

**Say “Yes” to Enron**  
**Police Coercion and Popular Resistance**

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**A CPDR REPORT**

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## **PREFACE**

Over the past six months or so Guhagar taluka in Ratnagiri district of the Konkan has increasingly become the site of a resolute struggle for the people directly affected by the proposed power project of the US-based multinational gas contractor-The Enron Corporation.

The present phase of the struggle can be traced back to the massive morcha numbering around 10,000 outside the Main Gate at the project site on January 30, 1997. The police too acknowledge this incident as a turning point in the 4 year long struggle against what has increasingly come to be characterised as the 'Enron Policy' of the Indian State. The perceptible momentum that the struggle has acquired over the past six months is all the more remarkable for the continued emphasis on constitutional and non-violent means of protest adopted by the agitationists. This has however not stopped the police from branding the struggle 'increasingly violent'.

Consequently the people of Guhagar taluka have been reporting an increase in the number of instances of police excesses including arbitrary and unreasonable use of prohibition laws; ill-treatment in police jails and lock-ups; wilful harassment of the activists and physical abuse of the agitationists.

The latest in a series of police excesses were the incidents spread over June 2-3 of this year. This resulted in the arrest and subsequent police custody of 26 women and 13 men of Veldur village in Guhagar taluka on charges of, among others, attempt to murder. This charge under Section 307 is punishable with sentences upto life imprisonment, is non-bailable and is triable only at the Sessions court which is in Ratnagiri town, about 100 kms. away. The accused are mostly women (26) and even going by the list attached to the FIR filed by the police, 20 of whom are under 25 years of age. Most of them are first-time offenders.

The Committee for the Protection of Democratic Rights (CPDR) constituted a three member team including Mahesh Gavaskar, George Jose and Sakharam Sathe to inquire into this incident and other allegations of police brutality in Guhagar taluka. The team was in Guhagar from June 21-23, 1997. This is their report.

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**Mumbai.**

## **CRACKDOWN AT DAWN**

On June 3, 1997 at about 5.30 a.m. the Guhagar police arrested 26 women and 13 men from Veldur village. A case under Sections 307, 147, 148, 149, 341, 353, 332, 336, 337, 427, 151 and 152 IPC was registered against them on the basis of an FIR registered by PSI Waman Pashte of the State Reserve Police ( CR No. 47/1997 ). The offences registered by the police relate to attempt to murder, rioting with deadly weapons, causing hurt to deter a public servant from his duty, causing hurt by doing acts which endanger human life and damaging property to the amount of rupees fifty or above. A police document dated June 19, 1997 charges 200-250 men-women from Veldur village for the offence and specifies arresting 39 of them.

The genesis of this incident can be traced back to the on-going agitation launched by the anti-Enron Front since April 28 when a band of satyagrahis marched to the project site to register their protest against the Dabhol Power Project(DPC) being constructed by Bechtel and owned jointly by Enron Corporation, Bechtel and General Electric. On May 15, 1997 under the leadership of Medha Patkar and Sadanand Pawar 450 people, including around 300 women, gathered outside the main gate of the DPC. The police and SRP personnel stationed at the project site lathi-charged and dragged women protesters by their hair into waiting police vans. Many women protesters also reported that they were roughed up and manhandled by the police and their dresses and sarees were torn in the process. The protestors were arrested and remanded to magisterial custody till May 19, 1997. Later they were shifted to Yerawada jail, Pune, where they were kept for 4 days. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of May Mrinal Gore alongwith 30 satyagrahis were arrested when they agitated outside Guhagar police station against the high-handedness of the police the previous day.

The agitation soon began to manifest various forms. The fisherfolk of Veldur village resolved on May 17 to prevent the workers of the DPC from using their jetty. The DPC had commissioned a jetty for their *exclusive* use a 100 metres away from the Veldur jetty. [Various organisations have in fact repeatedly pointed out that, "Not only is this construction activity a gross violation of the Coastal Regulation Zone notification but it also poses a threat to the livelihood of hundreds of fishing families in the area. In fact, the site of the fuel jetty at Konavel (one of the two jetties being constructed by the DPC) is reputed to be one of the best sites for natural shrimp fishing. The jetty in the Dabhol creek is to be encompassed within the all-weather port of Anjanvel].The workers however had continued to use the village jetty for their personal transport. From May17 the workers were forced to use the Company jetty.

On June 2 the workers had as usual reached their work-site through the DPC jetty. However in the evening, say the police sources, the rough sea made the company jetty unfit for use. ( The Veldur fisherfolk assert that no such change had taken place in the sea and workers coming to the village jetty was primarily an act of provocation.) On approaching the Veldur jetty the DPC workers who numbered about 100 (250 say the villagers) were stopped by 25-odd villagers (200-250 according to the police sources) mostly girls in the age group 15-20

years. The total police force at this time was 11 including 2 woman police constables.

The villagers claim that the DPC workers were hurling threats ( "Come to Dabhol and we will teach you a lesson" ) even as the police were backing the workers and egging them on ( "Use the jetty. Lets see who will stop you" ). At this point one of the police women attacked the girls, and hit the 19 year old Sugandha Vasudev Bhalekar on her knuckles. A scuffle ensued between the villagers and the police women, in which the sari of Woman Police Constable No. 826 R.P.Nachankar got dishevelled. According to the police sources, Nachankar was completely stripped of her sari even as the villagers began stone-pelting the police. It was under such circumstances, claim the police sources, that PSI Waman Janu Pashte ordered police constable V N Sutar to open fire. Consequently one round was fired in the air. The entire incident according to the FIR filed by the police occurred between 6.45pm and 7.45 pm. The FIR also mentions that PSI Pashte received an injury on his right eyebrow because of stone-throwing and his left buttock was scratched by a villager wielding a sharp object. Interestingly, besides the villagers, even the police sources denied that WPC Nachankar, as reported in the press, was thrown in the sea. In fact, Sadhana Bhalekar said that when Nachankar's sari got dishevelled, a girl named Rekha Patekar began wrapping it around Nachankar but she too received a stick. When we asked ASP Satoshe about Nachankar's whereabouts, we were informed that she was temporarily transferred out from the taluka and was undergoing treatment at the Ratnagiri civil hospital as an out-patient.

Following this incident the police retreated and immediately reported to Guhagar police station. Later the same night at around 11.30pm Ambaji Dabholkar, a well-off Veldur fisherman who used to rent his jeep to the DPC before the agitation began, received a phone-call from Guhagar police station enquiring about the whereabouts of Waman Patekar and Vijay Patil - local level leaders of the agitation in Veldur village. At 12 midnight the police came to the village, this time with ASP P.G.Satoshe in charge. They claim to have seen a number of people in Waman Patekar's house. The police then met Ambaji Dabholkar and threateningly told him that they are going to pick up Patekar and Patil in the morning, and that he (Dabholkar) shouldn't intervene. ( This threat, besides the fact that fisherfolk leave their houses at pre-dawn for fishing, also appears to be one of the reasons why the police were unsuccessful in arresting most of the men on the morning of June 3.) The police left the village at about 12.30 am in the night.

That morning (June 3) at about 5.30 am, 8 vans of the State Reserve Police(SRP) and 3 jeeps of Guhagar police together numbering 135 including 8 women police constables surrounded the village and in groups of 10 each dispersed throughout the village. The first victim of that day's police excesses was Sugandha Vasudev Bhalekar as she was returning having answered nature's call. The stick with which she was beaten, broke into two. Manisha Patekar, along with her two school-going daughters, was caught hold of as she was brushing her teeth. The most brutal treatment was meted out to Sadhana Bhalekar(24 yrs) and her family members. Sadhana is the wife of Vithal alias Baba Bhalekar, one of the leaders of anti-Enron agitation. Sadhana, three-months pregnant, was specifically targeted by the police with two male constables breaking open the window and the door of the bathroom while she was

having her bath. Not only were her two small children aged 8 and 6, thrust aside forcefully by the police, but they also hit her polio-stricken and severely mentally ill brother-in-law Pradeep Dattatreya Bhalekar, on their way out. Sadhana alleged that P G Satoshe pointing her out to women constables remarked, " This is Baba Bhalekar's wife, bang her head on the road", which the women constables did twice, once hitting her against the floor and then on the street. Two sisters-in-laws of Sadhana, Indra Pandurang Madekar(40 yrs) and Supriya Chandrakant Padyal(29 yrs) who just arrived the previous day from Mumbai, too were dragged out of their sleep, while Anil Madekar(18 yrs), son of Indra Madekar, was hit on his knee. Ambaji Dabholkar recalled that the police were beating and dragging the villagers like cattle, and two daughters (15-18 yrs) of Viju Dabholkar were so harshly beaten up that they urinated. Women suffering from health problems and not part of the previous day incident, were also rounded up. Aparna Harishchandra Dabholkar, an asthma patient and who recently underwent a kidney operation, was picked up from a loft at the point of a rifle. Later, on taking ill, she had to be transferred to Ratnagiri civil hospital. Shobha Shankar Patekar too fell ill in the prison. Among the other arrested were Chandrakant Lavande of Jaigarh who had decided to spend the night at Ramesh Bhalekar's place in Veldur because his boat was anchored there and Ramesh Padyal along with his 14 year old son Bhaichandra Padyal. Altogether 30 women were arrested, of which four were released at Guhagar. The remaining 26 were first taken to Guhagar police station and were later huddled for 9 days into a cell meant at the most for 4-5 inmates in the Chiplun police lock-up. Later they were shifted to Yerawada jail before being released on a bail of Rs.1000/- each. The 13 arrested men were kept in Guhagar police station throughout their police custody and later, were shifted to Yerawada jail, before being released on bail.

On enquiring into the bases on which the police released four of the women at Guhagar police station itself, different reasons were forwarded. The villagers alleged that family members of the arrested women went to Guhagar police station and were able to secure their release on the ground that they were working for Enron. When questioned, Anandi Padyal, one of the released women, denied this and said that since she fell ill and had vertigo, the police released her. ASP Satoshe clarified that the police released the four women because they realised that these four were not part of the "mob that attacked the police the previous evening". (It might not be out of place to point out that the police themselves had earlier claimed that the mob, mostly women, numbered around 250! The police must definitely possess razor-sharp memory to recollect that exactly these four women were not part of the mob of 250!)

The police Charge Sheet not only accuses the arrested with the 'offences' committed on June 2 but also of May 17 when there was a huge turn-out in front of the Main Gate of DPC. Evidently the police who seem to be reduced to utter helplessness and consequent frustration whenever agitationists have assembled in massive numbers, use isolated incidents like the Veldur one to slap charges against the agitationists for 'earlier' 'offences'.

Moreover, though the villagers claim that most of the people involved in the skirmish on the evening of June 2 were girls between 15-18 years of age, not a single person in the list of the arrested attached by ASP Satoshe to his report(No. 2046/1997 dt June 6 1997) to the judicial magistrate is noted to be below 18 years old. The villagers



registered a complaint to the judicial magistrate( Guhagar police register no 47/97) accusing the police of deliberately falsifying the age of the arrested girls to prevent them from being released on the grounds of being juvenile offenders. Vanita Manik Patekar(accused no 16) is mentioned to be 19 years of age when her actual age is 16 years, while Rekha Kisan Padyal(accused no 30) and Malini Dattaram Padyal(accused no 35) both aged 15 years, have been shown to be 19 years old. The demand for a magisterial inquiry into the incident was however turned down by the Ratnagiri District Collector Shri. Madhusudan Salvi.

The degree of physical force used by the police in the morning of June 3 was something that the village women were totally unprepared for. The police evidently used the pre-dawn crackdown as a retribution for the previous day's incidents. Their inability to seek out, locate and arrest the "main instigators" of the incidents of the previous evening, including Waman Patekar and Vijay Patil, made them all the more revengeful and brutal. As Baba Bhalekar remarked, "If the village women could be charged under Sec.307 [ attempt to murder ] for disheveling the saree of a WPC, what should the police personnel who carried out the search on June 3 be charged with?"

As noted earlier many of the arrested were young girls with no previous police records. Although the experience of being transported first to Chiplun police lock-up, then to Yerawada jail and finally to the Ratnagiri Sessions Court must have been quite traumatic, the girls we met seemed to manifest a strong resolve and a quiet confidence in their ability to face up to such inhuman treatment.

#### DEALING WITH THE AGITATION

Local people have been resisting the Dabhol Power Company(DPC) ever since its inception. When the officials of Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation(MIDC) began their survey of land for the DPC without seeking permission of local gram panchayats, people protested, and for the first time 189 persons(144 men and 44 women) were arrested on October 29, 1994. Later, on two occasions in the first week of November 233 and 105 persons respectively were arrested, which included the present MLA of the region, Vinay Natu. In those days the Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP) pledged support for the anti-Enron agitation and made it a rallying point against the Sharad Pawar government. This was the eve of the assembly elections. Shiv Sena MP Anantrao Gite and Shiv Sena taluka pramukh Dilip Gadade were active participants in Natu's campaign against the Enron then. On March 6, 1995- in the one month interval period between the assembly elections and its result being declared-present deputy chief minister of the state, Gopinath Munde, had specifically come down to Anjanvel to felicitate Hamid Chougule whose acres of land was acquired by the DPC, and assured that his(SS-BJP) government, if elected, would return Chougule's plantation. But since then, after the elaborate scrapping of the project and its farcical revival after 'renegotiation', Munde has yet to arrive in Guhagar.

Though the BJP betrayed the trust of the people, local residents kept up their resistance through other means. The judgement given by B P Saraf and M A Rane of the Bombay high court on December 2, 1996 on the CITU petition went against the petitioners. The recent order of May 3, 1997 passed by the three member bench

headed by Chief Justice Verma of Supreme Court on the Special Leave Petition filed by the CITU appears to hold little promise. Meanwhile, the work of the project which had come to a standstill between August 1995 and December 1996, has picked up. Simultaneously, the resistance instead petering off, gained momentum with noted environmentalist Medha Patkar taking up the issue. The satyagraha of January 30, in which 5,000-10,000 participated, became a major turning point in the history of the agitation. The agitationists agree that the protest grew 'militant' since January 30 as was evident from the widening of the base of the agitation and the increasing repression unleashed by the police. More and more villagers are getting drawn into the agitation. On May 17, even in the absence of Medha Patkar, a morcha of around 3,000 from neighbouring villages marched on to the Main Gate of the site. Parents are proud of their girls for participating in the agitation, arguing that what they(girls) are doing is for the good of the people. Pramod Devkar of Aarey village categorically stated, "They [the police] may remove one Medha Patkar, there are thousand Medha Patkars to take her place".

Though, as Jagannath Vishram Devkar of the same village said, "Medhatai never once told to indulge in violent act", the police have found the agitation since January 30 taking a decisively "violent" turn. The police force in Guhagar police station before January 30 incident was 36 men police, with four vacancies. Since then additional 8 women police have been posted since there is a large scale participation of women in the agitation. ASP Satoshe had asked for permanent deployment of 180 police(100 SRP+ 80 PCs) which has not been fully granted. More importantly, the DPC recommended the Government of Maharashtra(GoM) to station a police patrol specifically for the express purpose of preventing impediments to the construction work at the site. Accordingly, one battalion of SRP(100 police) with two PSI in charge has been stationed within the precincts of the DPC. The company is footing their expenses directly to the GoM on monthly basis. The GoM has fixed rates according to the designation for employing the service of the police force. The rate of police constables is Rs 125 per day per police. The ASP appeared keen to communicate the fact that the police force was also contributing its mite in raising the revenue for the State!

Besides beefing up its strength, the police resorted to other methods of harassing the agitationists. They started sending notices under section 149 of the Cr.PC ( Criminal Procedure Code) to numerous villagers, irrespective of whether they were involved in the agitation, falsely charging them with campaigning for the agitation.

Furthermore, the police would ask the villagers to report at the police station by a particular date, failing which they would be arrested. On coming to the station, these villagers were asked to sign a personal bond, by the Tehsildar, to the effect that they would strictly dissociate from the on going agitation. Villagers who had never seen the police station nor even once visited it, panicked. Guhagar taluka has only one police station at the taluka proper, with no out-post. Villagers, if charged under such "chapter cases" (as they are popularly referred to), which can later form the basis for preventive arrests have to travel all the way to Guhagar police station at the taluka place. This distance, and the threatening image of the police station, has till now prevented villagers from coming out forthrightly.

Interestingly, as ASP Satoshe informed us, neither the DPC, the state administration nor the MIDC has filed a complaint, against the villagers, with the police. Only once, in February 1997 when the pipes supplying water to the site were broken by Aarey villagers did the company lodge a complaint at the station. On February 22, Vinayak Sahadev Padwal, among others, was arrested for the 'crime'. But whenever the agitationists have ventured to report to the police station, the police have shown reluctance to co-operate.

Firstly, their charges are not taken down, allege the agitationists, and if taken, no police action is initiated. Adinath Rajaram Kaljunker, a resident of Aarey village, filed a complaint in the station against four people from Varcha Pat, Guhagar, who at 10 o'clock night of February 18, threatened to finish him off. The police entered it as a non-cognizable offence but took no action whatsoever. Quite a few instances of the police responding in a blatantly partisan manner were reported to us by the protesting villagers. These include:

\*Just a day before the satyagraha of January 30, 1997 a rumour was spread that there would be police firing next day. A local delegation of samiti members and villagers went to the police station on January 29 with a complaint demanding an inquiry of the person spreading such a rumour. Instead, the police arrested all of them. In fact, in a meeting with the district collector and the district superintendent of police on the that very day in the morning, Sadanand Pawar had informed that he has been a personal witness to the deputy superintendent of police, Patankar, dissuading the villagers from participating in the agitation on the grounds of a possible police firing. The district collector in reply had agreed to take action against persons found to be spreading rumours henceforth.

\*On November 22, 1996, Sushant Sudhakar Bhatkar filed a complaint in the Guhagar police station against Sandesh Pundalik Kalgutkar, a local contractor for the DPC and brother of ASP Kalgutkar, for assaulting him, Dilip Sakharan Misal and Anil Narayan Dhamnaskar on November 11 in Veldur with sword and causing injury to two fingers of his right hand. No police action has yet been taken.

\*A case registered against a migrant labourer working at the DPC for attempting to rape a girl named Sangeeta Dhopat in afternoon of January 17, 1997 in Gharatwadi, Veldur, awaits action. The girl has given statement that she will identify the person if produced before her. Bhau Khare, the Ratnagiri district general secretary of Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, alleged that the police took down a completely different account than the one narrated by the girl. Later, when this was brought to notice, the police agreed to change it but haven't done it so far, says Khare. ASP Satoshe informed that the police is in search of the person and has received information that the description of culprit's facial features match the description mentioned in a case of robbery at another police station. So, concluded Satoshe, that the culprit must be a robber moving about the taluka.

Secondly, the police has been implicating villagers in false cases, making the accused shuttle between their village and Guhagar-Chiplun to get acquitted. On June 6, 1997 one jeep and one van arrived in Borbatlewadi of Anjanvel and rounded up 15 men from the village including 4 old persons. The police forcibly took their thumb



impressions alleging that they were responsible for causing damage to Enron vehicles. The case is now in the court in Chiplun. The accused were later released on bail after being made to sign a personal bond.

\*On the evening of April 1, 1997, around 6 O'clock when palkhi procession of the village deity was taken around Katalwadi of Anjanvel, Chandrakant Bane and Ashok Bane, both supporters of Enron and residents of Katalwadi, and also Shiv Sena men, assaulted Hari Devale with sword. When Ashok Ramachandra Padyal ran to rescue Devale, Ashok Bane wounded Padyal's neck and right elbow with the sword. Dilip Bane hit Padyal in the waist and on the knee. Chandrakant Bane smacked Lata Madhukar Pate in her face, and he and his colleagues, Ashok Bait, Dinesh Bait, Sandeep Bagawe, Gorakh Bagawe, Santosh Bhuvad, Hari Kansare, started pelting soda bottles, acid bulbs and stones in the direction of the villagers. The acid bulbs burned saris of Sumitra Sonu Bane and Bhagirati Gangaram Bagawe, while the glasses of soda bottles caused wound in the head of Lakshmi Pandurang Pate. When the villagers approached the police to file the complaint, they were told that already a case has been filed against them for rioting and attempt to murder! The police arrested 23 villagers, 19 men and 4 women, and remanded them to Guhagar police custody for 3 days and later to Ratnagiri magisterial custody for 20 days. The police did arrest four of the assailants on minor charges but released them on bail on the very same day. The villagers informed that after their attack, the assailants sought shelter in the fuel jetty complex being developed by the DPC at Konavali, and that their families were evacuated prior to the incident, indicating that the whole incident was pre-planned.

\*The police have impounded a jeep belonging to Manik Patekar of Veldur village for ferrying people illegally. Manik Patekar happens to be leader of the fisherfolk from Veldur vehemently opposing the project. It is obvious that Patekar's jeep must have been plying the agitationists. Hence, the police action of taking Patekar's jeep into their custody smacks of deliberately harassing the agitationists when there are numerous other vehicles transporting passengers between Guhagar and Veldur.

- Two years ago, six Veldur villagers including Baba Bhalekar and Manik Patekar were arrested by the Guhagar police on having received a complaint from Sumati Jadhav, a panchayat samiti member of the Congress from Tari Bunder, Dhopave, for robbing an necklace and attempting to rape her on her way to the DPC site. Actually, Bhalekar had saved Sumati Jadhav from being beaten by aggressive fisherwomen of Vedlur and had escorted her in Patekar's jeep. Sumati Jadhav, now a contractor at the site, had on November 8, 1994 taken a delegation under the banner of 'Kokan Vikas Manch' in three luxury buses provided by the DPC under the pretext of meeting the then chief minister Sharad Pawar. In reality, this 300 strong delegation was paraded as 'project-affected' supporters of the DPC before the expert committee of the Ministry of Environment and Forests conducting a public hearing to review the environmental clearances for the project. But the fact of the matter was that none of these so-called project affected persons belonged to the villages whose lands had been acquired for the DPC.

Thirdly, the police in a pathetically vain attempt to contain the magnitude of the support the agitation is getting among the locals, are manufacturing stories about how the support base is being recruited. ASP Satoshe disclosed that their

'intelligence sources' have unearthed the fact that the leaders of the agitation *force* the villagers to take a collective pledge in temples to participate in the agitation, failing which a villager is charged a fine of Rs.500/- Thus the police intends to project the overwhelming support to the agitation as essentially drummed up and not spontaneous. But the villagers have a different story to narrate of police behaviour. The police tell the arrested villagers to say "yes" to Enron. And the villagers defiantly shoot back, "We're about to be ruined. If we do not start an agitation, what should we do? The government does not feed us. We toil for it".

### **PEDDLING LIES**

The *Dabhol Samvad*(DS) is the official monthly bulletin of the Dabhol Power Company. This bulletin is reasonably freely ( needless to add, free of cost, too!) available in Guhagar. Four issues have been published till date. The inaugural issue was in Marathi and was published in February 1997. From the March issue onwards the bulletin has become bi-lingual with the addition of the English version. May we point out however that this is in fact the inaugural issue of the DS in it's *second avatar*! The DPC had started publishing the DS back in 1994 but had discontinued it after the so-called 'scrapping' of the project.

The 'cover story' in it's *relaunched* "Shubh-aarambh Ank" reads like a thanksgiving in response to the Bombay High Court judgement dated December 2, 1996 dismissing the writ petition filed by CITU against the DPC. Additionally, the following pages reproduce photographs among which, in keeping with the spirit of thanksgiving, Vice-President- DPC, Sanjeev Khandekar is shown offering *Satyanarayan* puja in the company premises before restarting work on the project.

"Enron has always placed a strong emphasis on social commitment and interest of the community where we set up our plants."(Vol.1 No.2 pg.2 ) and the DS is primarily a reportage of the 'social service' projects that Enron has purportedly been involved in. Our enquiries revealed a number of tall claims and false promises.

Reiterating Enron's commitment to the "Health for All" slogan of the WHO, the company declared that it had begun a free mobile dispensary service for all the people living within the Enron project area from August 15, 1996. This information was the basis for a page-long report in the February 1997 issue of DS. Curiously, the March 1997 issue mentions the '*relaunching*' of the mobile dispensary. When was it discontinued and Why? Explanations are not forwarded in the Samvad. As for the villagers they are aware neither of its launch; its withdrawal or its relaunched! {The villagers say "If any such dispensary does exist it dare not come here"}

This issue incidentally also highlights Enron's resolve to work for the good of the local community *regardless* of the impending High Court ruling on the status of the power project. Furthermore the company also claims to have run a free ambulance service from Dec.'95 to Aug.'96, which too we are assured will be *relaunched* from April '97.

Thus we find see the series of 'discontinuities' and 'relaunches' starting with *Dabhol Samvad* itself.

Enron also claims to have pledged, "Rs.5 crore for a 50-bed state-of-the-art community hospital to be built to the highest standards" in Ranvi village by the Apollo Hospitals chain. The utterly cynical and shameless manipulation of a village community's need for basic health services, to sell a five-star hospital culture is deplorable to say the least.

The DPC has also reportedly committed a \$500,000 investment tie-up with CARE "the world's largest independent (read US-based NGO) relief and development agency. (Vol.1 No.2 pg.2 )

The March issue also lists Enron's support for local educational institutions. This includes educational materials worth Rs.5 lakhs for 'local schools'. Additionally the DPC claims credit for the "... repair work at Kathalwadi school;and the renovation of Anjanvel school"(pg.1 col.2)

The Group Grampanchayat at Anjanvel in a letter dated May 9, 1997 has refuted this claim in toto. The group grampanchayat limit includes Kathalwadi and Anjanvel. Reiterating its total opposition to the DPC the grampanchayat alleges that this is a blatant instance of misinformation directed at confusing the people and diluting the protests against the project. Since a "local contractor" has supposedly "recently completed this work" the grampanchayat demands that the company reveal the details relating to the contractor ( reminiscent of Enron's earlier expenditure on "educational costs"! ). Urging the state government to initiate an inquiry into this instance of malafide representation and corrupt practises. The grampanchayat also warns the DPC to desist from using its publicity mouthpiece to advertise such blatant lies.

The first page of the April 1997 issue of the DS informs us that, "Janghlibaba of Borbatlewadi *finally* gave us permission for laying our cross-country pipeline near his farm"(line 1 col.2 ). First question that comes to mind is who is this 'Janghlibaba'? In Borbatleywadi there lives a person named Ganu Raghu Jangli, a 70 year old retired mill worker from Mumbai, who refused to part with his land, and when the DPC people started bulldozing his plantation in 1995, it is narrated that his wife ran towards the bulldozer and implored that along with the trees she too be bulldozed. Dattu Dhondhu Jangli, a shopkeeper in Borbatlewadi, informed us that even now Ganu Jangli continues to oppose the DPC, and of recent the DPC even cavalierly ignored his plea to leave a corridor providing access to his farm, and instead have fenced entirely the land acquired(read robbed) from him. So 'Janghlibaba' happens to be one more mystification dessiminated by the DS so as to leave its readers confused about the real identity of the person. And by suggesting that the company sought Jangli's 'permission', that too much *after* his land was completely bulldozed by the company is only yet another illustration of Enron's genius for transforming survival issues into legal niceties!

"When a new industry comes to an essentially rural area, it needs a workforce with a variety of skills and abilities and usually these are hard to find in the immediate community. In our case we found that the best way would be to empower our community with the skills that would help them be a part of the

power plant's resource pool. With this in mind we are implementing three different training programmes for the PAPs including Gardener Training." The bulletin further informs us that, "the one-year training course has been devised by the Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth at Dapoli."

The Krishi Vidyapeeths were set up in the mid 1960s to mobilise, "human resources needed for the creation of a new and higher type of rural society... The 'Agricultural University' (was envisaged as)... "a future focal point of research in agriculture science and agricultural economics" (Education Commission 1964). It is in conjunction with one such University that the Enron Corporation, "has devised an eligibility criteria (which stipulates that)... anyone within the ages of 18 to 40 years and knows reading and writing can join the Mali [Gardener] training course!!" Needless to add this not only reflects on the unfortunate state of affairs of our Krishi Vidyapeeths but also the utter cynicism with which the MNCs views both our 'human resources' and our 'educational institutions'.

The April issue of the DS highlights the fact that the Enron Corporation has dug, "...bore wells in 12 villages, out of which at six places we have struck water." (pg.5). This service was ostensibly based on the study conducted by Enron's Community development team which "...discussed the issue with various people (with a view to) contribute to the supply of drinking water to at least some of our neighbours." ~~It seems that Enron~~ Two years ago a temporary water connection was constructed in Aarey village for the purposes of initiating the work on the DPC site. However over the two years this supply has drastically diminished and on February 7, 1997 a group of hundred villagers stopped the pumps that supplied to Enron. Water supply could be resumed only on February 21 and that too under the protection of a large SRP battalion. Thus far from contributing to solving the drinking <sup>water</sup> problems of the villagers the DPC has been a contributory factor to the increasing water problem in the area.

### **NOT A "ONCE FOR ALL"**

The police, in our interviews with them, made it a point to stress the increased "militancy" of the agitation. This, ASP Satoshe claims, has forced him to write to the Home Ministry requisitioning additional police personnel. When asked the reasons for this increase in militancy, he promptly replied, "outsider leadership!". On further enquiries he named Medha Patkar as the most prominent of the 'outside leaders'. The increasing militancy is a "direct result" of the activities of the 'outsider leadership', he asserted.

Up until now the main modes of protest of the agitationists have been 'silent satyagrahas'; 'courting arrest'; 'election boycott'; 'hunger strikes'; 'dharnas'; and filing of PILs and SLPs in the courts. Activities that can hardly be characterised as militant! Moreover, these forms of protest have been recognised as democratic and legitimate. By dubbing this struggle as 'militant' the police seek to justify their condemnable response to the agitation.

Yet another instance of police brutality was the manner in which the satyagrahis of the 'Konkan Sangharsh Yatra' were arrested at Mangaon on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 1997. This widely reported incident involved the tearing of clothes and the pulling of hair of the women agitationists including Medha Patkar by the police.



A TV journalist Yuvraj Agre had video-shot the incident. Medha later met Prime Minister Gujral in Mumbai. A formal complaint was registered with the NHRC on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1997.

The NHRC in an unusually prompt move despatched a three-member team to probe this incident. The NHRC team was in the Kokan and Mumbai between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of June. It is pertinent to note however that the complaints against the police will be investigated by NHRC members K K Arora, Rao Sharma and Chakravarti, who are themselves serving officers of the police force *on deputation* to the NHRC! Furthermore the activists got to know about the visit of the NHRC team only a day or so before whereas the police were intimated much earlier. The police were thus able to line up a number of 'their witnesses' even as the activists were desperately trying to coordinate their witnesses - claimed the agitationists.

It is also pertinent to point out that organisations such as the SJM (Swadeshi Jagaran Manch) as well as current office-holders of the SS-BJP at the village; taluka; and district levels continue to be actively associated with the anti-Enron agitation. The upcoming 'open debate' in Kathalwadi between the agitationists and the government needs to be seen in this context. Vithal 'Baba' Bhalekar, who is the Chairperson of the Ratnagiri district Fisher Sanghatana; Member of the Ratnagiri District Planning Board; Deputy Sarpanch of Veldur village; and most significantly the current Taluka Secretary of the BJP at Guhagar is an important local leader of the anti-Enron agitation. Speaking to us about the agitation he said that, "We felt that if we could bring down the Babri Masjid it would'nt be difficult at all to drown Enron in the Arabian sea!"

Announcing the date of the forth-coming debate, Mr. Munde stressed his government's belief in transparency. Importantly, the role of the police and the SRP personnel in Guhagar taluka is as of now *outside* the scope of the awaited debate. To illustrate, how does one understand the *arbitrary* and *unreasonable* imposition of colonial laws such as the Bombay Police Act, 1926 within the context of the government's self-declared policy of transparency?

Significantly, the MIDC is not a party to the forth-coming debate and hence rehabilitation and displacement too is presumably not an issue to be debated. How is it, for example, that the CEO of MIDC is able to assert that, "we are acquiring 5,000 hectares of land in Guhagar... [of which an overwhelming 90% is privately held - see table]...but we are giving a 100% guarantee that not a single person will be displaced from his house or gaathan area" !!(DS, March 1997 Vol.1 No.2 pg.2 ). Moreover, fishermen who will be 'affected directly' due to a host of reasons ( which include coast-line constructions and sea pollution) are not classified as PAPs.

This report, unlike Mr. Munde's 27<sup>th</sup> July debate is not meant to be a "once for all". Contrarily it seeks to institutionalise the Debate as a legitimate, democratic and "transparent" and therefore on-going form governance!



APPENDIX-1  
Dhabol-Guhagar notified Industrial area - Phase I  
Land Acquisition under the MID Act 1961

Village name	Govt. land	Pvt. Land	Total
Kathalwadi in Anjanvel	26.11.0	234.76.0	260.87.0
Ranvi	3.76.0	160.10.0	163.86.0
Anjanvel	11.44.4	15.16.6	106.61.0
Gharatwadi in Veldur	-	75.72.0	75.72.0

Proposed Guhagar Industrial Area Part-2  
Land Acquisition under MID Act 1961

Devghar, Guhagar	-	69.07.81	61.07.81
Zhombdi, Guhagar	-	274.75.30	274.75.30
Madhal, Guhagar	0.34.80	182.70.60	183.05.40
Kalmundi, Chiplun	-	33.20.00	33.20.00
Marg-Tamhane Khurd, Chiplun	-	89.90.00	89.90.00
Marg-Tamhane, Chiplun	-	86.45.00	86.45.00

Land acquired under the Land Acquisition Act 1894 for Petroleum Storage Depot for IOCL

Devghar, Guhagar	-	42.72.00	42.72.00
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Land Acquisition under the MID Act 1961 Veldur Industrial Area, Guhagar  
Govt. notification No./IDC/2195[1810]/Industry-14, Mar. 2 1996.

Navanagar, Guhagar	-	65.62.00	65.62.00
Sakhririshul, Guhagar	-	24.84.20	24.84.20
Tetle, Guhagar	-	50.08.50	50.08.50
Veldur, Guhagar	-	219.65.40	219.65.40
Sakhrikhurd, Guhagar	-	274.10.30	274.10.30
Dhopave, Guhagar	-	32.44.00	32.44.00
Palkot, Guhagar	-	56.25.50	52.25.50

Aarey, Guhagar	-	379.36.70	379.36.70
Varcha Pat, Guhagar	-	172.99.60	172.99.60
Mhaskarwadi Mohallawadi, Guhagar	11.02.00	326.60.00	337.62.00
Sakhri Budruk, Guhagar	2.79.00	399.51.10	402.30.10

Guhagar notified Industrial area Phase 3  
MID Act 1961  
Govt. No. /ID-2194/[1612] Industry-14 Mar. 2 1996

Shirvali, Chiplun	-	34.38.00	34.38.00
Pathardi, Chiplun	00.16.00	423.61.70	423.77.70
Umroli, Chiplun	04.00.00	344.45.10	348.45.10
Talegaon, Chiplun	01.16.00	399.31.40	400.47.40
Marg Tamhane Khurd, Chiplun	-	213.45.70	213.45.70
Devkherki, Chiplun	00.02.00	154.53.60	154.55.60
Jodhgaon, Chiplun	-	143.72.70	143.72.70
Ambire Budruk, Chiplun	00.39.80	277.11.40	277.51.20
Kalmundi, Chiplun	00.32.00	297.77.50	298.09.50
Gimvi, Guhagar	00.50.00	940.96.1	941.46.10
Zhombdee, Guhagar	02.55.00	533.95.30	536.50.30
Madhal, Guhagar	01.90.00	103.54.00	105.44.80
Deoghar, Guhagar	00.61.00	605.58.60	606.19.60