

FILE NAME: Shree Digvijay (SDV)

DATE: 2008 Nov 27

DOC#: SDV038

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Email to Barry Castleman from Madhumita Dutta RE Digvijay Cement

Subject: digvijay cement

From: "Madhumita Dutta" <madhu.dutta@gmail.com>

Date: Thu, 27 Nov 2008 18:09:18 +0530

To: "Barry Castleman" <barry.castleman@gmail.com>

CC: <laurie@lkaz.demon.co.uk>, "Jagdish Patel" <jagdish.jb@gmail.com>, "Raghunath Manwar" <newohsal@yahoo.com>

barry

last week when I was in ah'd, Raghunath and I went behind Digvijay cement factory to meet some workers and inform them about the january meeting. As you know after closing down for a while, Digvijay started operating again, with about 300 permanent workers and 500 contract workers. chrysotile is coming from russia, canada and brazil. there is no change in the working conditions. the bags are cut open manually by workers, asbestos is handled manually and mixed with hands. no protection, nothing. basically nothing has changed since you wrote about the factory many years back. The whole place is full of asbestos products----broken asbestos sheets, pipes, houses with asbestos roofing, roofing material used as boundary walls, generally broken pieces every where. No change since I had last visited this place in 2000 and 2003.

We also found a case of worker who died of lung cancer. But who never got any compensation. we are trying to see if there is any legal recourse for his wife to claim compensation. we met Dr SK Dave with all his medical papers. he confirmed that this was a case of lung cancer due to asbestos exposure. We are now filing for claims. Raghunath is working on it. We have many more cases from Digvijay for asbestosis cases, but ESI is refusing to acknowledge them or call a medical board. The whole compensation system in this country sucks!

I was thinking, since the conference you are attending in January in Delhi is being co-hosted by ESI, whether you could somehow raise some of the critical issues related to ESI? There are many problems with ESI and we have examples of silicosis cases and asbestosis, where ESI refuses to admitt these cases for compensation. And generally with most of the compensation cases for occupational diseases, ESI's track record has been abysmal. Jagdish will be able to brief you on this incase you think you will able to raise these issues.

madhu