

## PM CALLS FOR WATER CONSERVATION DRIVE

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Environmental Conservation, Sustainable Development, and EIA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said there was a need to start conserving water right away and that the Jal Shakti Ministry would be launching a 100-day “catch the rain” campaign soon.

Mr. Modi was speaking during his monthly radio address, *Mann Ki Baat*, when he said there was a need to have collective responsibility on water conservation.

“In most parts of India, rainfall begins in May-June. Can we right away start a 100-day campaign for the sake of cleaning up the water sources around us and conserving rainwater? With this very thought in mind, in a few days from now, Jal Shakti Abhiyan ‘catch the rain’ is being initiated by the Jal Shakti Ministry,” he said, according to the English translation of his address provided by the government.

Since it was National Science Day on Sunday, Mr. Modi said the youth should learn about the history of science in India and scientists.

### ‘Self-reliant India’

“Friends, when we talk of science, many a time people restrict it to physics, chemistry or labs, but the spread of science is much more than that. And there is a lot of contribution of the power of science to the Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign. We have to move science forward with the mantra of ‘Lab to Land’,” said the Prime Minister.

For making India more self-reliant, Mr. Modi said it was not just “bigger things”, such as missiles, aircraft, tanks and Metro trains, that would achieve the goal. He cited the example of a farmer in Uttar Pradesh who has started growing chia seeds.

“Friends, nowadays you must be hearing a lot about chia seeds. People connected to health awareness give a lot of importance to it and it has a lot of demand too in the world. In India, it is mostly sourced from abroad, but now people are taking up the challenge to be self-reliant in chia seeds, too. Similarly, Harishchandrajiof Barabanki in Uttar Pradesh has begun farming of chia seeds. Cultivation of chia seeds will also increase his income and will help in the self-reliant India campaign too,” he said.

Answering a question from a listener about the one thing he felt he “missed”, Mr. Modi said, “I pondered this over and told myself that one of my shortcomings was that I could not make much effort to learn Tamil, the oldest language in the world.”

“I could not make myself learn Tamil! It is such a beautiful language, which is popular all over the world. Many people have told me a lot about the quality of Tamil literature and the depth of the poems written in it. India is a land of many languages, which symbolises our culture and pride,” the Prime Minister said.

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