

## **Report about quarries in three districts of Rajasthan**

**Visits: 24.05.07 - 03.06.07**

**Brief Report :** This was my second chance of visiting Rajasthan. The first time I visited many mines of the company XX overseas in one district of Rajasthan was in April 2007 together with Mr. Pütter. These are mines from which stones are exported to Germany. We have seen the plight of labourers working there and the conditions of the labourers and their families, in the context of social security, minimum wages, child labour, bonded labour and other types of exploitations. We tried to fill the form according to directions given by Mr. Benjamin Putter on 28.04.07. In compliance with suggestions given by Mr. Putter, I along with a companion left Allahabad on 24.05.07 and reached Rajasthan on 25.05.07 at night. There we stayed and collected information about supportive governmental officers, organizations and persons.

On 26th May, 2007 at 5'O clock we left for the company XX. We reached on the office of XX overseas without prior information. We received information about mines and work places from their staff and did a thorough survey of 5 stone mines with their help. We have filled in the prescribed form by asking the labourers questions. Apparently, it was the first time that anybody has tried to know about their plight, about employment problems, about their children's education etc. It is apparently very dangerous to work in 45-46° and it is obviously very brave of them. After a long discussion nobody can deny that their children are not getting their basic rights of education, food and play. Children whose age is between 7-14 years they help in making small pieces of stones and carrying them from one place to another. Contractors and owners accept that these children are at least 10% of the total workforce. Actually it is responsibility of owners, contractors and government to provide education for those children. The social, geographical, economical conditions of these mines are as follows: -

1. **Work area of stones mines:** During the survey we have seen 5 mines and their conditions were almost the same. The only apparent differences were that some mines were big whereas some were small. Powerful persons have authority over those mines. But labourers who were working on these mines live in nearby places in huts. They don't have social security, health services. Education is not provided to their children and no person is ready to take responsibility.

Migrant labourers are most exploited and aggrieved ones. Tribal Bheels are called "Mama" by local residents. Their children even don't have fundamental rights. We visited mines on 26.05.07 wherever the company XX overseas is working. Description off these 5 mines which we visited is as follows.

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of Mines</b>	<b>Work area</b>	<b>Labourers Name with whom we talked</b>	<b>possible number of child labourers</b>
1.	Mine 1	200 Acre	Person 1 S/o; Person 2 (28 yrs.); Person 3 S/o; Person 4 (26 yrs.); Person 5 S/o; Person 6 (26 Yrs.); Person 7 S/o; Person 8 (24 Yrs.); Person 9 S/o; Person 10 (32 Yrs.)	23, some children were working there who ran away when they saw us. Need of survey.
2	Mine 2	25 Acre	Person 1 S/o; Person 2 (25 Yrs.); Person 3 S/o; Person 4 (28 Yrs.); Person 5 S/o; Person 6 (30 Yrs.); Person 7 S/o; Person 8 (20 Yrs.); Person 9 S/o; Person 10 (25 yrs.); Person 11 S/o; Person 12 (25 Yrs.); Person 13 S/o; Person 14 (30 Yrs.)	18
3.	Mine 3	200 Acre	Person 1 S/o; Person 2 (42 Yrs.); Person 3 S/o; Person 4 (40 Yrs.); Person 5 S/o; Person 6 (35 Yrs.); Person 7 S/o; Person 8 (28 Yrs.); Person 9 S/o; Person 10 (35 Yrs.)	22
4.	Mine 4	300	Person 1 S/o; Person 2 (35 Yrs.);	19

		Acre	Person 3 S/o; Person 4 (30 Yrs.); Person 5 S/o; Person 6 (28 Yrs.); Person 7 s/o; Person 8 (28 Yrs.)	
5.	Mine 5	100 Acre	Person 1 S/o; Person 2 (28 Yrs.); Person 3 S/o; Person 4 (25 Yrs.); Person 5 S/o; Person 6 (35 Yrs.); Person 7 S/o; Person 8 (33 Yrs.)	25

2. **Working conditions in mines:** Even in this age of globalisation there is no other means of livelihood in these parts of Rajasthan except stone mining. According to public opinions, in the area of XX there are 500 mines of which only 200 are registered, but only the mining department of government can give exact information on this. 60% of the labourers are local persons and 40% are migrants who came with their whole family. On an average, 100 to 150 people work in one mine. There is no preventive system for hazards, no ambulance on first aid box. There is no mask available to prevent accidents which can occur during the breaking and blasting of stones. Stone dust can cause T.B. and other respiratory diseases. In most mines water is available but there is even lack of pure drinking water. There is not crutch for children.

On these mines not only local companies are working but companies for Bombay, Delhi and Bangalore also exporting to Germany and different countries of Europe.

The future of these labourers is most miserable. These companies are giving wages to these labourers, but they are not providing social security. They don't know anything about I.S.O. E.T.C, but they know about child labour. On 4 p.m. we reached at XX where the company XX's sand stone work is going on. Just when we reached the mine and were talking to the mine owner, 3 children, aged 8 to 12 years, stopped their work and ran away. So it is clear that contractors know about child labourers but they don't want to comply it.

When we talked about these children with their labourer parents, they are ready to give fees for their children's education. Most contractors agree on the start of Non formal education centres, where child labourers can learn how to read and write in the evenings. The company's director from overseas said "We should believe in reality not in formalities and if we have to serve International Market, we have to comply to norms."

3. **Another Monitoring:** On 27 May, 2007 we have visited adjoining villages, talked to women, children, Panchayat Representatives (comparable to German "Gemeinderat") and Government officials and tried to understand actual basic conditions. What those labourers think about their own and their children's futures. How governmental schemes are implemented.

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Villages</b>	<b>Main Occupation</b>	<b>Problems</b>	<b>Implementation of Governmental schemes</b>
1.	Village 1	Stone Breaking	Many companies have established their stones and ware houses. Almost all families are engaged in this occupation. 50 % of males and females are infected with T.B. No scope of saving	Most men drink liquor; 50 children work over here; No School on 4000 population; No medication or medicine available
2.	Village2	Stone Breaking	This village is surrounded by mines. A child explained that there are 60 houses and 40 children, 36 of them are registered and 18 of them really go to school. There is no building for school, children work with parents. One tribal Bheel teacher told any man or woman, who starts	No school building and no other scheme is visible.

			working in child hood they don't cross age of 40-50, 75% of women are widows. Mostly Bheels tribe's people live here. Biggest problem is water.	
3.	Village 3	Stone Breaking	There is school, but not properly working, most children work with their parents.	School is not working, people don't have knowledge of Governmental schemes.
4.	Village 4	Stone Breaking	Many sick migrant labourers are here. One man's palm's skin is totally dismantled. He can't grip, he wants to teach his children and is ready to pay fees. According to him at least 50 children are there who want to go to school, but there is none.	There is no education place for migrant children. Contractors are least concerned about it. These children are deprived of their fundamental rights.

We talked to contractors, Media Persons, activists, local administration, Police Station and we collected information on 28.05.07 and came to know about 106 villages and 12 Gram Panchayat who are totally dependent on stone breaking. At least 20 to 25 companies are working. Government is planning to ease restrictions on providing lease to non tribes in several parts of Rajasthan. According to a report published in Rajasthan Patrika on 22.05.07.

Mines in Notified area:

Of primary Mineral: 280 out of 1310

Of Non Primary Mineral: 9500 out of 12000

Mineral in this area:

Green Marble, Marble, Zink, Rock Phosphate, Silver Bolestonite, Kersite, Soapstone, Sandstone.

Government earning: Taxes Rs. 2.50 Billion; Royalties Rs. 600 Million

Investment till date: Rs. 20 Billion; Export of Marble Rs. 1 Billion

So it is very clear that a lot of money is in this field and contractors are getting a lot of money. But the labourers' health and social security is most neglected. We have talked about labourers' health and children's education with young contractors. They have assured that they will provide support as much as possible. We will try to establish a coordination structure with state government, local authorities, local police, contractors and local representatives. The action plan of visits in the month of June is as follows:

1. Meeting of Migrant labourers along with their families on mines. So that their real condition can be understood and their children can be attached to main stream education.
2. Health Camp for T.B. patients in villages.
3. List of mines from mining department, so that actual ownership can be clarified.
4. Establish contract with central labour department, regional labour commissioner, Assistant Labour Commissioner and labour Enforcement Officers, because they are responsible for resolutions for labour problems.
5. Contact project holders of National Child Labour Programme, so that identification process of real child labour can be done and establishment of child labour schools where their education and health rights can be provided.

To understand these problems and seeing geographical conditions, some more visits are needed with the help of mine owners. Mr. XX, who is involved in the anti corruption mission, has assured that he will provide help from different. Along with him, the Chairman of another institution has assured me that he will give his

full support in our effort to create a common platform for mine owners, labourers and government.

Date : 09.06.07

Place: Allahabad, U.P.                      **(Raj Nath)**