Lakhs take a pledge across India to revive dying rivers

The nation is thirsting for change. On Friday, scores of people took to the streets across India to take a pledge to revive the country’s depleting rivers.

They also urged fellow citizens to join the cause with a missed call on 80009-80009. Each such missed call will be considered a vote to revitalise rivers.

Spiritual guru Sadguru Jaggi Vasudev, founder of Isha Foundation, who conceived the campaign, stood at India Gate appealing to “everyone who consumes water” to Rally for Rivers.

He will drive from Kanyakumari to the Himalayas in 30 days, and back to Delhi between September 3 and October 2, to draw attention to the depletion of rivers and to find solutions that will not just replenish streams but help increase farmer income and reduce floods and droughts. "In just one generation, our perennial rivers are turning seasonal... if we do not act now to reverse this, the legacy we hand over to the next generation will be one of conflict and deprivation," he said.

One of his campaign planks is afforestation: he has urged creation of green cover up to a depth of one kilometre along the banks of all major rivers.

The rally will culminate with the handing over of a blueprint, drawn up by a committee suggesting ways of reviving rivers across the country to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.