

TENTATIVE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

5th International River Congress (IRC5)

"Integrating River Governance: From Policy to Practice"

27 & 28 November 2026 | Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Avadh University, Ayodhya, UP, India

TIME	PROGRAMME DAY-1 (27 TH NOVEMBER, 2026)
09:00 – 10:00	Registration & Networking Tea
10:00 – 12:00	Inaugural Session - Inauguration with the Flag hoisting & Vande Mataram Sangeet - Sankalp of NADI BHAGIDARI through Tree Planting - Taking an oath to protect our mother River - Address by the Convenors, Guest of Honour, Special Guests & other Dignitaries - Release of Books, White Papers - Inauguration of the River Digest Magazine - Special Achievers Awards - Keynote Address by the Chief Guest - Vote of Thanks
12:00 – 12:30	Inauguration of the Open Air Exhibition Laying the foundation stone of the 'SARAYU RIVER RESEARCH LABORATORY' jointly developed by the International Institute of River Affairs (IIRA) and the Dept. of Environmental Science, RMLAU
12:30 – 01:30	LUNCH BREAK
01:30 – 03:00	HALL-1 Technical Session I: Reimagining River Landscapes: Heritage, Identity & Sustainable Tourism <i>This session explores the profound cultural and ecological connections between rivers, heritage, and human identity, reimagining river landscapes as living cultural corridors. It will highlight how sustainable tourism, heritage conservation, and place-based storytelling can foster river stewardship while promoting inclusive local economies. The session aims to bridge archaeology, anthropology, architecture and tourism studies to shape a sustainable future for historic river cities like Ayodhya.</i> <i>Key Discussion Points:</i> - River as cultural heritage: Sacred ghats, historic cities & intangible traditions - Identity and sense of place: Rivers shaping communities and civilisations - Sustainable & responsible river tourism models for heritage cities - Conservation of riverine built heritage and adaptive reuse - Balancing tourism development, livelihood generation and ecological integrity
	HALL-2 Technical Session II: River Rejuvenation & Sustainable River Basin Management <i>This technical session will focus on holistic strategies for rejuvenating degraded rivers and advancing sustainable river basin management in the face of climate change, urbanisation, and pollution. The discussion will bring together experts, policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to share innovative approaches, scientific insights, and successful community-led models for restoring ecological health, ensuring water security, and promoting livelihood resilience.</i> <i>Key Discussion Points:</i> - Integrated River Basin Management (IRBM) framework: From policy to practice - Science-based river rejuvenation techniques & nature-based solutions - Pollution abatement, e-flow maintenance and biodiversity conservation - Climate resilience, flood-drought management and water security - Community participation, traditional knowledge and river-centric livelihoods



HALL-3

Technical Session III: Reconnecting Cities with Rivers: Towards Resilient and Sustainable Urban River Systems

This session focuses on bridging the growing disconnect between urban growth and river health, emphasising strategies to reconnect cities with their rivers for ecological, social, and economic resilience. It will deliberate on urban river restoration, resilient waterfront planning, and nature-based urban design that restores the natural flow, ecological functions, and public accessibility of urban rivers. With a special focus on historic cities like Ayodhya, the session seeks to co-create sustainable pathways for transforming rivers from neglected drains into vibrant blue-green assets.

Key Discussion Points:

- Urban river restoration and blue-green infrastructure planning
- Flood resilience, stormwater management & climate-adaptive cities
- Revitalising urban waterfronts: Ghats, promenades and public spaces
- Waste, wastewater & solid waste management for clean urban rivers
- Policy innovations, Smart Cities and citizen engagement for city-river reconnection

HALL-4

Technical Session IV: River as National Highways & Supply Chain Corridor

This session re-envision rivers as strategic national highways for sustainable transport, logistics, and regional economic integration. It will deliberate on the immense potential of inland waterways to reduce carbon footprint, decongest roads and railways, and create efficient, low-cost supply chain corridors linking hinterlands to markets and ports. The discussion will focus on policy frameworks, infrastructure development, and innovations required to unlock the full potential of river-based freight, tourism circuits, and livelihood generation while ensuring ecological sustainability.

Key Discussion Points:

- Inland Waterways development: Policy, infrastructure & multimodal integration
- Rivers as green logistics corridors for sustainable freight and supply chains
- Economic benefits: Cost efficiency, trade facilitation and regional connectivity
- Balancing navigation, dredging and ecological flow management
- Innovations in river transport, Ro-Ro services, and tourism cruise circuits

03:15 – 03:30

Screening a Documentary Film on **Sarayu: The Lifeline of Ayodhya**
Venue I Main Auditorium

03:30 – 04:30

Special Round Table I: **Sarayu & Ayodhya 2047: Towards a Living, Flowing and Resilient River**
Venue I Main Auditorium

This flagship session envisions a long-term roadmap for River Sarayu as a living, continuously flowing, and resilient ecosystem at the heart of Ayodhya's sustainable future by 2040. Going beyond conventional restoration, the session will deliberate on an integrated vision that secures the sacred river from the twin pressures of rapid urbanisation and pollution, while ensuring its ecological vitality, cultural sanctity, and economic potential. It will bring together river scientists, urban planners, heritage experts, and policymakers to co-create a future where Sarayu thrives as AviraL and Nirmal - unencumbered by encroachments, sustained by e-flows, and protected as Ayodhya's ecological and spiritual lifeline.

Key Discussion Points:

- Vision 2040: Roadmap for a living, flowing Sarayu with assured e-flow
- Resilience & Sustainability: Climate adaptation, flood-drought management and groundwater security
- Protecting from Pollution: 100% sewage treatment, solid waste and plastic-free Sarayu
- Curbing Urban Encroachment: Floodplain zoning, ghat restoration and blue-green buffer development
- Ayodhya's Development Model: Balancing temple-town growth, heritage tourism and river health

04:30 – 5:00

Networking Hi-Tea

05:00 – 06:00

Cultural Event

END OF DAY -1



TIME

PROGRAMME I DAY-2 (28TH NOVEMBER, 2026)

08:00 – 10:30	• Ram Mandir Darshan • Morning Tea & Refreshment
10:30 – 11:30	Special Round Table II: Integration of River with the Indian Knowledge System Venue I Main Auditorium <i>India's rivers have been deeply embedded in the country's civilisational, cultural, ecological and knowledge traditions. Over centuries, communities developed diverse systems of understanding rivers, seasonal water cycles, landscapes, biodiversity, agriculture and water management. This special session will explore how the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) can be documented, revitalised and integrated with contemporary scientific approaches to strengthen sustainable river governance, conservation and community stewardship.</i> Key Discussion Areas • Rivers in Indian Civilisational and Knowledge Traditions • Traditional Knowledge, Nature-based Solutions and River Stewardship • Indigenous water conservation and management systems • Sacred Rivers, Cultural Traditions and Ecological Ethics • Integrating Indian Knowledge Systems with modern science and technology Keynote by Shri Arun Kumar Sharma, Akhil Bharatiya Kala Vimarsh Sanyojak, Sanskar Bharti, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh on नदियाँ-भारतीय कला जगत की प्राणवाहिनी (Rivers: The Lifeline of the Indian Art World)
11:30 – 12:30	Technical Session V: Intelligent Rivers: Harnessing Technology for Monitoring, Management & Governance Venue I Main Auditorium <i>This session explores the transformative role of next-generation technologies in building intelligent, data-driven, and transparent systems for river monitoring, management, and governance. As rivers face mounting pressures from climate change, pollution, and urbanisation, leveraging cutting-edge tools like IoT, Remote Sensing, AI, Digital Twins, and Big Data becomes crucial for real-time decision-making and accountability. The discussion will focus on creating an integrated tech ecosystem for early warning systems, flow and flood forecasting, water quality tracking, and evidence-based policymaking for future-ready rivers like the Sarayu.</i> Key Discussion Points: • Smart Monitoring: IoT sensors, drones, satellite & GIS for real-time water quality and flow monitoring • AI & Data Analytics: Predictive modelling for floods, pollution hotspots, and e-flow management • Digital Twin for Rivers: Creating a virtual Sarayu for simulation, planning, and governance • Technology for Enforcement & Transparency: Tech-driven pollution tracking and citizen dashboards
12:30 – 01:30	Technical Session VI: When the River Reclaims Its Space: Rethinking River Disasters, Risk & Resilience Venue I Main Auditorium <i>This critical session shifts the narrative from controlling rivers to co-existing with them, examining what happens when rivers reclaim their natural floodplains. Moving beyond conventional flood control, it will deliberate on river disasters as a result of disrupted human-river relationships, including encroachments, loss of wetlands, and altered flows. The session will focus on rethinking risk through a resilience lens, advocating for nature-based solutions, room-for-the-river approaches, and community-centric disaster preparedness to transform vulnerability into adaptive capacity, especially for cities like Ayodhya on the banks of the Sarayu.</i> Key Discussion Points: • Rethinking Floods: From flood control to flood management and living with rivers • Disaster Risk & Vulnerability: Impact of encroachment, siltation and climate change on river disasters • Room for the River: Floodplain zoning, wetland restoration and nature-based resilience • Early Warning to Early Action: Technology, community preparedness and resilient infrastructure
01:30 – 02:30	LUNCH BREAK
02:30 – 04:00	Research Paper Presentations



04:00 – 05:00	Valedictory Session • Welcome Address by the Convenor • Address by the Hon'ble Dignitaries • Awards <i>Best River Model Exhibitor Award</i> <i>Best River Photography Award</i> <i>Best River Poster Award</i> <i>Best River Painting Award</i> <i>Best River Short Film/Documentary Award</i> <i>Best Research Paper Presenters Award</i> • Review of the Outcomes/Key Discussion Points • Address by the Chief Guest • Vote of Thanks & Announcement of the Date and Venue of the IRC6
	End with the National Anthem
06:30 – 07:30	Visit to the Ghat to worship Maa Sarayu through Sarayu Arti & Pujan

For Any Details

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