



Environmental Social
Justice
&
Governance Initiatives

*Organization in Special Consultative Status with
the Economic and Social Council since 2011*

Environment Support Group® - Trust

1572, 36th Cross, 100 Feet Ring Road,
Banashankari II Stage,
Bangalore 560070. INDIA
Tel: 91-80-26713559-3561
Voice/Fax: 91-80-26713316

Email: esg@esgindia.org

Web: www.esgindia.org

Press Release : 30 June 2012

2 more die, yet no one cares for Mavallipura's people affected by Bangalore's Waste

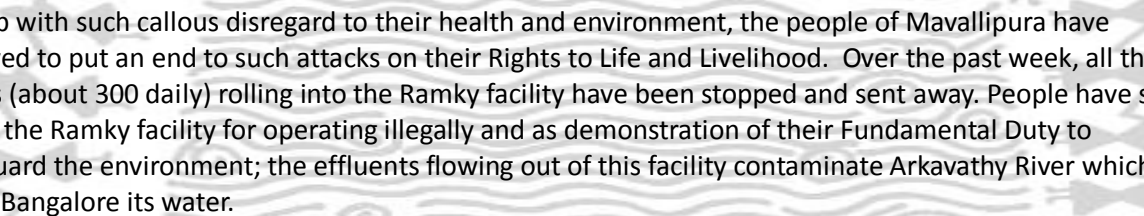
Muniraju (35 years) died couple of weeks ago in Mavallipura, a village north of Bangalore, due to kidney failure. With no previous family history of prevalence to such chronic diseases, the villagers have accused the Ramky run 40 acres solid waste landfill facility for his death. Last year when then Commissioner of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike, Mr. Siddaiah, IAS, visited the village with an entourage of officials, following strident protests from villagers against the unbearable pollution they are suffering for years now from dumping of Bangalore's solid waste, Muniraju, a poor shepherd, had pleaded for financial and medical assistance. The BBMP Commissioner had immediately assured that all his treatment expenses would be taken care of at BBMP cost. However, weeks turned into months, and no assistance whatsoever was extended to Muniraju. Several trips that he made to seek support to BBMP officials were all turned down, or deflected. Unable to bear the high cost of dialysis, he began to sell the last few flock of sheep he had held on to to support his medical expenses and for sustaining his family. When he died, his family lost its only breadwinner and are left with no sheep. Tragically, his wife and kids have turned to scavenging to survive.

Narayanappa (aged 55 years), was a able bodied farmer, cultivating what till recently was very fertile land. His misfortune was that his land was abutting and downstream to Ramky's landfill facility, and thus suffered heavy contamination due to periodic and illegal release of untreated leachates. None of his protests worked to move Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) or BBMP to tackle this criminal menace. Additionally, being so close to the facility, his family suffered very heavily from the plumes of smoke that arose from the massive mountains of waste that caught fire, or were subversively burnt to reduce waste volumes. Narayanappa was known to be extremely healthy and active, cycling everywhere he went, and with no previously known health issues. About a month ago, he suffered a serious asthmatic attack and died.

These are not stray instances, but follow a dangerous pattern of increasingly life threatening diseases that are affecting Mavallipura's people. In previous years, 15 year old Akshay died of dengue and 60 year old Rajanna was lost to kidney failure. Almost everyone in the villages affected suffers from gastro-intestinal and skin disorders as all water sources (well, borewell and tank) have been seriously polluted. Several have chronic ailments, and the worst affected are women and small children. This has reached epidemic levels and yet not one hospital or public health agency from Bangalore has made it their concern to extend systematic support to the affected communities. BBMP and KSPCB ritually turn up only when there are protests, make various promises, and disappear soon as the protests subside along with their promises.

No more tolerance to being dumped on:

The cause of all this misery is the daily dumping of about 1,000 tonnes of unsegregated solid waste from Bangalore in Ramky's 'scientific' landfill. Very little 'scientific' processing actually takes place in the Ramky facility, it is terribly managed, and yet the private corporation is paid crores of rupees every month by the city for such a service.



Fed up with such callous disregard to their health and environment, the people of Mavallipura have resolved to put an end to such attacks on their Rights to Life and Livelihood. Over the past week, all the trucks (about 300 daily) rolling into the Ramky facility have been stopped and sent away. People have shut down the Ramky facility for operating illegally and as demonstration of their Fundamental Duty to safeguard the environment; the effluents flowing out of this facility contaminate Arkavathy River which feeds Bangalore its water.

Mayor and Commissioner have not time to address such concerns:

Neither the Mayor nor the Commissioner of Bangalore have had the time to come to address their concerns. However, other BBMP officials have turned up and claimed the problem would be resolved by setting up a waste-to-energy facility, which is now being supported by World Bank and other international financial institutions, knowing fully well its toxic impacts.

Mavallipura's people want no more promises. They demand that the landfill be shut down. That people of Bangalore be taught immediately to segregate waste at source, compost waste locally, recycle most waste, and only landfill that which really has no other purpose in designated hazardous facilities. They do not want Mavallipura or any other village to suffer on account of Bangalore's consumerism or lack of humanity. They are refusing to be dumped on anymore, including by false assurances that burning waste in incinerators is an environmentally benign solution; they know it is not.

Police action imminent:

At the time of this release, the authorities are responding with a massive mobilisation of police force to tackle and disrupt the peaceful resistance to solid waste dumping on Mavallipura's villagers. We encourage all those who wish to support them to join their protest at Mavallipura.

Driving Directions: Take a left from the Bangalore-Bellary-Airport Road at Yelahanka, and then after travelling a few kms. turn left after the CISF training centre. Follow the winding road that leads you to the landfill and the protest site.

Background information:

ESG has produced comprehensive reports of the environmental and social impacts, and illegalities relating to the Ramky run landfill facilities at Mavallipura, and this may be accessed at:

<http://esgindia.org/campaigns/mavallipura/resources/index.html>

For more details, please contact Srinivas of the Dalit Sangarsh Samithi and local resident of Mavallipura: Cell: 9448174834.

Leo F. Saldanha

Bhargavi S. Rao

Mallesh K. R.

Environment Support Group