

Message from Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs

The first International River Congress 2021 being organised by South Asian Institute for Advance Research and Development (SAIARD), where many national and international experts, stakeholders and investors will deliberate upon river resources planning and management, is highly welcome.

At this juncture in India's development, our country faces many unsolved problems, but we have the ability to turn adversity into opportunity and leapfrog over the pitfalls of other nations in river resource management. One of the major problems that has escalated in India for decades is that of water. Both water shortages and water surpluses occurring periodically in various parts of the country have slackened our progress. And we face this problems because of high levels of pollution and deterioration of our rivers and waterbodies, which have limited the access of many of citizens to clean water. Needless to say, other problems like unmet irrigation, municipal and industrial water needs have also grown. To overcome these challenges Government has taken multiple provisions but that is even more challenging as it involves ensuring – not only the rural water supply infrastructure – but also sustainable freshwater sources that can be tapped for years without affecting other freshwater needs. It is in this context that planned use and management of our river resources become pressing, and is, moreover, essential for securing our future.

I am pleased to note that the First International River Congress will not only focus on the conservation of rivers through judicious river resource management on basin scales but will also forge greater interaction between investors and stakeholders in the water sector and promote international cooperation.

I wish the organisers every success in this venture, and hope that it will strengthen our various developmental programmes with the infusion of Summit-generated ideas.