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MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES,
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NATIONAL MISSION FOR CLEAN GANGA
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Message

I am pleased to learn that the 1st International River Congress is being organized by South Asian Institute for Advance Research & Development for Planning and Management at the Regional Level for wide-ranging discussions by national and global experts, stakeholders and investors.

Since the beginning of time, humans and rivers have always shared a close relationship. Civilizations across the globe have emerged along the banks of rivers and examples can be cited from the Ancient Chinese civilization along River Yellow, Egyptian Civilization along River Nile or even in our country, the Indus civilization which emerged along River Indus. This delicate balance between the natural and cultural environment was nurtured and revered greatly by our predecessors. However, in the last few decades, rivers and their surrounding ecosystem have suffered detrimentally due to anthropogenic factors such as pollution, encroachment of riverbeds and floodplains, uncontrolled urbanization, etc. which has severely impacted the health of the rivers.

Given the increased impacts of climate change and the recently concluded COP 26 Summit, it is crucial for us to conduct a global discourse on the sustainable management of river resources. The resulting strategies and action plans which shall emerge from such dialogues must include nature-based solutions and ecological resilience. At the same time, it is also important to ensure that these dialogues are inclusive and have representation from all stakeholders such as policy makers, academia, government representatives, practitioners, industry partners, private sector, etc.

In this background, I am pleased to note that the International River Congress-2021 will deliberate on the planning and management of river resources in the long run.

The world of academic has a critical role to play in the development of new innovative research and sustainable technologies which will enable implementing organizations such as Namami Gange to strategize and formulate sustainability-oriented policies. A platform such as the International River Congress will provide an interactive forum for the community and other stakeholders to engage and learn from each other.

I wish the organizers of IRC-2021 all success in their venture, and hope that the outcome of the Congress will prove invaluable in chalking out India's river resource planning in our holistic developmental journey.

(D. P. Mathuria)

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