Himalayan range near the Mandakini river which is a tributary in Kedarnath, Uttarakhand.



Moradabad, a city located on Ramganga river which is a tributary to River Ganges is famous for brassware.

