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Email: mediarelations@ishafoundation.org

Union Minister Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal presents National Water Award for Rally for Rivers

Award conferred in Best Educative/Mass Awareness Efforts category

25 February 2019, New Delhi: Rally for Rivers (RfR), the national level river revitalization movement that was launched by Sadhguru, Founder, Isha Foundation, in September 2017 was awarded the 2018 National Water Award in the category of Best Educative/Mass Awareness Efforts. Hon'ble Union Minister of State in Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Shri. Arjun Ram Meghwal and Shri. U P Singh, Union Water Resources Secretary, presented the award on 25 February 2019 at the Malvankar Auditorium in Constitution Club, New Delhi.

The Rally for Rivers movement was launched with the dual objective of raising awareness about India's depleting rivers as well as providing a comprehensive and holistic plan to address the issue. A record-breaking 162 million Indians from all walks of life supported and endorsed the campaign making it the largest ecological movement in the history of the planet.

RfR combined the use of traditional media, social media and on-ground campaigns to effectively spread its message about river revitalization. It enrolled business houses, civic organizations, media houses, the youth, farmers, celebrities, children and leaders from across the political spectrum into the idea with its simple but compelling message to support the revival of "India's lifelines". With over 4000 media stories and an online reach of over 400 million, RfR generated over 4 billion impressions across mediums.

Sadhguru spearheaded the movement, personally driving 9300 km through the length and breadth of the country to raise public awareness about the state of India's rivers.

Covering 16 states and holding over 180 public events in 23 cities in one month, Sadhguru called upon the nation to speak in one voice to save India's rivers. The public events were attended by 13 Chief Ministers and lakhs of people including business and social leaders and celebrities from sports and entertainment.

Several state governments signed MoUs with Isha Foundation for river rejuvenation projects in their states. The followup after the campaign has been strong also by the Central Government. On 6 June 2018, NITI Aayog sent a national advisory to all 29 State Governments and Union Territories recommending the implementation of river revitalisation projects across the country. A pilot project has been launched in Maharashtra for the revitalisation of Waghari river in Yavatmal district in the Vidarbha region, the epicentre of farmer suicides. One hundred full-time volunteers are working on the ground with various stakeholders for project implementation and to advance the Rally for Rivers movement across the nation. A major project focus area in 2019 will be in the Cauvery River Basin and another awareness campaign, '*Cauvery Calling*' is planned for Karnataka later this year.

The National Water Award was instituted in 2007 with the objective of encouraging all stakeholders including Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Gram Panchayats, Urban Local Bodies, Water User Associations, Institutions, Corporate Sector and Individuals to adopt innovative practices in promoting water use efficiency, recycling & re-use of water and creating awareness through people's participation resulting in sustainable development of water resources.

Rally for Rivers

Sadhguru launched one of the world's biggest environmental campaigns, Rally for Rivers in 2017 in which he personally drove across 16 Indian states in a month's time. The campaign saw an unprecedented coming together of political leaders, farmers, industrialists, businessmen, students, professionals, media, culminating in the handing over of the draft policy recommendation to Hon'ble Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. The initiative enlarged into a large-scale people's movement with the participation, in various modes, of over 162 million people, across all walks of life. Subsequently, the PMO formed an executive committee spearheaded by NITI Aayog. On 6 June 2018, NITI

Aayog issued an advisory to all 29 States and Union Territories recommending implementation of the River Revitalization policy. In March 2019, Maharashtra became the first state to formally approve Rally for Rivers' pilot project for revitalization of Waghari River in Yavatmal district.

Sadhguru - Founder, Isha Foundation

Ranked amongst the fifty most influential people in India, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, visionary and a New York Times bestselling author. Sadhguru was conferred the "Padma Vibhushan" by the Government of India in 2017, the highest annual civilian award, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service.

Three decades ago, Sadhguru founded Isha Foundation, a non-profit human-service organization, with human well-being as its core commitment. Sadhguru has initiated powerful yoga programs for human transformation as well as various outreach projects to uplift under-served communities in rural India.

Isha Foundation

Isha Foundation, founded by Sadhguru, is a volunteer-run, international non-profit, human service organisation dedicated to cultivating human potential. Isha Foundation is operated by over 9 million volunteers from more than 250 city-based centers spread worldwide. The Foundation is headquartered at Isha Yoga Center, set at the base of the Velliangiri Mountains in southern India, and at the Isha Institute of Inner Sciences on the spectacular Cumberland Plateau in middle Tennessee, USA.

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