



LOST: The Story of Disappearing Rivers and Lakes in Our Cities

By

National Water Mission

Department of Water Resources, River Development
and Ganga Rejuvenation,
Ministry of Jal Shakti

A collage of nine hexagonal images arranged in a honeycomb pattern. The top row shows a sunset sky with silhouettes of birds and power lines. The middle row features a boat with a red, white, and green stripe on the water. The bottom row shows two people standing in the shallow water, and a person's legs wading. The background is a solid orange color with white hexagonal outlines.

- Encroachment and illegal construction
- Pollution from domestic and industrial waste
- Drainage and groundwater recharge disrupted
- Loss of urban biodiversity and climate resilience

The Growing Risk of Urban Flooding



Millions affected annually
by urban floods and
water shortages



Rapid urbanization and
climate change aggravate
water loss



Neglected rivers, lakes,
and drainage systems
worsen disasters

Ministry of Jal Shakti Efforts in Urban Water Restoration

Ministry of Jal Shakti spearheading nationwide water conservation programs.

Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain – Promoting rainwater harvesting and rejuvenation of traditional systems.

JSJB Initiative: Convergence through AMRUT, PMKSY, MGNREGA, and CSR initiatives for urban water restoration.

Namami Gange Programme – Integrating pollution abatement, biodiversity restoration, and riverfront development.

Global River Cities Alliance (GRCA) – A global platform promoting river-centric urban planning and resilience.

Community engagement and local governance as central pillars of water restoration and management.



Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch The Rain



National Water Mission

- The **National Water Mission (NWM)** leads India's efforts in **water conservation, efficient use, and rejuvenation** of rivers, lakes, and wetlands.
- The **Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain (JSA:CTR)** complements this mission by reviving **traditional water storage systems** and promoting **modern rainwater harvesting techniques**.
- Across cities and villages, communities participate in **cleaning, desilting, and maintaining** ponds, lakes, and drains — enhancing **rainwater absorption, groundwater recharge, and urban flood prevention**.
- In 2025, special focus is being given to **13 major rivers**: *Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej, Yamuna, Brahmaputra, Luni, Narmada, Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna, and Cauvery* under the theme "**Jal Jangal Jan: Ek Prakritik Bandhan Abhiyan.**"
- The initiative, in collaboration with the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)**, highlights the deep connection between **water, forests, and communities** for ecological resilience.



Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch The Rain

Reviving Heritage and Resilience: Best Practices from the Field

Under the Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari (JSJB) initiative, several impactful community-driven models have emerged across the country.



Desilting of Minor Irrigation Tanks – Yadgir, Karnataka

- Kalike–Tata Trusts (2024) led participatory tank desilting across four villages. Through Gram Sabhas and farmer involvement, **34,000 m³** water capacity was restored. Nutrient-rich silt rejuvenated **500+ acres** of farmland, improving soil fertility, yields, and economic resilience.



Traditional Stepwell Renovation – Muradpur, Madhya Pradesh.

- The Zila Panchayat of Ashoknagar revived a historic **Bawadi (stepwell)** through community effort — desilting, structural repairs, and landscaping restored water availability, biodiversity, and local heritage **with zero financial expenditure**.



Tank Desilting under Jal Ganga Samvardhan – Mamon, Madhya Pradesh.

- Community-led desilting using **shramdaan** and natural interventions (boulder plugs, sedimentation reservoirs) improved water quality, increased storage by **10,000 m³**, and enhanced **climate resilience**.



Integrated Revival of Water Bodies – Buxar, Bihar

- Convergence-driven model integrating **Amrit Sarovar, Jal-Jeevan-Hariyali, Clean Ganga Mission, MWRD, and MGNREGS**. Revived **76 Amrit Sarovars**, thousands of traditional Pokhars, Ahars, and Pynes. Added fishery, NICRA techniques, and beautification—making Buxar a **model district in water resilience**.

River Rejuvenation & Urban Flood Management

Namami Gange Programme:
pollution abatement, riverfront
development, ecological
restoration

Urban flood management:
stormwater drainage, desilting,
zoning regulations

Technology integration: satellite
monitoring, hydrological
modeling, real-time forecasting



River Cities Alliance (RCA) – Vision of the Hon’ble PM

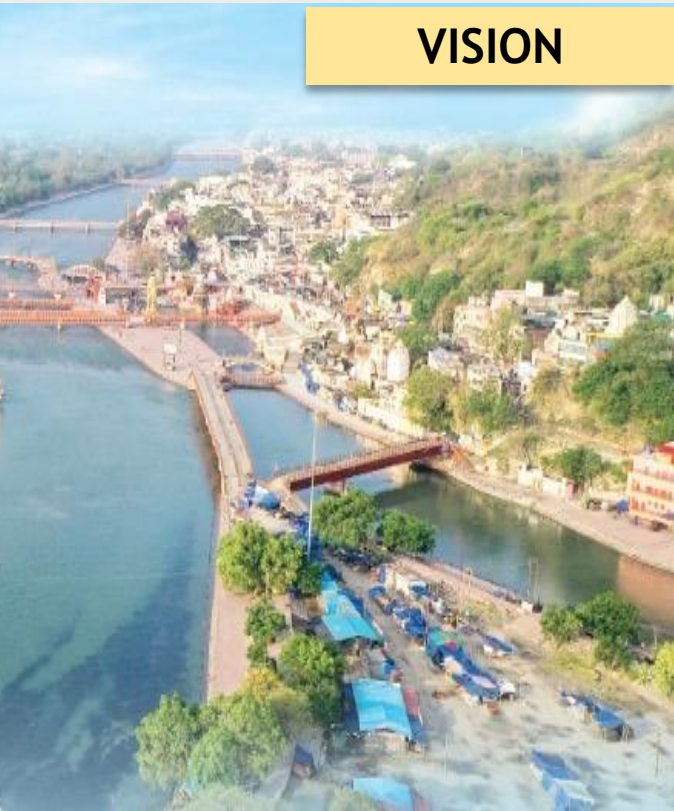
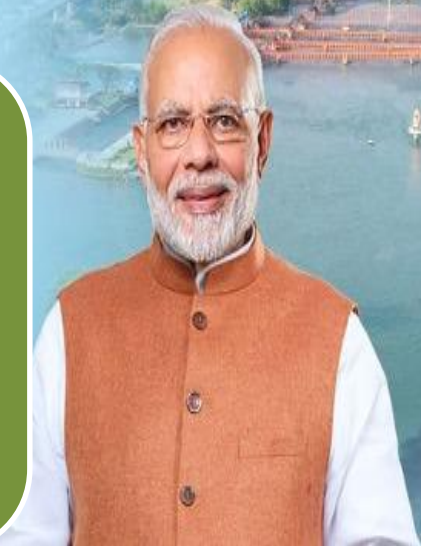
VISION



“There is a need for new thinking for River Cities”.

“There is need for the residents of these cities to ask, ‘What can we do for the rivers?’ There is a need for a new river centric thinking in planning for cities on the banks of rivers.

The river health needs to be mainstreamed into urban planning process by developing **Urban River Management Plans**. Cities should be responsible for rejuvenating their rivers. It has to be done **not just with the regulatory mindset but also with developmental and facilitatory outlook.**”



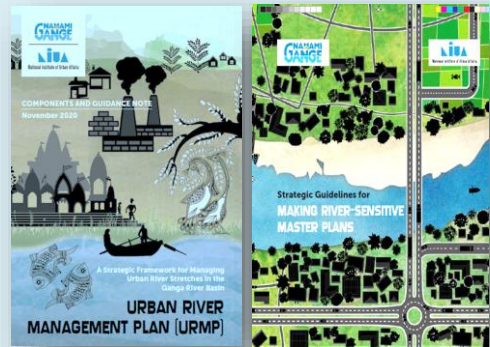
Revival measures focusing on pollution abatement measures



Wholesome rejuvenation of rivers and its associated eco-system



Launch of the River Cities Alliance (RCA)



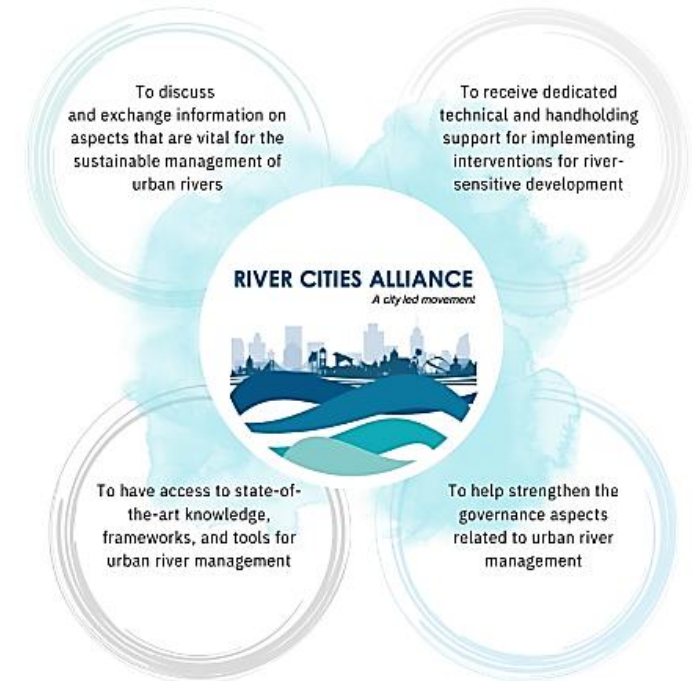
2019 – 21

Development of **key templates/ Frameworks** to holistically plan for revival of urban river stretches within city limits in sustainable manner

2021

River Cities Alliance (RCA) Launched in Nov 2021 with 30 members by **Hon'ble Minister Jal Shakti**

A Dedicated Platform for River Cities to collectively work towards Sustainable Management of Urban Rivers



As of August 2023, the RCA has **143 member cities** of India, including the city of Aarhus (Denmark)

Funding Mechanism of the Government of India

Multi-Sectoral Convergence Approach

- Water conservation and rejuvenation activities are funded through **convergence of multiple schemes** under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, and State Governments.

Central Flagship Programmes

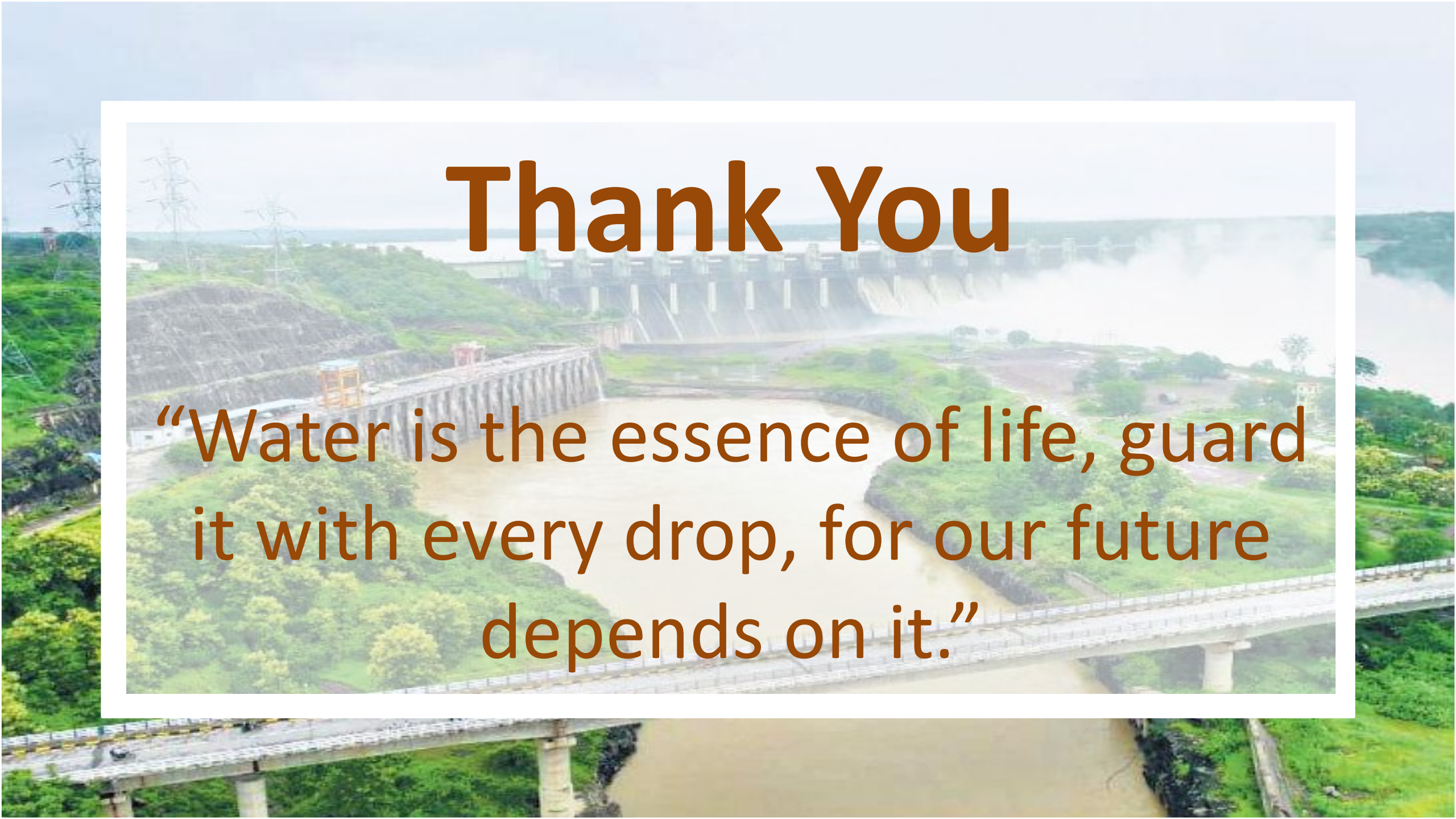
- **Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA)** – Funded through departmental convergence and existing schemes (MGNREGS, PMKSY, SBM, AMRUT).
- **Namami Gange Programme** – Centrally Sponsored Scheme with **100% Central funding** for river rejuvenation, pollution control, and biodiversity restoration.
- The **National River Conservation Directorate (NRCD)** funds river pollution abatement projects under the **Centrally Sponsored National River Conservation Plan (NRCP)** through **Centre–State cost sharing**, supporting sewerage, treatment, and riverfront restoration to rejuvenate polluted river stretches across India.
- **Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of Water Bodies** – Jointly funded by **Centre and States (90:10 / 60:40 ratio)** based on region type.
- **Amrit Sarovar Mission** – Implemented through **convergence of MGNREGS, 15th Finance Commission Grants, and SBM-G funds**.

CSR and Public–Private Partnerships (PPP)

- Encouraged under **National Water Mission** and **River Cities Alliance**, promoting industry participation in water recycling, rejuvenation, and community-based conservation.

State and Urban Local Body (ULB) Contributions

- States mobilize additional resources through **State Water Missions, Urban Rejuvenation Funds, and Green Bonds** for sustainable water infrastructure.

The background image shows a large concrete dam with several spillways. Water is cascading over the spillways, creating a misty spray. In the foreground, a concrete bridge with a metal railing spans a river. The surrounding landscape is lush with green trees and vegetation. In the distance, several high-voltage power line towers are visible against a cloudy sky.

Thank You

“Water is the essence of life, guard it with every drop, for our future depends on it.”