

Environment protection movements in India

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ABSTRACT

The environment protection movements in India was a concerned of both environmental preservation and issues of economic equity and social justice. The aim of this research was to find environment movements that occurred in India. In this research paper the researcher focused on the movements that awaken environmental protection concern in India. All the information was gathered from books, researches published by various researchers and electronic media. The researcher while reviewing gathered five major environmental movements that had occurred in India. The Chipko Movement in the Himalaya, Appiko (Chalewali) Movement in the Uttar Kannada region of Karnataka, Save the Narmada Movement in central India, Silent Valley Movement in the Malabar region of Southern India, Dehradoon Valley Protection Movement in hills of Himalaya state were discussed as examples in this paper. The Movements occurred at a time when there were few environment movements in the developing world. These environment movements had helped to plant the idea of the need to preserve the bond with nature deeply in the communal awareness. In that sense these Movements had changed the term of debate about development in an essential way.

Key Words : Environmental, Protection, Movements

INTRODUCTION

India is a land of philosophy of nature and its conservation Gandhi preached, plain living, high thinking. Gandhi's model of economic growth is a kin to the sustainable growth which the present day environmentalists recognize and Mrs. Indira Gandhi's speech on 1970's conference on Human Environment was highly acclaimed. She established a National Committee for Environmental planning and co- operation. Soon after a series of enactment of environmental laws for Environmental protection- were passed in the parliament, the U.N. conference on the world wild life protection Act 1972 was enacted (8).

Environment movement is an expression of the socio-ecological effects of narrowly conceived development based on short-term criteria of exploitation. The movements are revealing how the resource intensive demands of development have built-in ecological destruction and economic deprivation (9). In this paper the researcher focused on the movements that awaken environmental concern in India; the "Chipko Movement" in the Himalaya, Appiko (Chalewali) Movement in the Uttar Kannada region of Karnataka, "Save the Narmada Movement" in central India, the "Save Silent Valley" in Kerala and Dehradoon Valley Protection Movement in hills of Himalaya state as case

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studies of the nonviolent environment movements of grass root level in India.

In recent years many grass root environment protection movements had launched against the developmental activities that had threatened the ecological balance (9). The objective for the present research was to gather information regarding the environment protection movements took place in India.

METHODOLOGY

The electronic media was used to collect the list of environment protection movements took place in India. Only five were finally selected based on the available information for the present study. The researcher had gathered information from secondary sources regarding the environment movement occurred in India. The information about the movement was derived from books, researches and internet. The paper only covered the environment protection movements that took place in India. These movements were in the minds of majority of the Indian population.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher had gathered information of five major Environment protection movements in India in present paper are listed below.

Chipko movement:

The forests of India are critical resource for the subsistence of rural people throughout the country, especially in hill and mountain areas. The forests were their direct provision of food, fuel and feed. As these forests had been increasingly cut down for commerce and industry, Indian villagers had sought to protect their livelihoods through the “Gandhian method of satyagraha” or non-violence resistance(4).

The “Chipko movement” or “Chipko Andolan” was a movement, which practiced through the act of hugging trees to protect them from being felled. The movement leader was Sunderlal Bahuguna. According to Rangan (2000), “The Chipko movement, though primarily a livelihood protection movement rather than a forest conservation movement, went on to become a rallying point for many future environmentalists, environmental protests and movements all over the world and created a precedent for non-violent protest” (1). Chipko Movement, started in 1970’s, was a non violent movement aimed at protection and conservation of trees and forests from being destroyed. Chipko movement was based on the Gandhian philosophy of peaceful resistance to achieve the goals. It was the strong uprising against those people, who were destroying the natural resources of the forests and disturbing the whole ecological balance (5).

In the 1970s, an organized resistance to the destruction of forests spread throughout India and came to be known as the Chipko movement. The name of the movement comes from the word ‘embrace’, as the villagers hugged the trees, and prevented the contractors’ from felling them (3). In other terms “Chipko” in Hindi means to cling, reflecting the protesters main technique of throwing their arms around the tree trunks designated to be cut, and refusing to move (6). The Chipko protests in Uttar Pradesh achieved a major victory in 1980 with a 15-year ban on green felling in the Himalayan forests of that state by order of India’s then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi (2).

Chipko Movement occurred at a time when there was hardly any environmental movement in the developing world and its success meant that the world immediately took notice of this non-violent movement, which was to inspire in time many such eco-groups by helping to slow down the rapid deforestation, increase ecological awareness and demonstrate the viability of people power. Above all, it stirred up the existing civil society in India, which began to address the issues of tribal and marginalized people (1).

For rural women, saving the environment is crucial to their economic survival. As primary food, fuel and water gatherers were women. The women, who eke out (economize) a living in the Himalayan foothills, using its forests as sources of food, fuel and forage for their animals, face a particularly severe challenge. The hill soil washed away, causing landslides, floods and silting in the rivers below the hills. Crops and houses too were destroyed and women had to trudge (hike) further and further for their fuel, fodder and water. All in all, it was the women who were the main victims of India's deforestation policies(7).

The movement was sparked off by the government's decision to allot a plot of forest area in the Alaknanda valley to a sports goods company. This angered the villagers because their similar demand to use wood for making agricultural tools had been denied by the government. With encouragement from a local NGO (non-governmental organization), DGSS (Dasoli Gram Swarajya Sangh), the women of the area, under the leadership of an activist, Chandi Prasad Bhatt, went into the forest and formed a circle around the trees preventing the men from cutting them down (3).

The villagers were unsuccessful in their arguments to the government, so they adopted nonviolent resistance. They attached themselves to the trees to protect them from the axe. The Sangh decided to resort to tree-hugging or Chipko, as a means of non-violent protest (1). They were successful and the permit issued to the sporting-goods manufacturer was canceled. As result the action arose the Chipko environmental protection movement. More than a dozen major and minor incidents of confrontation occurred during the 1970s. Each confrontation was nonviolent and successful (5). The successes led to increasing national and international publicity and recognition for the movement. Going from village to village, the Chipko activists prepared for each confrontation by informing people of the movement's purpose and inviting their participation.

A feature published by the United Nations Environment Programme in June 1982 reported that, the Chipko Movement thus: 'In effect the Chipko people were working a socio-economic revolution by winning control of their forest resources from the hands of a distant bureaucracy who were concerned with selling the forest for making urban-oriented products' (2). Some of the key women leaders who fought for the protection of forests were Gaura Devi, Sudesha Devi, Bachni Devi, Dev Suman, Mira Behn, Sarala Behn and Amrita Devi (5).

The Chipko Movement gained momentum under Sunderlal Bahuguna, an eco activist, who spent his whole life persuading and educating the villagers. Sunderlal Bahuguna protested against the destruction of the forests and the Himalayan Mountains by the government (5). According to Sunderlal Bahuguna, "The solution to present-day problems lies in the re-establishment of a harmonious relationship between man and nature. To keep this relationship permanent we will have to digest the definition of real development: development is synonymous with culture"(2).

Result of chipko movement:

According to Murali Krishna (2004), "The success achieved by this protest led to similar protests in other parts of the country. From their origins as a spontaneous protest against logging abuses in Uttar Pradesh in the Himalayas, supporters of the Chipko movement, mainly village women, have successfully banned the felling of trees in a number of regions and influenced natural resource policy in India. Mr. Sunderlal Bahuguna, had been involved in this movement and had given it proper direction. Mr. Sunderlal Bahuguna, a Gandhian activist and philosopher, whose appeal to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, resulted in the green-felling ban. Mr. Bahuguna invented the Chipko slogan: 'ecology is permanent economy'. Mr. Chandi Prasad Bhatt, was another leader of the Chipko movement. Chandi Prasad Bhatt encouraged the development of local industries based on the conservation and sustainable use of forest wealth for local benefit (1, 3).

The Chipko protests in Uttar Pradesh achieved a major victory in 1980 with a 15-year ban on green felling in the Himalayan forests of that state by the order of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime

Minister of India (3). The success of the Chipko movement in the hills saved thousands of trees from being felled (18). In 1987 Chipko was chosen for a "Right to Livelihood Award," known as the "alternate Nobel" prize honor. The honor was rightly deserved for this small movement dominated by women which had become a national call to save forests (1, 7).

Appiko movement:

To save the natural forest of Western Ghats and stop soil erosion of forest land the Appiko Movement was started. Inspired by "The Chipko Movement" the villagers of Western Ghats, in the Uttar Kannada region of Karnataka started AppikoChalewali movement during September – November, 1983. According to Andharia and Sengupta (1998), "the destruction of forest was caused due to commercial felling of trees for timber extraction. Natural forests of the region were felled by the contractors which resulted in soil erosion and drying up of perennial water resources.

In the Saklanivillagein Sirsi, the forest dwellers were prevented from collecting usufructs like twigs and dried branches and non timber forest products for the purposes of fuel wood, fodder andhoney". In September 1983, women and local community of the region decided to launch a movement similar to Chipko, in South India (6). The local community from Saklani and surrounding villages walked to a nearby forest and hugged trees there.

They forced the contractors of the state forest department to stop cutting trees. The community demanded a ban on felling of green trees of the forest. The protest continued for 38 days and this forced the state government to grant to their demands. The state government withdrew the order for felling of trees (7). The Appiko movement was successful in its three fold objectives, which was the protection of the existing forest cover, the regeneration of trees on discarded lands and the utilizing forest wealth with proper consideration to conservation of natural resources.

Dehradoon (Doon) valley protection movement:

The Doon valley had abundance of greenery. It is surrounded by forests from all the sides. On the one side, it has the hills of Mussoorie and on the other, it is bounded by Himalayan range which is the source of perennial rivers like Ganga, Jamuna and Brahmaputra and the Shivalik range. The perennial streams and the fertile soil have contributed to the growth of dense lush green forests of the area. The unscientific mining and the uncontrolled cutting of trees had created disaster with vegetation and destroyed the ecology.

According to Murali Krishna (2004), "The Doon Valley Quarrying Case was the first major public interest litigation that emphasized environment as a human right. This public interest litigation case was filed by the people of Doon Valley as a part of their struggle to save the unique and fragile Himalayan ecosystem." The limestone had good market and it was gradually increased since 1965 in Doon Valley. The cement factories were polluting the valley and the atmosphere which caused tuberculosis and other health problems.

Under the leadership of Shri Dhoom Singh Negi and encouragement of Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna, volunteers positioned themselves on the truck route and a camp was established on the bank of the stream called Sinsyaru Khala (6). The villagers and the Chipko Movement activists started their non-violent resistance against ecologically destructive limestone quarrying on September 16, 1986, bringing a complete halt to the functioning of the quarry and the movement of the mineral. The activists stood in front of large trucks to stop them going to the limestone quarries. The Chipko Movement against limestone quarrying celebrated six months of its struggle on 15 March 1987(3).

The United Nations held Conference on Human Environment in 1972 in Stockholm spread awareness about environment protection. It declared that to defend and improve human environment for present and future generations has become an imperative goal for mankind. The international conferences spread the awareness regarding environment and its protection. The chipko movement

had become a catalyst for various environmental protection movements in India. The judgment of the 'Doon Valley Quarrying Case' on 1985, the Supreme Court ordered for the closure of 53 quarries out of 60 quarries of limestone and making rehabilitation a possibility. According to Murali Krishna (2004), "It is a right to grow economically but without harming the interests of others and the future generations."

Save silent valley movement:

Save Silent Valley Movement was a remarkable people's movement that stopped a hydroelectric project across the Kunthipuzha River and saved a pristine evergreen forest in Kerala. The battle for the now famous Silent Valley raged for over ten years and involved thousands of people who did not even live in the vicinity of the area that was to be destroyed. Although the campaign did not have any centralized planning, it was highly effective (11). The sustained pressure exerted on the government by citizens using every possible means available at the time – letters to the editors of newspapers, seminars, widespread awareness programmes and finally petitions and appeals in court and other high offices proved successful (9).

Silent Valley, occupying an area of 8950 hectares at an altitude of 3000 feet in Palaghat district of Kerala, is the single remaining undisturbed tropical rainforest in Indian peninsula (9). Kuntipuzha is one of the major rivers that take its origin in the lush green forests of Silent valley (19). The Kuntipuzhariver flows 15 km southwest from Silent Valley (9, 10). The Silent Valley has forestland in the region with a relatively undisturbed evolutionary history of at least 50 million years. Compared to other sub-tributaries of the Bharathappuzha, the lifeline of central Kerala, the Kunthi flows undisturbed due to the success of the conservation of the Silent Valley (12). The tropical rain forest in Western ghats were precious reservoir of biodiversity where many plant and animal species have survived for centuries. Romulus Whitaker, founder of the Madras Snake Park and the Madras Crocodile Bank was probably the first person to draw public attention to the small and unknown area in Kerala called Silent Valley (13).

In the year 1928 the location at Sairandhri on the Kunthipuzha River was identified as an ideal site for electricity generation. According to Murali Krishna (2004), "A study and survey was conducted in the year 1965 of the area about the possibility of a hydroelectric project of 120 MV and one costing Rs. 60Crore was later proposed by the Kerala State Electricity Board". In year 1970, Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) proposes a hydroelectric dam across the Kunthipuzha River. The river runs through Silent Valley would submerge 8.3 sq km of untouched moist evergreen forest. In year 1971 – 72, Steven Green, a scientist from the New York Zoological Society, conducted various studies on primates, especially the lion-tailed macaque in Silent Valley.

Green expressed concern about the possible threats to the rare macaque from the project. Around the same time, herpetologist Rom Whitaker explored Silent Valley to study the snakes of the region and wrote a letter to the Bombay Natural History Society about the need to conserve the Valley. The reports alerted other naturalists living in various locations (11). Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) announced its plan to begin dam construction in 1973. After the announcement of imminent dam construction the valley became the focal point of "Save Silent Valley". The concern about the endangered lion-tailed macaque, the issue was brought to public attention (17, 19).

National Committee on Environment Planning and Coordination (NCEPC) sets up a task force, to study the ecological problems that encounter by the project in October 1976. The Task Force was chaired by Zafar Futehally. Task Force recommends that project be scrapped. However it provided a loophole that stipulated that, "if abandoning the project is not possible, a series of safeguards to be implemented." Several Non-Governmental Organizations opposed the project and urge the government to abandon the project (12).

The activists Sathish Chandran and Nair, visited Silent Valley in 1977. With missionary zeal they

started the movement to create awareness in academic circles through talks and slide shows (11). The Kerala Forest Research Institute carried out an Ecological Impact study of the Silent Valley area and they proposed that the area be declared a Biosphere Reserve (9, 10). V.S. Vijayan of the Kerala Forest Research Institute does a study on the impact of hydroelectric projects on the environment. The research institute had written a letter to the authorities recommending that, do not begin the project till the report was being submitted (11). S. Prabhakaran Nair visited the villages of north Malabar with the message of the conservation of valley to villages and cities all over Kerala; Prof. John Jacob trains young nature lovers and spring up Nature Clubs all over the state (13).

The General Assembly of the IUCN urged the Government to conserve the undisturbed forest area. Many renowned people, including conservationists, corporate and political leaders, had written to the Central Government requesting that no sanction be given to the project. The researchers like Salim Ali, Madhav Gadgil, C.V. Radhakrishnan, M.S. Swaminathan, Subramaniam Swamy, Sitaram Kesari, Pilo Modi and Krishna Kant had joined the movement to save the silent valley. According to Salim Ali the project was 'shortsighted' and had 'limited objectives'. Institutions like the BNHS and Geological Survey of India had appealed that the area to be declared a Natural Bio-reserve. The Government rejected all the appeals and recommendations that the proposal of project should begin in the year 1979 (18).

N.V. Krishna Worrier of the Prakriti Samrakshana Samiti, Prof. Joseph John and P. Gopalakrishnan Nair, an advocate, filed a petition in year 1979 and got a stay order from the High Court of Kerala, stopping work on the project. In year 1979 the stay order was rejected by the High Court saying that, "it was not for the courts to go into the merits of scientific arguments" and added that the High Court was "satisfied that the matters had received attention before the State decided to launch the project". In the year 1979, the Silent Valley Samrakshana Samiti and Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad started awareness campaigns (16).

The members of the campaign held protest meetings, rallies and debates all over the state. The awareness campaigns turned the campaign into a mass people's movement. The movement was being supported by the local news paper and eminent peoples. In 1979 the Government of Kerala passed Legislation regarding the Silent Valley Protection Area (Protection of Ecological balance Act of 1979) and issued a notification declaring the exclusion of the Hydroelectric Project Area from the proposed National Park (17, 19).

In the year 1980-81, Indira Gandhi become interested in the conservation movement and with an active personal interest in the Silent Valley project. As national and international pressure mounted on Indira Gandhi declared that Silent Valley will be protected. By June 1983, the Centre re-examination was done of the issue through a commission chaired by Prof. M.G.K. Menon called the Menon Report. A careful study of the Menon report by the Honorable Prime Minister of India decided to abandon the Project (19).

Result of silent valley movement:

In 1985 Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi formally inaugurated Silent Valley National Park. The battle for the Silent Valley raged for over ten years and involved thousands of people who did not even live in the surrounding area (11). Consecutively, another major movement to stop the widespread deforestation of Himalayan forests was taking place known as "The Chipko Andolan". Chipko Andolan resulted in the setting up of the Union Ministry for Environment and Forests as Lord Protector of India's ecology (18).

After the formation of Kerala, one of the positive changes in social attitudes during that period was the growth environmental consciousness. The Silent Valley movement contributed much to that. It demanded the attention of the society on matters that had not been discussed or attended to previously (17). According to Murali Krishna (2004), "The Stockholm Convention in 1972 had generated

a world-wide awareness about environment.” The media had been vigilant about environment along with the people. There were criticisms about media and their role in creating awareness about environmental protection (12).

The government had tried to turn social forestry into a movement. In recognition, the Centre had chosen Kerala for the Indira Gandhi “Vriksha Mitra” Award. ‘Ente Maram’ had been recognized as the most imaginative social forestry programme. The State won a second “Vriksha Mitra” award for small States of India for increasing the forest cover. Kerala was the only State to launch a slogan against global warming for a campaign and organized a national workshop for the first time in India (16).

Save the Narmada (Narmada Bachao) movement:

Narmada Bachao Andolan was the powerful mass movement. The movement began in the 1980s as a struggle for just resettlement and rehabilitation of people being displaced by the Sardar Sarovar Dam, but the focus was shifted to preserving the environmental integrity and natural ecosystems of the entire valley (20). It started in 1985, against the construction of huge dam on the Narmada River. Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) was a social movement consisting of activists, farmers, environmentalists and human rights activists against a number of large dams being built across the Narmada river. The river flows through Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh states in India. Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat was one of the biggest dams on the river and was one of the first focal points of the movement (21).

Narmada is the India’s largest west flowing river, which supports a large variety of people with distinguished culture and tradition ranging from the indigenous (tribal) people inhabited in the jungles here to the large number of rural population. The proposed Sardar Sarovar Dam and Narmada Sagar would displace more than 250,000 people. The big fight was over the resettlement or the rehabilitation of these people. The Narmada Valley Development plan was the most promised and most challenging plan in the history of India. According to Murali Krishna (2004), “The project will produce 1450 MW of electricity and it would deprive thousands of people of their livelihood. The project will provide pure drinking water to 40 million people covering thousand of villages and towns (20).

The Save the Narmada Movement (Narmada Bachao Andolan, NBA) was the people’s movement that had mobilized itself against the development since the mid 1980s and late 1980s. It had succeeded in generating a debate across the subcontinent which had encapsulated the conflict between two opposing styles of development: one massively destructive of people and the environment in the quest for large scale industrialization and the other consisting of replicable small-scale decentralized, democratic, ecologically sustainable options and activities harmoniously integrated with both local communities and nature (23).

The Narmada basin covers 94,500 square kilometers between the Vindhya and Satpura ranges in central India. Between gorges flanked by densely forested basaltic hills, the 1,300-kilometer-long Narmada valley contains large alluvial plains in Madhya Pradesh. To the west the Narmada River, which is sacred to the Hindus, meanders through Gujarat, widening into a 25- kilometer-long as it flows into the Gulf of Cambay (22). More than twenty- one million people lived in the valley, mostly in villages. Many tribal groups, such as the Bhils and the Gonds, occupy the forested uplands. The Narmada valley was the site of one of the world’s largest multipurpose water projects: the Narmada River Development Project (8). According to Murali Krishna (2004), “Narmada Project costs Rs. 25,000 cores. Besides this the project was going to submerge 11,300 hectares of agricultural land. The project will submerge 60,000 hectares of fertile land and rich forests.”

According to an article published in India Today magazine in 1992, “there had been no detailed assessment of the overall environmental, social and technological effects of the Narmada project, but the construction of dams and reservoirs will displace an estimated one million people and will submerge 350,000 hectares of forestland and 200,000 hectares of agricultural land. The reservoir behind Narmada

Sagar Dam would become the largest manmade lake in India, submerging 91,348 hectares and displacing 120,000 people from 254 villages (Shiva, 1991).

The issues of land for the displaced, the rehabilitation policy at a national level and development planning without displacement had become national issues with Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) interventions, influencing policy making and mass movements. Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) had been effective in its multiple strategies at the executive, legislative and judicial level, campaigning against the destruction and displacement caused by large dams and for the rights of the affected people who were farmers, laborers and fishermen (23).

The movement had used the project as a symbol of Indian development planners' fascination with costly projects at the expense of the environment and the poor. The withdrawal of World Bank funding was a victory for the movement. Field surveys in July 1993 revealed considerable anti-project sentiment among the residents of the basin in Madhya Pradesh. According to Appa and Sridharan (1992) that, in Gujarat dissatisfaction exists among people whose homes and lands were expropriated without adequate compensation by the government (20).

The movement being led by Medha Patkar, and it had been turned into the International protest, gaining support from NGO'S all around the globe. Protestors agitated the issue through the mass media, hunger strikes, massive marches, rallies and the through the onscreen of several documentary films. The protestors had been protesting peacefully, but they been arrested and beaten up by the police several times. The strong protests throughout the country made impact on the local people and had also influenced the several famous celebrities like film star Aamir Khan, who had made open efforts to support Narmada Bachao Andolan (20). Their mode of campaign had generated support from film and art personalities and with its leading spokespersons Medha Patkar and Baba Amte, received the Right Livelihood Award in 1991 (21).

The protestors of the dam question the basic assumptions of the Narmada Valley Development Plan and believe that its planning was unjust, immoral and the cost benefit analysis was grossly inflated in favor of building the dams. It was well established that the plans rest on untrue and unfounded assumptions of hydrology and seismicity of the area and the construction was causing large scale abuse of human rights and displacement of many poor and underprivileged communities. They also believe that water and energy can be provided to the people of the Narmada Valley, Gujarat and other regions through alternative technologies and planning processes which can be socially just and economically and environmentally sustainable (22).

The Supreme Court's decision is still pending, seeking stoppage of construction of the Sardar Sarovar dam. The court initially ruled the decision in the Andolan's favor, thereby affecting an immediate stoppage of work at the dam and directing the concerned states to first complete the rehabilitation and replacement process. The Court deliberated on this issue further for several years but finally upheld the Tribunal Award and allowed the construction to proceed, subject to conditions. The court introduced a mechanism to monitor the progress of resettlement paripassu with the raising of the height of the dam through the Grievance Redresser Authorities (GRA) in each of the party states. The court's final line of the order states, "Every endeavor shall be made to see that the project was completed as expeditiously as possible" (21).

Result of Narmada Bachao (Andolan) movement:

The decade-long struggle in the Narmada valley had resulted in suspension of the work on the Sardar Sarovar dam project through the movement as well as the Supreme Court's intervention (23). According to Estava and Prakash (1992), By linking problems of environmental change and degradation of the valley with issues of economic equity and social justice, the movement forced the world bank to withdraw from the project (22). The Narmada Bachao Andolan had rendered a common man's service to the country by creating a high-level of awareness about the environmental,

rehabilitation and relief aspects of Sardar Sarovar and other projects on the Narmada (21). According to Murali Krishna (2004), “The controversy of Narmada Project is still (2003) going on”.

Conclusion:

The environment movements three decades ago were young at that time. The awareness to save the environment was yet to seep into the minds of people. These movements had provided the model for many other movements for protection of environment elsewhere in the country in later years. The Chipko movement to protect trees in the Garhwal Himalayas started around the same time as Silent Valley Movement. There had been other agitations since then to protect the Western Ghats, the Aravalis and other ecologically sensitive regions. The Appiko Movement was inspired by “the Chipko Movement” and took place in Karnataka. The Silent Valley movement was the first important environmental agitation in the country and had become a text book example of successful mass movements. In that sense the Silent Valley movement changed the terms of debate about development in an essential way.

Many laws and regulations which helped to protect the environment followed the movement. The Forest Conservation Act, which shifted forests from the state to the concurrent list, was a direct result of the environment movement. These movements had helped to plant the idea of the need to preserve the bond with nature deeply in the collective consciousness. Medha Patkar and Baba Amte, received the “Right Livelihood Award” in 1991, who has made open efforts to support Narmada Bachao Andolan.

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