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PSK

PARISARA SANMRAKSHANA KENDRA

HALF YEARLY REPORT FOR JANUARY TO JUNE 1994

This report contains a brief report of the activities taken up by Parisara Sanmrakshana Kendra (Environment Conservation Centre), based at Sirsi in Uttara Kannada district, Karnataka.

SAVE HOENY BEES COMPAIGN

In continuation of earlier work we continued the struggle to save indegenious honey bees in western ghats, south India. Due to our efforts the state government constituted a committee of experts to study the impact of Thai Sack Brood disease and also the suitability of introduction of A. Mellefera, the exotic bees from North India.

The Thai Sack Brood disease spreads during winter. This winter it has crossed the Bhagamandala valley in the Cavery catchment in Coorg.

Our activisits ~~visited~~ ^v visited these areas to understand the problem and to organise beekeepers. One beekeeper, the largest in south ~~east~~ east Asia, Mr. Suresh Chengappa of Honey Valley Apaiary has lost 450 colonies in a matter of just 15 days. Similarly many small bee keepers have suffered due to sudden appearance of the x disease.

The Karnataka Government is providing a minimum compensation of Rs.50/- per bee box. No doubt, it is a meagre sum, but it is a token compensation to people in times of distress.

The government has not initiated any programme for breeding disease resistant strains from among the indegenious colonies. Many bee keepers told us that there are some colonies that have survived the virus disease. PSK (Parisara Sanmrakshana Kendra) is advocating for taking up such breeding programme immediately. But government has not taken any action. We have approached BAIF, a NGO to help us in breeding honey bees resistant to the virus disease. We have also

written to ^{the} state government to launch breeding of disease resistant strains of honey bees in western Ghat districts, Karnataka.

There is a ~~center~~ ^{counter} reaction by some Bee Keepers Cooperative Societies. The Puttur Society in South Kanara has already imparted 100 bee colonies of exotic species from ^{North Eastern} India, from Calcutta. It costs Rs. 2000/- per colony. It is almost impossible for a small ^{and} marginal farmer buy colonies which are exorbitantly expensive.

In addition to these cost aspects, the exotic bees are not in a position to survive in the tropical conditions of western ghats.

We have also established contacts in Tamil Nadu and Kerala to know more about the spread of the disease and the performance of exotic honey bees in their respective states.

Unfortunately even the National Bee Board at the centre (Delhi) is ^{still} ~~push~~ ^{propagating} these exotic bees into south India. There is an urgent need to create awareness about its irrelevance to south India.

FORESTRY:

A forestry programme funded ^{by ODA, U.K. (Overseas Development Administration)} ~~externally~~ is being implemented in Western Ghats, Karnataka. The first phase of this project known as 'Western Ghat Forestry Programme' is being implemented in Uttara Kannada district.

As PSK is involved in forestry issues, we tried to look into the project to see whether it is contributing to development of the forests in Western ghats. We analysed the Project Proposal and found that though they have lofty objective, ^{in terms of} ~~in real~~ financial allocations it does not give priority to peoples participation. There were too many experts coming from foreign country via the funding agency (ODA, Overseas, Development Administration, U.K.). While analysing these aspects, we felt that there is a need to create awareness among policy makers and

general people. In order to do this we held a press conference at Bangalore in March 1994. Local newspapers covered the issue raised by us.

In addition to analysis of the project proposal we are also conducting an indepth study on this programme in Uttara Kannada. We are assessing the possible impact of such programme on village people.

One of the main objective of the programme is to involve level village people in management of forest resources. This is known as Joint Forest Planning and Management (JFPM) in which Village Forest Committees is to be formed at village level. PSK is contacting such village forest committees to create awareness among people about JFPM.

We are also contacting other NGOs in Uttara Kannada to coordinate the strategy to implement JFPM and help people to take control of forest resources. We have established contacts with some villages in which the forestry programme is implemented .

ANTI NUCLEAR R MOVEMENT:

The collapse^s of a dome at Kaiga, has raised doubts about the saftey of nuclear power plant. Inspite of strong opposition to building of nuclear power plant in Kaiga, Uttara Kannada, Karnataka; the government has gone ahead to build the plant. They promised that there is total saftey in the generation of nuclear power.

However, even before completion^{of the building} the falling of ~~dome~~ dome indicates the imminent danger of nuclear energy. Utilising this oppontunity we

took part in rejuvenating antinuclear struggle in the district.

We took part in organising the meeting and holding a *rally* at Karwar, the district headquarters.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:

In order to create awareness in the villages we held ~~xx~~ slide shows on environment in 9 villages. We also contacted students in the schools for this purpose.

JUNE 1994.

- PARISARA SANMRAKSHANA KENDRA
- HULEMALGI BROTHERS
- CHOWKIMATH
- SIRSI (UTTARA KANNADA DIST)
- KARNATAKA 581401

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PARISARA SANMRAKSHANA KENDRA, SIRSI

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Parisara Sanmrakshana Kendra has been involved in three movements from January to June 1995. These movements have been supported by people and in some cases it has produced results.

POWER STRUGGLE:

The struggle to save the tropical forests from construction of power line:

We were involved in launching struggle against construction of Kaiga Atomic Power Plant (KAPP) in our district. The government wanted to build the high tension 400 KV power line across the best forests of Western ghats. The construction of this line would destroy about 900 hectares of forests. This is more than the forests that would be destroyed by nuclear plant.

Realising the dangers of the destruction of forests people launched movement on 29th December, 1994 at Bobbikoddalu in Sirsi taluka. Threafter the momentum was kept up and construction of the power line came to stand still. The movement continued for two months and people gathered to protect the forests.

The state government called a meeting of agitators and officials in Bangalore. In this meeting the officials from Central Electricity Authority were unable to provide the reply as why the proposed line across the best forests is the only alternative. Forest and Environment Secretaries from Karnataka Government categorically told the meeting that it is dangerous to cut the forests for power line.

They said that alternate route should be studied to reduce the destruction of forests.

Inspite of this opposition the government is determined to go ahead with the construction of power line. PSK is actively organising the people to stop this destructive project.

SAVE HONEY BEES CAMPAIGN:

We have continued our efforts in saving the local indigenious honey bees. The dreaded TSBV (Thai Sack Brood Virus) has affected thousand of honey bee colonies in Uttara Kannada district. It has almost led to decimation of bee keeping in the district.

Our efforts to dailouge with the state government to initiate a programme to breed queens from local bee colonies has had little impact. Even Bee keepers societies have opted to import exotic bee colonies from Bengal. This has proved very disastorous because the exotic bee colonies have not been able to perform well. They can not adopt to the tropical climate in western ghats.

We have been creating awareness with Bee keepers and policy makers on this issues. We are asking the government not to introduce exotic honey bees in this region.

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

PSK is involved in a campaign to save the forests from an anti people afforestation programme funded by ODA. ODA (Overseas Development Administration, U.K.) is funding Western Ghat Forestry Project. This is being implemented in Uttara Kannada district. Due to the implementation of this project, the poorest people are

being evicted from their land. The grazing land is planted with acacia monoculture, leading to destruction of biodiversity of western ghats. PSK has launched a campaign against adverse impact of the forestry project.

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JUNE 31, 1995

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