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## **A SOCIO-LEGAL STUDY OF CHILIKA LAKE MOVEMENT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Save the Chilika lake movement or Chilika bachao andolan was a movement by people, especially by local fisherman who were successful in resisting the early 90's integrated shrimp farming project for shrimp cultivation and export that was signed by Tata steel India Limited and Government of Orissa. This project is a direct threat to livelihood of fishing communities living around the lake and indirect threat to many who are inter dependant on the fish trade.

The fishermen in their struggle were supported by farmers, students, intellectuals, human right activists and environmentalists. The scenic spot was stirred with voices of resistance and andolans for saving the lake against Tata commercial house and the state government. They criticized them for making commercial use of natural resources and reducing local sustainable and subsistence use in the name of development. The movement was episodic in nature and the vigour, intensity and speed was uneven. There were different streams of thought and action among which it was not always possible to achieve synchronization. Yet all these separate formations together gave the resistance a form of movement. Despite the internal conflicts and contestations among the people and the leaders, the worth of the resistance lies in rising some critical governance issues pertaining to policy formulation, resource use and control, socio-economic equity not only with regard to the specific instance but with regard to the broader question concerning the prevalent paradigm of development, as well, and more importantly in pointing out the way the Indian state relates to ordinary people would like to refashion this relationship.

### **Introduction:**

Save the Chilika lake movement originally called as Chilika bachao andolan in native language was a movement by people living around the Chilika lake, especially by local fisherman who were successful in resisting the integrated shrimp farming project for shrimp cultivation and export around 1990 to late 1990's that was signed by a private corporate party Tata steel India Limited and Government of Orissa. This project is a direct threat to livelihood of fishing communities living around the lake and indirect threat to many who are inter dependant on the resources available in brackish water like mangroove forest products, tourism etc.

### **Research Question:**

Whether the movement was successful in reinforcing environment protection laws in India?

### **Objective of Study:**

1. To understand the Chilika bachao andolan in detail
2. To analyze its socio-legal impact
3. To critically analyze the role of state in handling sustainable development and environment protection.

### **Significance of Study:**

This study is important because there can be more such movements in future due to human environment conflict or to be more precise development environment conflict. This is important to understand the socio-legal impact of such movements before the era of sustainable development goals(SDG).

### **Research Methodology:**

The nature or method of this socio-legal study includes descriptive, explanatory and analytical approach.

### **Primary Sources:**

1. JSTOR - The legal research database.
2. Down to Earth

**Secondary Sources:**

1. niti.gov.in Reports
2. www.orissapost.com

**Literature Review:**

1. JSTOR is really helpful for getting articles and research papers.
2. Down to Earth is renowned for its articles on geography, environment and ecology.
3. Government reports for authentic stats and figures.
4. Orissa post for understanding in local people's perspective.

**Scope of the Study:**

Scope has been restricted to the mature phase of movement and aftermath events. Only social, economical and legal aspects were covered and environmental aspect was also dealt but only in legal sense.

## **CHAPTER - 1**

### **CHILIKA BACHAO ANDOLAN - THE INTRODUCTION**

Environmental movements in the world are understood to be very diverse and complex. However, in case of the developing societies or the ‘Third World’, they are perceived to protect particular ecological regions from environmentally damaging practices usually of a capitalist nature. Such movements are therefore often distinguished by their attempts to protect existing or traditional cultural practices as against global, modernizing ones. One may define these environmental movements as an organized social activity consciously directed towards promoting sustainable use of natural resources, halting environmental degradation or bringing about environmental restoration. Such environmental movements are primarily people’s movements for the protection of environment as well as its restoration. They deal not only with various environmental issues but also with contemporary socio-economic issues associated with the spread of capitalism. Their organizational forms range from the highly organized and formally institutionalized to the radically informal forms. They are the protest movements which reaffirm its faith in fundamental human rights in the dignity and worth of the human person, in equal rights of men and women, in rights to save environment, in rights to child, in rights to development etc. Different environmental movements of India take on different issues of conflict, involve diverse groups of people, bring about different agenda of demands and resort to different techniques of conflict generation.

According to Ramachandra Guha, one of the eminent Indian scholars on environmentalism, the “Indian Environmental Movement is an umbrella term that covers a multitude of local conflicts, initiatives and struggles where the poor confront the rich in order to protect the scarce, diminishing natural resources that are needed for survival”. Starting from the case of Chipko movement in the Garhwal Himalayas in the 1970s to the movement in Narmada Bachao Andolan against the Sardar Sarovar Project in Narmada valley during the next two decades or the Chilika Bachao Andolan (C.B.A.) in eastern India in early 1990s, India has witnessed a series of resistance movements defending the rights to natural resources. In other words “social conflict over the participation or ‘systematization of rural common property resources - especially forests and fisheries—also drew sociologists’ attention to the study of changing patterns of their ownership, control and use.” These popular movements often termed as ‘social movements’ centre on the conflict over production relations and they pose a challenge to the policy of ‘national development’ as adopted by India. Their challenge to development has come

in the form of political movements of people who are ecologically, economically and culturally marginalized. To put it in more explicit terms, the challenge has been posed by the communities of the ecosystem people who dependant heavily on the natural resources of their own locality, against the elements of development.

Ironically “the bulk of development policies in India justified in the national interest actually diminish poor people’s ability to control and gainfully use natural resources. In the name of development, national elites through the institutions of the state and market and often in collaboration with foreign capital have appropriated natural resources. The traditional communities who depend upon the natural base for sustenance have been deprived of their” sustenance. It is to be noted that the subsistence economies of these communities in recent years, were seen to be in. keeping in line with the forest ecology, With minimal social differentiation and restraints on the over exploitation of resources these communities were able to subsist quite easily on the boundaries of nature. However, these communities have been alienated by the western model of development. This alienation cannot be adequately described in terms of a material livelihood alone; it is most profoundly a wider loss of cultural autonomy, knowledge and power. In the name of development, the poor people have been marginalized. This is particularly true in case of Chilika’s environmental Protest movements in Orissa, Because it is always seen that where the agents of more intensive resource exploitation are supported by the state, local communities have no recourse except direct action in protest against injustice. This project is an honest attempt to enquire into the issues of ‘development’, ‘ecology’ as a source of sustenance, ‘marginalization’, ‘displacement’, ‘alienation’, and issues pertaining to a popular movement.

## CHAPTER - 2

### WITNESS THE MOVEMENT

Chilika's environmental movement has got not only national but also transnational support as well as mobilizations, which serve as a focus for its wider popularity. For its wider mobilization and the impressive way in which the local fishing communities protested the movement became a center of attraction and the Chilika Development Authority (CDA) was chosen for the prestigious Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award for 2002. However the question arises: What constitutes a resistance movement and what is the articulation of the movement's ideology? What are the factors responsible for the wider popularity of the movement in the transnational level? The paper also discusses how a responsible government has turned a blind eye to the cause of the marginalized class. To understand the whole process let us now briefly learn about the short history of Chilika Bachao Andolan (C.B.A) and subsequent developments there after.

#### **C.B.A - A short history of the campaign:**

Lake Chilika is situated in eastern side of the coastal state of Orissa in India and is surrounded by 137 fishermen villages. The total fisher-folk population of these villages is around one lakh out of which 27,200 are active fisher-folk. Fishing has been the traditional occupation of these people since long and their rights to fishing can be historically traced back to the Afghan rule in Orissa. These fishermen who were and are basically poor, enjoyed these rights even during the British rule when the first fishermen's cooperative was formed at Balugaon in 1926. There was a system of ecologically stable co-existence between the traditional fishermen community and the lake ecology and this has been continuing since then. However in late 1970s, during 1977-78, with the advent of prawn as an important export commodity in the international market, the situation in the country and in Chilika lake started changing. The non-fishermen community in Chilika area started eyeing the lake for prawn. First the unscrupulous traders and middlemen, then the politicians with their musclemen, a handful of big business families of Orissa and their local middlemen termed as "mafia", and finally, the big industrial houses with the blessings of the state government displaced the local fishing community and started gaining control over most of the prawn cultivating areas of Chilika for which there was opposition from the fishing communities<sup>1</sup>. Also the non fishermen who were the 'outsiders' sometimes made

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<sup>1</sup> Kanungo, B.P. 1996. "Public Interest Petition to Save Chilika Wetland from Mafiaraj", Bhubaneswar: Manavika Adhikar Sangathan.

fishing co-operatives their “agents by depositing lease money with the government on their behalf and advancing loan to their leaders. In this process the mafiaraj operated in the lake and the fishermen were being gradually squeezed out of the resources with the money and muscle power of the intruders. By the early 1980s, outsiders controlled a significant portion of Chilika’s fisheries. To add to the agony of the traditional, local fishermen the government of Orissa, in the meantime, allowed the Tatas to advance possession of 400 hectares of Chilika land for intensive prawn culture. Thus the Tatas started prawn culture, with semi-intensive method, in Lake Chilika, near Panaspada of Puri district. A further 200 hectares of Chilika Lake were later leased out by the state government to Tatas. The total project, which the Tatas undertook, was promoted on the grounds that it would bring about economic development of the region.” An environmental impact assessment study was done by the project through the consultancy agency, WAPCOS. But this study was biased and ignored totally the vital socio-economic aspects related to the lake ecology. For example, the problems of traditional fisherfolk like the threat to their sustenance, the possible occupational displacement, marginalisation, the impact of the proposed embankment on the surrounding environment such as pollution, decreasing depth of water and threats to the living organisms of the lake were not given attention. The lake area witnessed mushrooming prawn culture by these business houses and various other groups with the connivance of the state government only to be resisted by the traditional fisher folk through protests. Thus a protest movement emerged in Chilika over the last few years, named as Chilika Bachao Andolan (CBA) to protect the lake against the commercial exploitation by big business, and to restore to the people their right to live in Chilika.

There are mainly three strata of social forces operating in Chilika contributing to the emergence of this protest movement. They are the traditional fisher people, farmers and students. Among them the fisher people and the farmers are directly affected by the Tata’s and the Mafias’ invasion of Chilika. Students group is an extraneous force, but deeply involved in the Chilika’s struggle. The traditional fishing communities, however, were the people who were deeply concerned with the destruction of Chilika. Though their protest was considered important, still there was not a proper forum through which they could air their grievances. Fortunately the situation changed with the arrival of a batch of Utkal University students in Chilika in 1991. They supported the fishermen community of Lake Chilika in their movement against the entry of Tatas. They worked with a mission to bring about a value-based change in the society. Meanwhile the movement got support from other sections of the society such as social activists.

The contribution of Dr. Bhabagrahi Mishra, Sri Pradumna Bal, late Sri B.B. Das, Prof. Chiaranjan Das and Sri. Gangadhara Panigrahi was remarkable in this regard<sup>2</sup>. Thus the movement got a huge support base and the fisher people regained their confidence and they mobilized themselves in an organized way. With the help of this organized effort, on 15th Jan 1992, in Gopinathpur, in a meeting of representatives of fisher peoples' villages, the agitation in Chilika was named as "Chilika Bachao Andolan". Subsequently, the orissa Krushak Mahasangha (o.K.M), one of the reputed organizations representing the cause of the peasants extended its wide support to this movement. The o.K.M., through its main activists such as B.B. Das, entered the fray to protect the livelihood of these fisher-folk. Rallies, demonstrations, meetings and conferences were held in an organized manner and in the half way forced the Tatas to abandon the project. Thus the fisher folk showed remarkable activity at this stage of the movement, The movement soon became broad-based and received a boost in its subsequent stages.

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<sup>2</sup> Ram, Rahul. N. et al 1994. Ramsar Sites of India: Chilika Lake. New Delhi.

## CHAPTER - 3

### GROWTH OF THE MOVEMENT

By 1992-93 it was reported that 71,244 non traditional fisher folk were already engaged in fishing operation in Chilika and ten large prawn processing plants were already located in the area. And the rate of prawns had reached a price of Rs. 280/kg by 1992 from a meagre Rs.3.5/kg in 1930. Most of the prawn farms and companies were operating in gross violation of several laws of the country. Their only motive was to get more prawns. The craze for big and quick money was so great and the temptation to earn foreign exchange so intense that number of prawn culture companies were multiplying every year.

Aquaculture and costal fishing projects, till 1996, had attracted 546 crore rupees worth of foreign investment. In 1996 twenty-six companies of orissa were exporting prawns to many countries including Japan, USA, and European Union<sup>3</sup>. All these companies violate the water pollution (control and prevention) Act because they discharge effluents and solid waster to the sea, or the tidal rivers and creeks, without treatment. None of them had obtained clearance from the state pollution control board though it was obligatory under the said Act. Most of them violated revenue laws because they had encroached upon government land. Some of them also violated Orissa Land Reforms (O.L.R) Act because they had purchased agricultural land from people belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Almost all of them have violated Coastal Regulation Zone Notification under the Environment Protection Act, because prawn culture ponds were either in the prohibited zone between high tide line and low tide line or within 500 meters of the High Tide Line for which prior permission was needed, The central government had no policy about costal prawn culture till recently and the state government of orissa did not enforce the existing laws till the early part of 1995. Thus the plethora of laws and their non-implementation in practice points to the contradictory roles of the state. on the one hand, the state must represent itself as the guardian of 'public interest' protecting 'national' natural resources. Yet, on the other hand it acts to facilitate accumulation by private capital, acting as a mediator between farms and consumers.

Thus, we see, in the name of development, how national elites through the institution of state and the market and often in collaboration with foreign capital, have appropriated natural

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<sup>3</sup> Samal, Kishor and Shibala Meher. 1999. Socio-Economic Survey of villages in and around Chilika: A Report, Bhubaneswar: Navakrushna Chaudhury Centre for Development Studies (N.C.C.D.S.).

resources land, forests, and water for conversion into commodities. They have impoverished the earth of its natural wealth. In the name of development poor-people have been pushed out of their land. Their forests and water have been taken over by the state and the market. They have been deprived of everything except their labour power. The protest by the local people arises out of the loss of their main life support system been choked by the industrial policy of the government favouring capitalist elements like big businessmen, bureaucrats etc. We can highlight some of the issues from which it will be clearly known about how C.B.A's growth took angle from local to national and then to transnational level.

For the uneducated, down trodden, low caste local fisher-folk of the lake Chilika, the first enemy in such protests is the immediate exploitator, who threatens their livelihood. Since their knowledge about state laws and process, was limited, these fisher-folk have acquired this knowledge through the participation of intellectuals who have supported their cause. Although they could not realize the export-oriented economic motive of the state initially still it was realized with the support extended by the environmental activists and the intellectuals both from national and international level. It is these activists who have supported this movement thinking it a genuine and justified one. The efforts made by the intellectuals and environmental activists have made the local fisher folk conscious about the courts and different laws regulating the coastal ecology. For instance, the role of late Shri Banka Bihari Das, one of the main activists of C.B.A and the president of O.K.M, in taking the case of lake Chilika to supreme court by invoking the C.R.Z notification, the role of a group of students of Utkal University in mobilizing the people to protest outside the Assembly are, instances of the efforts of the activists who pleaded for the suffering, marginalized fishermen and wanted to save the lake ecology.

The role of different regional and national! social organizations like the Krantidarshi Yuva Sangha, Centre for Productive Social Work (C.P.S.W), Centre for Youth and Social Development (C.Y.S.D) and also transnational agencies like Canadian International Development Agency (C.I.D.A) have been supportive against the destructive attitude of the state and other allied elements. The poor, marginalized people of Chilika have expanded their consciousness with their association with intelligentsia and carried forward their struggle in an organized way. From a simple grassroots movement of the marginalized it became a movement of the people and became a broad-based, organized one.

## CHAPTER - 4

### THE SOCIOLOGY OF RESISTANCE

It is accepted by various thinkers that 'economic deprivation' is a necessary condition for resistance. Historiography of resistance mainly consists of the following sort of explanation resistance is seen as either a spontaneous response which is exemplified in the periodical outbursts of crime and lawlessness to which all wild tribe are subjects, or as a reflex action prompted by being driven over the edge by economic and political deprivation. The poor traditional fishing people of Chilika Lake are referred to as the deprived sections of the society. In Marxian terms, they have been thrown away to become destitute and have been exiled from their land against which they are rebelling and protesting. As part of a larger study from 'consensus to conflict' approaches in sociology and from 'top down' to 'bottom up' in history, the major works of conflict and resistance have firmly placed the study of lower class resistance' on the scholarly agenda so the struggle of save 'Chilika Movement' falls in this category because here the resistance supports a conflict situation over the use of resources<sup>4</sup>.

Kalland and Persoon in their works have shown how, at times, a more intensive resource use or mode of exploitation brings people in conflict with other group. Conflicts are between the authorities in need of foreign exchange and local people fighting for their physical, economical, ecological as well as for their cultural survival. It is the conflict between people who look upon the environment as a resource to be exploited for profit and those who define themselves essentially as being part of the nature. Amita Baviskar in her work "In the Belly of the River" explains how the changes brought by the independent state have created conflicts over competing claims to environment and how these conflicts range from the incessant battles between the forest department and local communities. She also-explains how the attempts of elite to exploit the nature in the name of development have been challenged and collectively resisted by the very people whom they have sought to marginalize. According to Guha, 'resistance and system political legitimacy are the interplay between ideologies of domination and subordination'.

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<sup>4</sup> Das, B.B. 1996 a. Chilika: The Nature's Treasure, Will it be allowed to die? Bhubaneswar: Orissa Krushak Mahasangha

The political legitimacy in case of Lake Chilika is the combination of state, private capital and rich elites. It is the rich, elite class as political power that suppresses the poor, marginalized class.

The bourgeoisie uses the state as an instrument of economic exploitation and consolidation of self-interest', With the growth of class consciousness the crystallization of social relations into two groups have been streamlined and the class struggle has become more intensified and the struggle takes the form of social movement of various kinds (the emphasis on C.B.A. as a sociological example here).

## CHAPTER - 5

### SUCCESS AND FAILURES OF THE MOVEMENT

Chilika lake occupies a pre-eminent place as the only lake in orissa, out of the two in India (the other one being Kealado National Park of Bharatpur, Rajasthan), declared in 1982 as a wetland of international importance under the I.U.C.N, (International Union for conservation of nature and natural resources) sponsored Ramsar convention of 1971 held in Iran to which India acceded as a party in october 1981. Regarding the movement that has arisen around the lake, one may find several success stories. First, the movement could not be suppressed by the government machinery. Even though the non-fishermen got the hidden support from the government machinery, bureaucrats including revenue and police officials, politicians and merchants, still the movement could not be suppressed. The movement started by the local traditional fishing community soon gathered momentum in due course due to the support extended by social activists, environmentalist, N.G.O's. For example, the fishermen community, as part of the C.B.A. programme, along with the organized bodies started a 'do or die' movement in 1999. With a nine point demand they started their agitation in March 1999. The demands were:

1. Total prohibition of shrimp cultural in Chilika.
2. A long term league policy for fishing by the fishermen.
3. Demolish all shrimp gheries (bamboo embankments) inside Chilika.
4. Complete ban on collection of wild shrimp seedling.
5. Formation of an autonomous body with representatives of fishermen by an act for preservation and management of Chilika Lake. Etc.

The Chilika Matshyajivi Mahasangha (Fishermen's Association) gave the ultimatum to the chief minister of orissa on 29.3.1999 to fulfill their 9-point demand particularly to demolish all shrimp gheries in Chilika by 15% April 1999. When no action was taken by the government, they themselves started demolishing the shrimp embankments. When their collective action was at its height at Sorana Village (29-30 May 1999), Police arrested the leaders of Mahasangha. There was severe resistance by the fishermen, they blocked the movement of police, which led to a bloody firing by the police claiming four lives. Still, the protest did not stop. With more enthusiastic spirit they continued the ongoing struggle.

Another important success story of the movement is its judicial nature and the positive attitude of judiciary towards the movement. When the C.B.A. was supported by the O.K.M. it launched another phase of the movement to protect the environment and also the livelihood of the poor community. The matter was then placed before the highest court based upon the Crucial Coastal Zone Regulation Notification (C.R.Z.-1) of 1991. The Supreme Court in its verdict dated 11" Dec.1996 said that the shrimp culture industry cannot be permitted to set up anywhere in the coastal regulation zone under C.R.Z. notification 1991 (A.L.R. 1997: 811). on the basis of the recommendation of the Supreme Court of India, the Government of India also constituted Aquaculture Authority of India under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperation Department. Accordingly the Government of Orissa constituted the state level and district level Aquaculture Committee, Thus the House committee on prawn culture constituted by the orissa Legislative Assembly on 28.06.1997 constituted a sub-committee to look at shrimp culture in Chilika Lake. The committee arrived at the conclusion that the practice of leasing or some portion of Chilika Lake for prawn culture has encouraged people to indiscriminately encroach inside Chilika Lake using their affluence and influence<sup>5</sup>. In the aftermath of police firing on the fishermen in village Sorana in the western bank of Chilika, the enunciation of a revised policy for regulation of fishing of Chilika is under consideration of the State Government. The Government has decided that no lease shall be granted or renewed within the lake area either in favour of any P-F.C.S. (Primary Fishermen Cooperative Societies) or in favour of groups/societies of the non-fishermen inhabitants of the adjoining villages and hamlets for culture fishery for the time being. Along with this the collectors of Puri, Khurda and Ganjam districts were requested to ensure implementation of this interim direction forthwith.

Here I would argue that Chilika's Environmental Movement is basically a resistance of the marginalized. For the success of such a movement it has united different dispersed groups of fisherfolk who face a common threat of loosing their livelihood. They have also enlisted support from the middle class people like students, intellectuals etc. Such alliances between middle class and the fisherfolk at the grassroot level have drawn attention to the media. The media attention has also shaped the identities of people at the grassroots. Through this weapon (the media) the Andolan has tried to expose the dominant political culture. The Andolan put pressure on the state through various strategies using the law court and various other institutions from which it got sympathetic attention and by mobilizing the support of other

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<sup>5</sup> (House Committee Primary Report 1999: 2)

intellectual elites along with media. These strategies have put pressure on the government so that the traditional claims have prevailed.

One major aspect of the success story of the movement is the part played by fisher women and their strong, bold support in this movement to fight for their rights. The role of local traditional fisherwomen was exemplary and they participated in large numbers. To bring them in larger numbers of the movement, separate fisherfolk conferences were held in different localities of the lake and all of them were tremendously successful. Many educated girls of the fishermen community joined this movement. There were some Mahila Samities of fisherwomen in some of the villages. They were in moribund state. However, they were all mobilized and integrated with the CBA through these women conferences. It was the experience of the common people that the fishermen played a major role in the movement and they have large share in the successful battle against the Tatas. The bloody incident of 'Sorona' again highlighted the organized and success story of the protest. The united traditional fishing community could finally put pressure on the state government as a result of which the orissa fishing in Chilika (Regulation) Bill, 2002 by the Assembly has been passed out and it is expected that the bill will put an end to intensive culture fishing in the lake area. The Proposed legislation seeks to protect the rights of the traditional fishing community in tune with the recommendation made by various government appointed committees in the past. The committee, among other things, recommended complete ban on culture fishing through a comprehensive piece of legislation. The immediate purpose of the Bill is to eliminate culture fishing and protect the interest of traditional fishing community. The bill, however, promise to be a revolutionary piece of legislation but, its efficacy would depend upon its proper implementation which is eagerly awaiting by the traditional fishing community.

### **Failure of the Movement:**

Of course, the movement that started its initial agitation in early 1990s and taken a full fledged action in 1999, took some years to achieve success, even though the demands of local fishing community is to be fulfilled totally. However, Initial years of the movement were not fruitful due to many factors which are as follows:

Contradiction within the fisher-folk community: It is alleged that a group of fishermen known as middlemen also were supporting the mafia dons, mafias, local encroachers' clandestinely to gain money lucratively. They did not support the movement because they were getting money

from the middlemen and satisfied their own selfish goals. Moreover, it is one of the loopholes of the C.B.A. that it could not bring them to be associated in the movement. However, this limitation could not hinder the C.B.A. in achieving its larger goal. The C.B.A with its wide base and organized behaviour marched forward and enlisted local, national as well as international support. In the eyes of the success, so far achieved, the failures became minuscule. However, the use of the lake by both fishermen and non-fishermen, through these middlemen, remained a large question due to its nature of “common property resources” (C.P.R.).

## CHAPTER - 6

### THE RAMSAR AWARD - 2002

Recently the Chilika Development Authority (C.D.A.), an agency of the state government looking after the welfare of the Lake, received the prestigious Ramsar Wetland Conservation Award 2002 at Valencia, Spain on 18 November, for its achievements in restoration and the wise use of wetlands<sup>6</sup>. As per the convention the Chilika Lake qualifies as a wetland of international importance for several reasons. They are briefly as follows:

1. over a million migratory water fowl and shorebirds winter here, and it comprises a substantial portion of the migratory fly way of several water fowl.
2. It is a hot spot of biodiversity, with over 400 vertebrate species recorded;
3. Several endangered, rare, threatened and vulnerable species are found here;
4. Exceeds 1,00,000 hectare in total area;
5. Supports fisheries that are a lifeline to a community of over 1,00,000 fisher folk and contribute significantly to India's international trade etc. A lot many questions, however, lay answered in this context. Does it really mean that the Lake is devoid of any future problems? Is the marginalized, poor fisherfolk community happy now? What will happen to the people who have already left the area (displaced), in search of a livelihood at other places, during the last few years?

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<sup>6</sup> The Hindu: 23.06.2002

## CHAPTER - 7

### ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

#### **Analysis:**

The C.B.A. which was basically a grassroot movement of the marginalized people has become people's movement. The primary cause of this movement is the loss of livelihood of local fishing community through the national process of globalization, structural adjustments and liberalization policy started in India in 1991. These processes were promoted by the developed nations in the early 1990s. However, India adopted it without foreseeing its deleterious implications for the poor and large sections of its masses. Development has not only given a blind eye to the sustenance of the poor, fishing people of Chilika, but also neglected the tradition and culture of these people. For centuries, the Lake was managed by the traditional fishing communities through their system of caste panchayats. The panchayat imposed controls on various aspects of fishing. Numerous rules regarding the seasonal catch areas and community-related fishing equipment ensured that the lake was managed like a common property. There were festivals related to no fishing days and also restricted fishing seasons. During these restricted fishing seasons and no-fishing days, these traditional fisher-folk worship their boats, nets as well as Mother Chilika, Mother Chilika, boats, nets are sacred to them. They are a sacred force for them that provide sanctions for violations of taboos that inculcate moral responsibilities in the group that creates a common bond or collectivity among the group and binds them through their religious sentiments. India, even today, abounds in examples of such traditions. Thus the movement has taken up the issues of traditional problems allied with development process and other economic evils.

There are, however, several questions which still haunt the mind. Has the movement really been ceased? Is the marginalized class satisfied? The answer is quite ambiguous. As the illegal and unauthorized shrimp culture is still going on in the Lake by the mafias. In the month of December 2001, the fishermen of Chilika started agitation against these illegal and unauthorized shrimp culture in the lake. The government of orissa has recently banned shrimp culture in Chilika. It is yet to be seen how government orders are observed. From the referred success stories of the movement discussed above, however, it can be argued that because of the international attraction due to several issues such as environmental degradation through intensive prawn aquaculture, deprivation of the main support base for the livelihood of the poor

local fishing communities, destruction of social and cultural base of the marginalized people etc. it has become popular. At one level the Andolan (C.B.A.) is defensive, seeking to escape the tentacles of the commercial economy and the centralized state; at another level it is assertive, challenging the urban industrial culture, which threatened their culture and society. It is not merely a defence of the traditional fisher folk community and its cultural values but also an affirmation of a way of life which has harmoniously adjusted with the Lake's natural process. Thus C.B.A. has specific goals, objectives and lessons.

1. It mobilized the local people in defence of the local environment against out side interests - usually the state or big business interest etc.
2. The action groups of this movement were mainly based at the grassroots level.
3. Women, in some cases, formed the core of their membership and participation in this movement for a better mobilization and success of the struggle.
4. The people due to their genuine cause could mobilize different sections and protested properly against the state apparatus. It also enlisted support from international level through C.R.Z. notification.
5. Finally, the groups often could record victory in their struggles, of course, partially due to its organized agenda.

### **Conclusion:**

Each social movement differs with regard to the specific details of its emergence and this in turn affects the manner in which the leadership presents itself to the wider world. However, irrespective of the variations in the style of leadership in each movement there lies a community spirit among the totality of participants, which needs to be emphasized and maintained. This community sentiment is a measuring rod for achieving the goal of any struggle or movement. In case of Chilika's Environmental Movement the means of organized protest and community sentiment of the participants were highly valued. This organizational spirit has brought the movement to the forefront and made the movement highly powerful. Though the C.B.A. was initially localized soon it became a popular movement because of the larger unity among the marginalized people who were the main participants of this movement. The importance of the movement thus lies in the unity and organized behavior of its people and also in the growing consciousness of the participants (in this case, poor marginalized people) about their rights and collective action. The C.B.A. is a reflection of new self-reflection among its people. It has given its participants a new identity - which they are and what kind of life they would like to

live. It brings forth a message that collective action is a major instrument in any social movement. This helps to make the movement organized and broad based. That is why, we find, even though C.B.A. had a limited grassroots base, it could still buttress to mobilize the dispersed metropolitan support both at national and international level. Moreover, marginalized classes could fight through the social movements against social evils, to challenge the state authority if it marginalizes them and undermines their importance. In fact the marginalized people are the people who should be given proper attention in a country like India if real development is aimed at.

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