

Society and Environment

Environment Protection case study of AVH Chemicals Pvt. Ltd. in Chandgad Taluka

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Introduction

Chandgad Taluka is situated in the Southern part of Kolhapur, adjoining konkan Area. It is highly hilly area. It is one of the secured jungles of forest department of Maharashtra State. The status of World Heritage has been recently given to this Taluka by UNESCO. This Taluka has a big Bio-diversity. According to K. Kasturirangan's Report twenty one villages from Chandgad Taluka lies in Sensitive zone. Kitwad is one of them which is just one km away from the present AVH Project.

The AVH (Aditya Vikram Hunda) Project is established by Jindal Group of Industries. This industry is entirely based on coal tar. Coal tar is very harmful for living species. Therefore people opened a mass movement against the project. Various Organizations including women organization joined the movement. Due to the constant agitation and movement of the people against the project. The company decided to shift the stock of the Coulter to Bellary and they started shifting. It was the result of the strong mass movement of Chandgad Taluka,

Objectives

- i) To study the Coal tar effects on Society.
- ii) To study the mass movement against AVH.
- iii) To study the success of mass movement.

Hypothesis

Success of mass movement is very low in recent Developmental process of Society.

Methodology

- i) Primary Sources: Interview with Participants in agitation
- ii) Secondary Sources: Books, Newspapers etc.

1) About Nature and Organism

Two components of Nature, Organism and its environment are not only much complex & dynamic but also interdependent, mutually reactive & interrelated. Eco-system includes organic & inorganic conditions. We call biotic & abiotic environmental factors. Biotic factors are the other organisms counteracted. Abiotic factors are the physical & chemical conditions such as temperature, moisture, respiratory Bases & substances. Eco System balances this biotic & abiotic world very properly. But man disturbing this eco-system for his greed, which creates problems in the environment. Due to the various types of pollution biotic world comes in dangerous zone now-a-days.

2) What is AVH?

AVH is coal tar distillation plant established by Jindal Group of industries. For the production of steel, iron is burnt with the help of coal But enough carbon is taken while burning the Iron i.e. the oxygen is not let be emitted & what remains during the process is called coaltar. This Coal tar is harmful for living organism all the developed countries have rejected this project because of its hazardous effects on living as well as non-living things.

3) What are the products of Coal tar

From Coal tar distillation Plant four products are obtained viz. i. Coal tar pitch. ii. Naphthalene. iii. Heavy oil. iv. Light oil.

About coaltar – Coaltar is brown black liquid of extremely high viscosity. Coal tar is a by product when coal is carbonized to make coke or gasified to make coal gas. Coal tars are

complex and variable mixture of Phenols, Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAHs) & Hydro cyclic compounds.

Aluminium companies like Hidalgo Nalco make use of Coal tar peach for producing Aluminium. Naphthalene is useful for Odonil & spectrum & dyes industry. Whereas heavy oil is useful in carbon companies like Philips Adity Birla Group etc. Foundry industries use light oil for many purposes.

4) Establishment of AVH in Chandgad Taluka False documents

This Project was started in year of 2013 in Chandgad Taluka. All the requisite licences from Maharashtra Government were obtained but they were false in many respect. E.g. actual rainfall recorded is more than 2000 mm. but in report it is shown 500-600 mm. per year. Again the distance from Belgaum (Karnataka State) to the site is 24km. But it is recorded as 5-6 km. More than this project was sanctioned to Halkarni Tal Gadhinglaj but it is shifted to Halkarni, Tal Chandgad, taking the false advantages of the similar names of the village. Even it is stated that project will create better employment opportunity in Chandgad Taluka but the fact is that it is purely automation project which requires only 40-45 workers. Even the Weather forecast recorded in the project is taken from Belgaum instead of Chandgad Taluka so it differs in statistics too.

The company states that the present project is non-pollutionary project but it is not so. It lies in the Red-Category at world level. The company requires 33,500 Lt. sulphuric acids per month for distillation but it skilfully hidden and from Environmental & pollution control Board.

5) Why Chandgad People opposing this project?

- i) It is very hazardous project.
- ii) Chandgad Taluka is declared as World heritage.
- iii) From the Bio-Diversity point of view, it is very sensitive area.
- iv) Due to this project acid rainfall is possible.
- v) It causes various types of Cancers.
- vi) It crates bad effects on pregnant women.
- vii) Possibility of rise of physically & mentally retarded generation.
- viii) It creates heavy water pollution.

6) Mass Movement (Jan Andolan)

In the beginning the mass movement against the company was opened under the guidance of former Chief Justice Shrikolase-Patil and co-workers Prof. N. S. Patil, Ex MLA Narshingraoji Patil, Adv. Santosh Malvikar etc. It was only to create awareness among the people regarding the project its production.

Meantime Shrikolase – Patil left the leadership of the mass movement and then it was headed by Dr. Nandatai Babhulkar and her co-workers. A large number of people actively took part in the movement. Even the school students arranged “Candle morcha” with slogan “Jindal Aamhala Jagu Dya.” (Jindal Lets us live). Again the Jan Andolan Committee went to see the collector of Kolhapur District for the Discussion regarding the Project, but the collector denied the visit. As a result people vandalised the public Property.

It is necessary to take the history of the project into consideration. The project was sanctioned during the Congress and NCP led Government. Mr. Babakumar was the then MLA from Gadhinglaj assembly Constitution. He was the Chairperson of the Assembly too. After the reconstruction of the Constitution was made including half of the part Gadhinglaj Taluka, Ajara and entire Chandgad Taluka. Baba Kupekar was elected from this newly formed Constitution. But unfortunately he passed away and by election took place. Mrs. Sandhya Devi Kupekar wife of Baba Kupekar Contested the election and during the election complain Vice-Chief Minister of Maharashtra assured the People of the candidate of their

Party is elected the project will either shutdown or shifted to other place. In the hope of that, the people elected Mrs. Sandhya Devi Kupekar, but he & his Party did not keep the words. Finally people got resented and they made their Andolan strong & marched towards Project and destroyed a huge amount of Project property. Some volunteers were kept behind the bar for nearly three months. After this agitation newly formed government took the notice of Andolan and astay order was made against the project.

The company waited for next move of the Government but as the company observed that nothing would happen in the minimum period of the time. They started Shifting of raw material to Bellary.

Conclusion

Because of vested interested of the political leaders the project was sanctioned in very sensitive area but because of the strong agitation of people company had to shift the raw material. In brief Mass movement finally successes in its mission.

References:

- 1) Sharma P.D., Ecology and Environment, Rastogi Publications, 1995.
- 2) Interview with Advocate Santosh Malvikar
- 3) News Paper cuttings.