

TAMIL NADU

Spearheading water conservation campaign in Tamil Nadu



[Rohan Premkumar](#)

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Rajendra Singh File photo © KARTHIKEYAN · G · KARTHIKEYAN · G · KARTHIKEYAN

Water conservationist, activist and winner of the Stockholm Water Prize, Rajendra Singh announced plans to spearhead a campaign on May 28, aimed at promoting awareness about water conservation and instituting management policies that will lead to the long-term benefit of farmers in Tamil Nadu.

Mr. Singh, who attended the Mines, Minerals and People (mm&P) alliance's general assembly at the Keystone Foundation campus on Saturday, said that the campaign would start from Kanyakumari on May 28 and culminate in

Chennai on May 30. Called the Tamil Nadu Jal Biradari, the movement was aimed at mobilising local communities, college students, farmers, bureaucrats and technocrats into forcing the State Government into enacting long-term, sustainable water management policies.

Mr. Rajendra Singh said that the drought that Tamil Nadu witnessed this year was one of the worst in history. The Tamil Nadu Jal Biradari movement was being backed by around five farmers' groups across the State, he added.

“Water resources in Tamil Nadu face threats such as encroachment on natural water bodies, pollution and overuse of groundwater aquifers,” he said, adding that the movement would battle polluting industries and the commercialisation of water resources.

He also said that the dispute between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over Cauvery River was being stoked up by politicians, and said that there needed to be a move in the State towards “community-driven, decentralised management” of water by local communities.

The mm&P alliance's sixth general assembly kicked off in Kotagiri on Saturday. Pratim Roy, founder director of the Keystone Foundation, said that it was the first time the general assembly was taking place in Tamil Nadu.