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## S'pore celebrates World Water Day

by Monica Kotwani

SINGAPORE - Water security cannot be taken for granted, said President Tony Tan yesterday, even as the country launched its largest World Water Day celebrations at the Marina Barrage yesterday morning.

Dr Tan, who arrived by boat to a drum fanfare by pupils of Fuhua Primary School, noted that demand for water is expected to double over the next 50 years. "Unfortunately, changing climate patterns have added to the uncertainty of our limited water supply," he said. "We will need the collective efforts of every individual, young and old, not just to conserve water in our daily activities, but to also keep our water resources clean for long-term sustainability."

Across the island yesterday, more than 25,000 people turned up at 15 locations islandwide to mark World Water Day, with about 10,000

people at Marina Barrage.



Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam participating in a record-breaking water filtration exercise. Photo courtesy PUB

About 500 cyclists, kayakers and dragon boaters converged at Marina Barrage, after having meandered through key "Active, Beautiful, Clean Waters" sites islandwide.

Over at Jurong Lake, Deputy Prime Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam joined more than 1,000 people to set the record for Singapore's biggest Mass Water Filtration Exercise.

At the Lorong Halus Wetland, Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean and park-goers also helped raise awareness on

the importance of conserving water by going on a walk that symbolised the distance many in other parts of the world journey for clean water.

Mr Teo also spoke of the need to reduce water consumption. "Each person in Singapore uses 154 litres of water per day - that's quite a lot. What we're trying to do is, in 10 years' time, to reduce that amount to 147 litres per day," he said.

This year's theme is "Singapore Celebrates World Water Day: Active, Beautiful and Clean Waters for All". World Water Day in Singapore is organised by national water agency PUB, along with its 125 community partners. It is Singapore's fourth time celebrating World Water Day.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development designated March 22 as World Water Day to raise awareness on the importance of preserving global water resources.