

# **EVS ASSIGNMENT**



**BY**

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## **CASE STUDY 1: Chipko Movement**

The Chipko movement though primarily a livelihood protection movement rather than a forest conservation movement went on to become a rallying point for many future environmentalists, environmental protests and movements all over the world and created a precedent for non-violent protest. It occurred at a time when there was hardly any environmental movement in the developing world, and its success meant that the world immediately took notice of this non-violent movement, which was to inspire in time many such eco-groups by helping to slow down the rapid deforestation, expose vested interests, increase ecological awareness, and demonstrate the viability of people power. Above all, it stirred up the existing civil society in India, which began to address the issues of tribal and marginalized people. So much so that, a quarter of a century later, *India Today* mentioned the people behind the "forest satyagraha" of the Chipko movement as amongst "100 people who shaped India". Today, beyond the eco-socialism hue, it is being seen increasingly as an ecofeminism movement. Although many of its leaders were men, women were not only its backbone, but also its mainstay, because they were the ones most affected by the rampant deforestation, which led to a lack of firewood and fodder as well as water for drinking and irrigation. Over the years they also became primary stakeholders in a majority of the afforestation work that happened under the Chipko movement. In 1987 the Chipko Movement was awarded the Right Livelihood Award

One of Chipko's most salient features was the mass participation of female villagers. As the backbone of Uttarakhand's Agrarian economy, women were most directly affected by environmental degradation and deforestation, and thus related to the issues most easily. How much this participation impacted or derived from the ideology of Chipko has been fiercely debated in academic circles.

Despite this, both female and male activists did play pivotal roles in the movement including Gaura Devi, Sudesha Devi, Bachni Devi, Chandi Prasad Bhatt, Sundarlal Bahuguna, Govind Singh Rawat, Dhoom Singh Negi, Shamsheer Singh Bisht and Ghanasyam Raturi, the Chipko poet, whose songs echo throughout the Himalayas. Out of which, Chandi Prasad Bhatt was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1982, and Sundarlal Bahuguna was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2009.

## **CASE STUDY 2: Tehri Project**

The Tehri Dam has been the object of protests by environmental organizations and local people of the region. In addition to the human rights concerns, the project has spurred concerns about the environmental consequences of locating such a large dam in the fragile ecosystem of the Himalayan foothills. There are further concerns regarding the dam's geological stability. The Tehri dam is located in the Central Himalayan Seismic Gap, a major geologic fault zone. This region was the site of a 6.8 magnitude earthquake in October 1991, with an epicenter 53 kilometers (33 mi) from the location of the dam. Dam proponents claim that the complex is designed to withstand an earthquake of 8.4 magnitudes, but some seismologists say that earthquakes with a magnitude of 8.5 or more could occur in this region. Were such a catastrophe to occur, the potentially resulting dam-break would submerge numerous towns downstream, whose populations total near half a million

The relocation of more than 100,000 people from the area has led to protracted legal battles over resettlement rights, and ultimately resulted in the project's delayed completion.

Since 2005, filling of the reservoir has led to the reduced flow of Bhagirathi water from the normal 1,000 cubic feet per second (28 m/s) to a mere 200 cubic feet per second (5.7 m/s). This reduction has been central to local protest against the dam, since the Bhagirathi is considered part of the sacred Ganges whose waters are crucial to Hindu beliefs. At some points during the year, the tampering with Bhagirathi waters means this tributary stops flowing. This has created resentment among many Hindus, who claim that the sanctity of the Ganges has been compromised for the generation of electricity. Though the officials say that when the reservoir is filled to its maximum capacity the flow of the river will again become normal. In spite of concerns and protestation, operation of the Tehri Dam continues.

## **CASE STUDY 3: Narmada Bachao Andolan**

Narmada Bachao Andolan is the most powerful mass movement, started in 1985, against the construction of huge dam on the Narmada river. Narmada is the India's largest west flowing river, which supports a large variety of people with distinguished culture and tradition ranging from the indigenous (tribal) people inhabited in the jungles here to the large number of rural population. The proposed Sardar Sarovar Dam and Narmada Sagar will displace more than 250,000 people. The big fight is over the resettlement or the rehabilitation of these people. The two proposals are already under construction, supported by US\$550 million loan by the World Bank. There are plans to build over 3000 big and small dams along the river.

It is a multi crore project that will generate big revenue for the government. The Narmada Valley Development plan is the most promised and most challenging plan in the history of India. The proponents are of the view that it will produce 1450 MW of electricity and pure drinking water to 40 million people covering thousand of villages and towns. Some of the dams have been already been completed such as Tawa and Bargi Dams. But the opponents say that this hydro project will devastate human lives and bio diversity by destroying thousands of acres of forests and agricultural land. On the other hand it will overall deprive thousands of people of their livelihood. They believe that the water and energy could be provided to the people through alternative technological means, that would be ecologically beneficial.

Led by one of the prominent leader Medha Patkar, it has now been turned into the International protest, gaining support from NGO'S all around the globe. Protestors are agitating the issue through the mass media, hunger strikes, massive marches, rallies and the through the on screen of several documentary films. Although they have been protesting peacefully, but they been harassed, arrested and beaten up by the police several times. The Narmada Bachao Andolan has been pressurizing the World Bank to withdraw its loan from the project through media.

The strong protests throughout the country not only made impact on the local people but has also influenced the several famous celebrities like film star Aamir Khan , who has made open efforts to support Narmada Bachao Andolan. He said he only want that those who have been rendered homeless should be given a roof. He pleaded to the common people to take part in the moment and come up with the best possible solutions.

## **CASE STUDY 4: Bhopal Gas Tragedy**

The Bhopal disaster, also referred to as the Bhopal gas tragedy, was a gas leak incident in India, considered the world's worst industrial disaster.

It occurred on the night of 2–3 December 1984 at the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) pesticide plant in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Over 500,000 people were exposed to methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas and other chemicals. The toxic substance made its way in and around the shanty towns located near the plant.

Estimates vary on the death toll. The official immediate death toll was 2,259. The government confirmed a total of 3,787 deaths related to the gas release. Others estimate 8,000 died within two weeks and another 8,000 or more have since died from gas-related diseases. A government affidavit in 2006 stated the leak caused 558,125 injuries including 38,478 temporary partial injuries and approximately 3,900 severely and permanently disabling injuries.

The cause of the disaster remains under debate. The Indian government and local activists argue slack management and deferred maintenance created a situation where routine pipe maintenance caused a backflow of water into a MIC tank triggering the disaster. Union Carbide Corporation (UCC) contends water entered the tank through an act of sabotage.

The owner of the factory, UCIL, was majority owned by Union Carbide Corporation (UCC), with Indian Government-controlled banks and the Indian public holding a 49.1 percent stake. In 1989, UCC paid \$470m (\$907m in 2014 dollars) to settle litigation stemming from the disaster. In 1994, UCC sold its stake in UCIL to Eveready Industries India Limited (EIIL), which subsequently merged with McLeod Russell (India) Ltd. Eveready Industries India, Limited ended clean-up on the site in 1998, when it terminated its 99-year lease and turned over control of the site to the state government of Madhya Pradesh. Dow Chemical Company purchased UCC in 2001, seventeen years after the disaster.

Civil and criminal cases were filed in the District Court of Bhopal, India, involving UCC and Warren, UCC CEO at the time of the disaster. In June 2010, seven ex-employees, including the former UCIL chairman, were convicted in Bhopal of causing death by negligence and sentenced to two years imprisonment and a fine of about \$2,000 each, the maximum punishment allowed by Indian law.

More than 20,000 people still live in the vicinity of the factory and are exposed to toxic chemicals through groundwater and soil contamination. A whole new generation continues to get sick, from cancer and birth defects to everyday impacts of aches and pains, rashes, fevers, eruptions of boils, headaches, nausea, lack of appetite, dizziness, and constant exhaustion.

## **CASE STUDY 5: Save Silent Valley**

Silent Valley National Park is located in the Nilgiri Hills, Palakkad District in Kerala, South India. The area in this national park was historically explored in 1847 by the botanist Robert Wight. The Silent Valley is the largest national park in Kerala. The park is one of the last undisturbed tracts of South Western Ghats mountain rain forests and tropical moist evergreen forest in India. Contiguous with the proposed Karimpuzha National Park (225 km<sup>2</sup>) to the north and Mukurthi National Park (78.46 km<sup>2</sup>) to the north-east, it is the core of the Nilgiri International Biosphere Reserve (1,455.4 km<sup>2</sup>), and is part of The Nilgiri Sub-Cluster (6,000 km<sup>2</sup>), Western Ghats World Heritage Site, recognized by UNESCO.

Save Silent Valley was a social movement aimed at the protection of Silent valley, an evergreen tropical forest in the Palakkad district of Kerala, India. It was started in 1973 to save the Silent Valley Reserve Forest from being flooded by a hydroelectric project... Because of concern about the endangered lion-tailed macaque, the issue was brought to public attention. Romulus Whitaker, founder of the Madras Snake Park and the Madras Crocodile Bank, was probably the first person to draw public attention to the small and remote area. In 1977 the Kerala Forest Research Institute carried out an Ecological Impact study of the Silent Valley area and proposed that the area be declared a Biosphere Reserve.

In 1978 Smt. Indira Gandhi, the Honorable Prime Minister of India, approved the project, with the condition that the State Government enacts Legislation ensuring the necessary safeguards. Also that year the IUCN (Ashkhabad, USSR, 1978) passed a resolution recommending protection of Lion-tailed Macaques in Silent Valley and Kalakkad and the controversy heated up. In 1979 the Government of Kerala passed Legislation regarding the Silent Valley Protection Area (Protection of Ecological balance Act of 1979) and issued a notification declaring the exclusion of the Hydroelectric Project Area from the proposed National Park.

On October 31, 1984 Indira Gandhi was assassinated and on November 15 the Silent Valley forests were declared as a National Park, though the boundaries of the Silent Valley Park were limited and no buffer zone was created, despite recommendations by expert committees and scientists. Ten months later, on September 7, 1985 the Silent Valley National Park was formally inaugurated and a memorial at Sairandhri to Indira Gandhi was unveiled by Shri. Rajiv Gandhi, the new Hon. Prime Minister of India. On September 1, 1986 Silent Valley National Park was designated as the core area of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.

Since then, a long-term conservation effort has been undertaken to preserve the Silent Valley ecosystem.