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5 lakh soldiers ready to fight global warming

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Dec. 23: India is set to have the world's first climate army, an exclusive force of nearly half a million 'soldiers' trained to fight global warming. A unique strategy to set up this climate army is being launched from Vedaranyam in Tamil Nadu on Sunday.

"This climate management army of nearly five lakh soldiers will man the length and breadth of India," Prof M. S. Swaminathan, eminent agriculture scientist, told Deccan Chronicle.

A plan to train at least two persons in each panchayat (one male and one female) as climate risk managers (CRMs) has been chalked out by scientists of Chennai-based M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation led by Dr Arivudai Nambi.

Prof Swaminathan described CRMs as grassroots workers who will be trained in the vagaries of weather. Dr Nambi said the local farmers were solely dependent on weather, so the CRMs would forecast local weather with the aid of instruments like rain gauge, wind gauge and thermometers. "Each panchayat will have an automatic weather station capable of predicting local weather in an area spanning 6-7 km radius," Dr Nambi explained.

The initial experiments held by Dr Nambi and his team of researchers in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan proved that agricultural operations based on local weather data resulted in high crop yields.

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