Cricketer Virender Sehwag pledges to work for the eco cause

Sadghuru leads nationwide rally to save Indian rivers

**LAKSHMI L LUND | DC COIMBATORE SEP 3**

As part of the nationwide Rally for Rivers drive, a public awareness campaign was held on Sunday at V.O.C Grounds here. In his address, Sadghuru, Founder of Isha Foundation stressed on the need for implementing a policy to save our rivers from becoming extinct and enhancing the fertility of our soil. “The government must immediately create a policy that will offer scientific solutions to increase our soil fertility and rejuvenate river flow that will bring about an economic transformation in the lives of the farmers. An expert committee of environmentalists and lawmakers are in the process of drawing up a draft policy recommendation. One of the very simple, yet effective means to replenish our rivers is to create a kilometre wide tree cover on riversides (and half-a-kilometre for tributaries). This recommendation also includes many other economic and ecological non-negotiable suggestions. The same will be submitted to the Central Government and State Chief Ministers. Such a political law can only be implemented with support of the public.” Sadghuru told a large audience.

Prof. K Ramasamy, vice-chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) who has also served as Member in National Policy planning of Agriculture Biotechnology, Ferti-irrigation and Biogas Development, by giving his expertise has supported the expert team in drafting out the policy recommendation. Sadghuru and the vice-chancellor exchanged the MOUs regarding the same.

Participating in the event cricketer Virender Sehwag turned nostalgic and shared memories of witnessing rivers flowing and overflowing as a child. “At least before we die, we must ensure that we leave the rivers following and overflowing for our children and grand-children,” he said.

The Punjab Governor, VP Singh Badnore mentioned in his speech that this event is very historic to Coimbatore and our country and the 60th birthday of Sadghuru could not have been celebrated more meaningfully.

Besides the Sadghuru, Founder of Isha Foundation and VP Singh Badnore, Dr Harsha Vardhan, Union minister of Science and Technology, S P Velumani, State minister of Municipal Administration and Rural Development, Prof K Ramasamy, P Nagarajan, Advocate and MP from Coimbatore, Mithali Dorairaj, captain of Indian women’s cricket team, Nairn Karthikeyan, first Indian Formula One Racer, Veeraj Ram Nakra, senior VP, Sales & Marketing, Mahindra & Mahindra were among those who participated in the event and expressed their support to the rally.

In a bid to generate awareness on saving our rivers, Sadghuru, will travel across India for 30 days, driving a car himself for around 7000 kilometres. Jawans from the Border Security Force among other participants are travelling along with him.

As part of this car rally, Sadghuru will drive through 16 states and has more than 20 events scheduled en-route to take this mission to the masses. This rally that was flagged off from here will conclude in Delhi on October 2.

Sadghuru said, “No farmer would be able to do farming in a land where there is no fertility and water. It’s time we did something to bring back the fertility of the soil and water in our perennial rivers which are slowly turning seasonal. What is expected is to bring out the twice the amount of potential in us; that’s the reason why Sehwag is here. He scored 200 runs when everyone expected a 100. All of you kindly keep pace with the rally for the entire duration.”