IACLALS

(Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies in India)
Annual Conference 2027
on
Riverscapes: Intersections of Migration, Community and Identity in South Asia

February4-6, 2027

co-hosted by

The Department of English &the Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies, Gauhati University

Guwahati, Assam

Call for Papers

An integral part of human civilizations, riverscapes are dynamic living spaces witnessing a variety of intersections between water, water-life and humanity. They are socio-ecological spaces where human and non-human lives are meant to co-exist; where faith, histories, cultures, and environments intersect. These spaces shape—and are shaped by—migration, memory, identity, territoriality, and ecological transformation. Since the ancient past, rivers have sustained civilizations, nurtured communities, inspired literary production, cultural activities, and shaped identities. They have also been sites of environmental injustice, ecological crises and political contestation. In the recent past, various factors including growing population, frenetic urbanisation, technological advancement and industrial development have posed serious threats to river health and riverscapes.

More concerns associated with contemporary riverscapes include human or community displacement, ecological precarity or degradation and climate change. Environmental refugees are often dispossessed, displaced or compelled to move due to erosion, recurrent floods, droughts, sea-level rise, and environmental disruptions that threaten livelihood and survival. Also under threat are citizenship, identity, cultural continuity, and access to essential resources. Societies and political systems respond to movement of displaced communities in riverine regions, in a variety of ways that may compel river activism. This in turn shapes and builds or reshapes and rebuilds or destroys communities and their means of livelihood.As environmental crises intensify, displaced communities frequently experience social marginalization, economic vulnerability, and inadequate

institutional or governmental support, raising urgent questions about environmental justice, resilience, and sustainable development.

Riverscapes are known to construct, contest, and transform identities, communities, mobilities, and ecological relationships. They play significant roles in human lives as material ecosystems, as well as historical, cultural, and sacred imaginaries. Memories of migration, resistance and responses to riverine catastrophes play significant roles in identity formation. Conservation of riverscapes and river-lives is fast becoming a compelling requirement.

This conference seeks to engage critically with these and many more ideas through interdisciplinary perspectives, drawing on blue humanities and river studies, environmental humanities, literary, cultural and social studies, anthropology, ecology, political science, disaster studies, development studies, and Indigeneity Studies. It aims to foster critical dialogue on the ecological, cultural, historical, and political significance of rivers in South Asia while highlighting the urgent need for inclusive, sustainable, and community-centred approaches to river governance and conservation. It seeks to reimagine rivers as spaces of ecological interconnectedness, cultural continuity, environmental resilience, and multispecies coexistence.

Scholars, researchers, writers, artists, policymakers and environmental practitioners, are invited to submit original research that engages with these themes from interdisciplinary and innovative perspectives. They may work along but not limit themselves to the following subthemes.

- Communities and river ecologies
- Climate change and river health
- Floods, famine and ecological precarity
- Rivers, identity and belonging
- River cities, urbanization, and sustainability
- River development and river activism
- Rivers, sacrality and riverine rituals
- Rivers and Indigenous Studies
- Rivers in mythology, orality and storytelling
- Riverine memory
- Rivers and post-humanism
- Rivers and environmental justice
- River, people and anthropology
- River and the Anthropocene
- Rivers, migration, and displacement
- Hydro aesthetics, poetry, fiction and non-fiction
- Filming the river - cinema, visual arts, and digital media
- Riverine travel and riverine narratives
- Rivers, biodiversity, and conservation
- Riverscapes and cultural imagination
- Riverine landscapes and spatial imaginations
- River governance, policy, and community participation
- Riverine communities, gender and livelihoods
- Rivers, borders, and transboundary ecologies
- Water conflicts, resource politics, and river rights
- Multispecies relations and river ecosystems
- The politics of memory and belonging in migrant communities

Submission Guidelines

● Abstracts of 250-300 words with a bio-note of no more than 50 words may besubmitted using the submission link at the latest by**: September 20, 2026**
Acceptances will be conveyed between: **October 20-30, 2026**
●**Abstracts submission link:**https://forms.gle/5kbN9p9h9c3YDXrJ6

CDN Prize 2027

If you wish to participate in the "C.D. Narasimhaiah Prize" for the Best Paper Presented at an Annual Conference, kindly type "Submission for CDN Prize" in the subject line of the email, when you send in the full paper to: iaclalsguconference2027@gmail.com
The last date for the submission of complete papers**: November 15, 2026.**
For details of the CDN Prize, visit: https://iaclals.in/cdn-prize/
(Papers presented in the CDN panel MUST be submitted for publication in the IACLALS journal, which has the first right of publication of these papers. Participants will fill out a signed form to this effect.)

MMM Prize 2027

IACLALS also announces the next edition of the "Meenakshi Mukherjee Memorial Prize" for the Best Academic Paper published by a member during the previous block of two years(2025 & 2026). IACLALS Members can submit their published paper for consideration using the **Google Form:** https://forms.gle/3dyfDRYuoKue42Wu6
The last date for submission: **September 20, 2026.**
The author(s) should have been a member of IACLALS at the time of publication of the paper.
For MMM Prize submission guidelines, visit: https://iaclals.in/mmm-prize/
The conference is open **only to members of IACLALS.** Participants are encouraged to become members before sending abstracts for the conference. Membership at the time of participating in the conference is essential.

IACLALS Membership

Life membership: INR 6000/-
Three-year membership: INR 2500/-
Research Scholars and Faculty: INR 1500/- (1 year)
Postgraduate students: INR 1500/- (1 year)
NB: IACLALS Membership is not available for students below Postgraduate level. For IACLALS membership details and payment options, please contact the Secretary, IACLALS at: secy.iaclals@gmail.com, with copy to Treasurer, IACLALS at: treasurer.iaclals@gmail.com

Registration Fee for the Conference

(Includes lunch, refreshments on conference days, and conference kit)
● Faculty: Rs 3500.00
● Research Scholars: 2000.00
● Foreign Delegates: USD 100 (equivalent amount in Indian currency maybe paid at the conference venue).

Mode of Payment (for payment of Conference Registration Fee): To be announced

Registration: Open from **10th November - 10th December 2026**

For all conference related queries please write to: iaclalsguconference2027@gmail.com

Accommodation

Participants will make arrangements for their own stay. The conference organizers will suggest a list of nearby hotels/guest houses/ home stays at a later date.

About Gauhati University

Gauhati University (GU) is one of the premier institutions of higher education in Northeast India and one of the most sought-after postgraduate institutions in the country. It has been a top-ranking institute as per the NIRF rank list and is a NAAC A+ Grade institution. In the NIRF 2025 rankings, Gauhati University secured the 9th rank among the State Public Universities, 33rd among Universities, and 52nd overall in India. Starting with 18 affiliated colleges and 8 departments in 1948, Gauhati University, today, has 45 Academic Departments, besides GUCDOE and a constituent Law College. It has 300+ affiliated colleges offering undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the various disciplines of Arts, Science, Technology, Commerce, Management, Law, and Engineering. Being the oldest and the largest university in the entire Northeast, the University represents the academic and cultural background of the region, on which other academic institutions of Northeast India started their journey — extending pioneering support to all subsequent academic institutions in the region. Gauhati University has served as the Think Tank for the development of Assamese society throughout its history.

The **Department of English, Gauhati University,** is one of the premier centres for the study and research of English literature, language, and cultural studies in Northeast India. Established in 1955 under the intellectual leadership of Vice-Chancellor K.K. Handiqui, the Department has played a significant role in shaping English studies in Assam and the Northeast. Its academic activities encompass British, American, Indian, and postcolonial literatures, literary theory, cultural studies, and emerging interdisciplinary fields. The Department promotes innovative teaching, research, seminars, conferences, publications, and academic collaborations. It is committed to nurturing critical thinking, intellectual creativity, and socially engaged scholarship while foregrounding the rich literary and cultural traditions of Northeast India.

The **Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies, Gauhati University,** established in 1967 as a research department, is dedicated to promoting the study of Indian languages, literatures, cultures, and comparative literary traditions. The Department has played a pioneering role in advancing Comparative Indian Literature, with programmes spanning language studies, literary studies, translation, and interdisciplinary research. It currently offers UG and PG programmes in Comparative Indian Literature, Ph.D. programme, and postgraduate diploma courses in Assamese, Nepali, Odia, Tamil, Mising, and Rabha. Through research, publications, seminars, and academic collaborations, the

Department contributes significantly to preserving India's multilingual and multicultural heritage.

Gauhati University is located at Jalukbari, Guwahati, and is well connected by road, rail, and air. From Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport (GAU), the university is about 12 km away and can be reached by taxi or cab via the Airport–Jalukbari road. From Guwahati Railway Station, approximately 10 km away, one can take a bus, shared taxi, auto-rickshaw, or cab towards Jalukbari. Kamakhya Railway Station is also conveniently located nearby. The university is easily accessible from major parts of Guwahati through local buses, taxis, and other public transport.

Important Dates and Deadlines for the Conference

- Submission of Abstracts: **September 20, 2026**
- Confirmation and Acceptance of Abstracts: **October 20-30, 2026**
- Submission of entries for the MMM Prize: **September 20, 2026.**
- Submission of entries for the CDN Prize: **November 15, 2026.**
- Receipt of Complete Papers: **31st December 2026**