

Manmohan not understanding responsibility, says Rajendra Singh

[News » National](#)

Published: March 11, 2012 19:05 IST | Updated: March 15, 2012 01:53 ISTPTI



*The Hindu*A file photo of 'Waterman' Rajendra Singh.

Magsaysay award-winner 'Waterman' Rajendra Singh, who stepped down from National Ganga River Basin Authority (NGRBA) along with two others protesting government's "negligence" of the river, on Sunday criticised Prime Minister Manmohan Singh for "not understanding his responsibility" towards the river as head of the body.

Addressing a press conference, Mr. Rajendra Singh said he would come out with a Ganga Lok Bill within a week proposing "strong and effective" legislative measures to protect the river.

"He is a sober Prime Minister but I am angry that he did not understand his responsibilities towards Ganga... The Prime Minister never tried to understand suggestions and activities of the members (of NGRBA)," Rajendra Singh said.

Mr. Rajendra Singh along with Ravi Chopra and R.H. Siddiqi had sent their resignation letters to Dr. Manmohan Singh on Saturday, who is chairman of the NGRBA, protesting inaction of the body in protecting the river and expressing solidarity with noted environmentalist G.D. Agrawal who is on "fast-unto-death" to press for cleaning up the Ganga.

Announcing their decision to quit the NGRBA, the three members charged the Centre with “gross negligence towards worsening state of the holy river” and said the government has neither political will nor any executable plan to save the Ganga. They also criticised the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand and West Bengal, who are members of the NGRBA, for failing to take any steps to protect the river.

The NGRBA was constituted on February 20, 2009, under Section 3(3) of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and its objective was to ensure effective control of pollution and conservation of the river by adopting a river-basin approach for comprehensive planning and management.

“We may humbly point out that though the Authority has been constituted nearly three years back but it has met only twice. There has been no meeting for the last one and a half year in spite of our repeated requests. It is also on record that no worthwhile action has been taken by the Authority on any of the critical issues concerning the river Ganga,” the three members said in their resignation letter to the Prime Minister.

While Mr. Chopra is the Director of Dehradun-based People’s Science Institute, Mr. Siddiqi is a former Professor of Aligarh Muslim University.