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Cauvery Calling: TN Governor, CM commit support in Chennai

15 September 2019, Chennai: Cauvery Calling arrived to a rousing reception in Chennai late afternoon today journeying from Puducherry where Lt. Governor Dr. Kiran Bedi and Chief Minister Thiru. V. Narayanasami pledged their support to the movement. As the motorcycle cavalcade led by Sadhguru, Founder, Isha Foundation, made its way to its penultimate stop, people thronged the street to welcome Cauvery Calling to the capital city of Tamil Nadu. Governor of Tamil Nadu Shri. Banwarilal Purohit and Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami joined Sadhguru at Madras University for a public event that saw a massive turnout.

Shri. Senthil Ganesh, a folk singer, delivered soulful melodies as did Sounds of Isha, Isha's home-grown music troupe that has been travelling with the rally. Students of Isha Samskriti also performed at the venue to a highly appreciative audience in India's cultural capital.

Lauding the initiative, Governor Purhoit said that a job "well begun is half done." The Governor said that the Chief Minister had formed a 16-member committee for Cauvery. "The entire government is with you. It is bound to be a success. I wish all success to Isha Foundation," said the Governor.

The Chief Minister urged the society to participate in the movement stating that it was not enough for government alone to support the initiative. He added that Sadhguru had "planted the maximum number of trees in the entire nation" and assured his government's full support for Cauvery Calling.

Referring to Sadhguru as the 'Father of Cauvery Calling', Deputy Chief Minister Thiru. O. Panneerselvam said that Cauvery finds mention in many ancient Tamil texts and her revival is critical for farmers' livelihood. He said history will accord a special place for Sadhguru for leading this initiative and said he joins the Chief Minister in supporting the movement.

Award-winning actor Smt. Suhasini Maniratnam, Tamil Manilaa Congress President Thiru. G.K. Vasan and Chairman of Apollo Group of Hospitals Dr. Prathap Reddy also pledged their support to Cauvery Calling. Australian cricketer Matthew Hayden who earlier played for the Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League sent a message of support for Cauvery Calling. Hayden has publicly pledged his support for the movement on several occasions.

Taking the stage to sustained applause from the audience, Sadhguru spoke about the importance of offering an economic opportunity to farmers that will encourage them to keep the soil rich and wet, two critical conditions for a river to flow perennially. "Only the farmer has the land," said Sadhguru adding that a farmer will adopt a solution only if it is economically viable. If one-third of the land comes under agroforestry, the government will earn 29,000 crore as GST by the 8th year, said Sadhguru. He also spoke about establishing 350 new Isha nurseries adding to the existing 35 and renaming all of them Mahatma Green India Mission in memory of Mahatma Gandhi whose 150th birth anniversary is being marked this year. Sadhguru said, "In our lives if we do not do what we cannot do, it is not a problem. But if we do not do what we can do, we are a disaster. This Cauvery Calling is to see that my life and your life doesn't become a disaster." He said that every girl child born in Tamil Nadu in the next year must be named "Kaveri".

Sadhguru thanked the Karnataka and Tamil Nadu Police who "were not just doing their duty, they were involved like volunteers." He also thanked the 25 riders in the cavalcade as well as the "120 yatris from 17 or 18 countries travelling with us for 16 days" and all influencers, celebrities, sponsors supporting the movement. He also thanked the media for their "unprecedented support".

The Cauvery Calling rally began on 3 September at Talacauvery and has been traversing the Cauvery basin since then. The nearly 3500 km journey will culminate in Coimbatore on 17 September.

Cauvery Calling is a first of its kind campaign, setting the standard for how India's rivers – the country's lifelines – can be revitalized. It will initiate the revitalization of river Cauvery by supporting farmers to plant 242 crore trees in the river basin. This will increase water retention in the basin, while enhancing farmers' income by 300 to 800% in 5-7 years and transforming the lives of 84 million people.

If you would like to know more about this, please write to mediarelations@ishafoundation.org.