Chapter 8

Summary and Conclusion:

Mining in Karnataka and elsewhere in general has been a subject of lot of controversy contention and even confusion. It has acquired political overtones and undertones. Many interventions by the governments and various committees appointed by Supreme Court to enquiry into large scale illegal mining particularly in the border district of Bellary in Karnataka and Ananthpur in Andra Pradesh have ended in fiasco.

But the mining industry has caused environmental degradation resulting in loss of green cover, erratic rains and depletion of natural resources like ground water, minerals and pollution of life supporting systems. The question that catches attention is how illegal mining has been thriving in spite of the government and environment activists groups. This chapter has revealed that one way or another almost every person depends upon and derive some benefits from the mining industry. For example landless agriculture laborers find some Job and get wages even if the wages are meager. Small and marginal farmers lease out their land and / or become middlemen, truck owners etc…

Small and marginal farmer serve partly as middlemen and partly was truck owners which are used to transport iron ore from place of extraction to place of sale. Farmers who are economically better of lease the part of their land it which mineral deposit are discovered and earn income from land and mine mafia. Persons who are politically strong use their power and position to silence, the opposition party by buying and partly by threatening by means of using muscle power. On the whole there seems to be some nexus across all groups in exploiting iron ore deposits and other natural resources.
The study reveals that some educated enlightened and environmentally sensitive persons protested time and again against the mining activities even in the face of formidable threats by vested-interests. The protest has been making an impact and it must be mentioned however that local protest movements, created an awareness of the adverse effects on mining activity.

Another conclusion that emerges in this study is the fact that mining produces lot of adverse effects traditional sources of life and livelihood of the people have been destroyed. Local people possess no skills to engage themselves in other productive activities. Some have become parasites and some migrate to cities and towns and some people have been forced to involve themselves in immoral and illegal activities including alcoholism, flesh trade and a host of unethical activities. The influx of people from outside often leads to maladjustment and even conflicts between local people and outsiders the social fabric of village society in jeopardy.

Theoretical-frameworks that have been enunciated provide framework for the analysis and interpretation of primary data. On the whole the study gives a detail of account of the background against which the present study has been contemplated. Environmental impact assessment studies have sufficiently recorded the possible adverse effect of development projects including mining and this has been well known and has often served as the basis for devising a wide-array of interventionist strategies to check the adverse effects. What has, however been not taken seriously is how people living in and around mining activities are affected particularly that population which has been dependent almost wholly on nature and natural resources.

The second chapter on “Evolution of mining industry” provides an account of the evolution of mining industry in Karnataka. Mining industry has evolved steadily in response to the increasing demand for iron ore and steel, in the context
of the country embarking upon a process of national reconstruction and development. Large scale industrialization with development of science and technology, further increase demand for mineral resources and steel. Mining activities are generally accompanied by environmental disturbances which has become a cause of serious concern.

Large scale illegal mining by vested-interests has been going on, even as the governments concerned failed to check effectively the illegal mining activities. Enforcement of rules and regulations has been causality. The subject of controversy today is not so much mining as the large-scale illegal mining in the country. A variety of protests by local people if not in well organized way often ended in-fiasco. An account of evolution of mining would help us to assess the ongoing mining activities objectively and critically.

The fourth chapter “socio-economic background of the sample population” reveals the hazardous conditions of the surrounding villages near by mining industry in Tumkur district. Analysis of this background in terms of a number of variables would help a critical analysis and interpretations of correlation between socio-economic and demographic variables. Attitude, perception and knowledge of the people of the effects of mining on the surroundings and the life and living standards of people in sample villages. The question that puzzles almost everyone is how do mining activities particularly illegal mining thrive when this activities adversely affects the life of the people. It is a fact that people cannot live without changing the environment in which they live but when environmental changes become negative people suffer and quality of life of people becomes very bad.

Mining activities seems to go on and people in the villages engage themselves in various activities which provide them bread. For example vast number of landless agricultural labourers has found mostly manual work which fetch them a bare subsistence wage. This is evident, for example forty nine (49)
percent of the sample population of five villages has changed and engaged in manual work. Why less proportion of sample population find jobs and services activities like teaching, sales, clerical jobs in mining industry and some are government jobs. This chapter also reveals that, the overwhelming of percentage of educated that means people know reading and writing with understanding even though people are educated they are unable to play affective role in checking illegal mining. So for as vast population concern majority of the sample are agriculturist and daily wage labourers, with no employment even the educated people are willing to work in mining has lend regular jobs and they get comparatively better if not high wages.

Economic income of the household is another variable examined in this chapter. Since majority of sample population is unorganized labour they suffer from lack of regular income, it has been found in this research that people find in mining at least immediately the sources of income even if the mining activities detrimental in the long run. The monthly average income of the people working in mining industry is less than Rs1500. And the people who have owned land and other sources of income, the average income of month is not more than Rs1000. Comparatively the income of the people of the sample villages, who are working in mining industry, is high than the farmers.

Caste composition is another social variable which has been examined in this chapter. Almost all castes groups are represented in the sample, but Brahmins are very less in the sample group. Majority of the sample belongs to Hindu religion, 294 households, 10 households of Muslims and 6 households belong to Jain religion.

Age is another variable considered carefully in this chapter. For, the manners in which people response to environmental disturbances to some extend depend upon the age of total population. Middle aged population is predominated in
compare to young and old people. Moreover equal ratio of work is been represented by male and female.

The chapter reveals that the sample population generally shows high awareness and has been active in protesting. It also shows that majority of people find mining in one way or another, has an important source of living in the absence of other sources of income. People have come to accept mining activities even if it leads to environmental destruction in long run. Impact of mining have been extensively investigated the net result being adverse consequences for environmental pollution and their living and working conditions.

In fifth chapter “impact of mining on environment, rural population and sources of livelihood” examines that mining activities have disturbed environment in the surrounding areas including sample villages in innumerable ways. Among other things it caused erosion of top soil, depletion of underground water resources. The lot of dust being deposited on plants and crops, the sample population perception of soil erosion shows 42.34 percent reporting top soil erosion, 38.33 percent reporting land becoming unfit for cultivation due to dumping of solid waste, 19.33 percent reporting standing crops are adversely affected since oil mixed dust disbursed in the air. Since mining activities are located in the forest it caused deforestation leading to irregular insufficient rain.

Sample population perception of water population shows that 61.67 percent reporting groundwater table going down, 22.67 percent reporting contamination of surface water due to mining, 15.66 percent reporting due to dumping of solid waste around mining areas existing tanks, rivulets, rives, open wells get filled up. Regarding to air pollution 31.25 percent reporting mining activities blasting of land produces lot of dust, 28.23 percent reporting mining activities disturb the beauty of nature, 21.87 percent reporting polluted air causes wide-range of respiratory disorders in people and 18.75 percent reporting polluted air carried more sulphur
oxide which cuts the nutrients which are necessary for nurturing of plants and this also causes dropping of the leaves.

The impact of mining industry has also accounted for noise pollution, 65 percent reporting polluted noise cause from used heavy machines, 20.67 percent reporting noise cause a sudden rise blood pressure, nervousness, fatigue, temporary or permanent hearing problems and 14.33 percent reporting due to blasting and operation of the wild animals and birds from the nearby forests. Intersection with the sample population doing the field work shows that high level of awareness of the negative impact of mining. 63.67 percent reporting increasing the natural calamities due to mining activities, ruthless destruction of plants and trees by the mining vested-interests leading to removal of valuable top soil and changes in the vegetation Chikkanayakanahalli mining belt.

Mining has impacted on animals particularly wild animals it is very serious, before mining the area was known for wild animals cheetah, fox, bear, wolf, deer, wild pigs and etc…. these animals are the verge of extension, due to lack of shelter and food they have started to flee towards the villages and towns. The conflict between men versus animals is becoming a serious threat. Large number of people particularly landless agricultural labourers, small and marginal farmers have deprived of their sources of livelihood. Widespread human rights abuses poisoning of environment deforestation and forest degradation are becoming very common.

Women are adversely affected by mining market driven economy eroded the traditional values which have sustained communities, caste tribes and clan. Women have been marginalized as their traditional roles as food gather water carriers, care-givers and nurturers they have pushed to enter into informal economy. Alcohol abuse, commercial sex, gambling have led to brutal violence against women. Large amount of dust emanating from mining resulted in the
spread serious health risks like high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, skin diseases, allergy are the common elements.

The six chapter “local environmental movements: episodes of protests” examines the environmental movements that have played an important role in checking environmental degradation. Lot of information is available on the dynamics of environmental movements at macro level- state region-national and international. Whereas local environmental movements have not received much attention of researcher and activists. Social mobilization of people in and around the mining areas have been going on for a long time unsuccessful though. Chipko movement and Appiko movement directly and indirectly provide an impetus to the rise of local environmental movements. The sample villages where the field work was conducted local population protested almost repeatedly. Majority of the people are small farmers, landless agricultural labourers they are attempt organized politically often random into serious problem, in the face of politically, economically powerful mining mafia.

Media’s especially print media often drafted local protest movement in mining in spot light. Farmers of such villages nearby the mining site, mine owners has given contract to middlemen, where middlemen started to harass the farmers. Local farmers protested in front of Abbige Malleshwara Swamy temple on the hill, because of mining famers and people faced many problems and difficulties. They went foot walks (Padayathra) to the hill to demand their rights.

Seventh chapter “Role of local self government and non-government organizations, NGO in environmental protection” described the role of village panchayat and non-government organizations in environmental protection are a subject matter of this chapter. Village panchayat are custodians of local common property resources they are expected to check they abuse and misuse of natural resources including iron ore deposits. Moreover this chapter shows a paradoxical
situations, majority of the members are portly hanging glow with the mine owners and portly stand to gain from the mining the working as middlemen, subcontractors, truck owners, labour leaders so on and so forth. Attempt was made to elicit to opinion of gram panchayat members the question was asked whether mining was discussed the subject in panchayat meeting. 51.67 percent of the sample reported negatively so distress at all, 48.32 percent the reported that the subject was discussed.

To another question whether there is unity among panchayat members in resolving mining issues. 56.67 percent of the reported lack of unity only 43.33 percent reported positively. Rerinding question whether mining owners use muscle power and hired goons to silence panchayat members, who may be against mining 49.33 percent reported positively and 50.67 percent reported negatively. The link between panchayat members and local officials is very crucial in protecting or penalizing people who were found misusing the natural resources. 66.67 percent of the reported that the local officials are not accessible or ever available. Mode of interactions of the panchayat members with local officers shows that 51.67 percent presented a memorandum only 20 percent reported they approach the official through the local leaders and 28.33 percent of the respondents bring the problem to official notice through oral presentation.

Data analysis shows response of local administration to local people. 57.67 percent reported the local administration is in different. They are several way by which people cope with environmental changes including mining, deprived of sources living and livelihood, people whether migrate to other place are find paid work and local situations. It has been found 22 percent reported migrate to other places, 78 percent reported not migrating. This shows majority of the villagers find jobs in mining even when they get major wages.
Given the health risks due to the exposure to the mining, an attempt was made to know local people ever demanded compensation to health risks. 91.67 percent reported they big demand compensation but 8.33 percent did not demanded compensation. Another follow out of mining is loss of crops, majority of the sample population being small farmers, marginal farmers and landless agricultural labourers. An attempt was made to elicit the open of local people regarding compensation for crops loss. 79.33 percent reported they demanded for compensation for crops loss but the mine owners turn beefier. 66.67 percent reported they suffer from distress due to mining but suffer silently, finding no alternatively together. One thing that emerges the discussion in the chapter is facts that panchayat members have responsibility to protect local resources themselves are regionally involved mining activities. Helplessly, small and marginal farmers have given out their land on lease and some of themselves who are clever turned to be truckers, middlemen and even henchmen of mining-lords. Landless agricultural labourers have not much to lose, anyway because they earn wages to live a subsistence life and youngsters have take to unethical illegal and anti-social activities because these activities suit their tastes and temperaments. It is hardly surprising that mining including illegal mining thrive on almost uninterruptedly. This is a sad commentary on the current government policies. Only time can provide answer to this illegal looting of national wealth by vested-interests.
SUGGESTIONS

Mining in Karnataka as elsewhere has been a subject of lot of contention and litigation. Illegal mining has been going on and due to pollution vested-interests and the common man is forced to bear the brunt of the ill effects of large scale misuse and abuse of iron ore. Particularly and other valuable natural resources in general.

This is a matter of common mans knowledge where do, we from here, what is the solution? What the way is out is a matter of serious concern for all people to the respect of mother land? Whatever has been done so far to contain this menace has often led to partial success much remains to be done? How to do this, this question disserves the answer, the modest the attempt has been made on the basis of examination already available literature and primary data collected a sample of 300 villagers to make some suggestions:

- There is a need to strengthen to existing the implementation to machinery. It is necessary to give protection to honest upright officers, the government officials who may dare to step decision to confirm the mining mafia.
- It is necessary to ensure that politicians are kept away from the ownership, control and use of natural resources. Nationalization of mining may be a solution.
- Local people participation in the management of local resources is very whiter preserving and protecting the natural resources.
- There is a need to sensitize the civil society and civil society organization regarding the adverse consequences of environmental destruction. Therefore there a need to reveal traditional norms, customs and values which gave lot of important to local resources, like people must learn to respect natural resources both letter and spirit, like worship in trees, water streams, rivers
and forest. Religion must be used an effective mode of communication to educate people regarding environment and nature.

- Protecting environmental resources and keeping environmental clean as a social value they get internalized through education and socialization from childhood till death.