

FILE NAME: Shree Digvijay (SDV)

DATE: 1981 Apr 15

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DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: Letter to Rakesh Madan RE Writing Account of Visit to the Hindustan Perodo Plant

NEWSCIENTIST
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Rakesh Madan,
B-100 Greater Kailash I,
New Delhi 110048,
India.

15th April, 1981

Dear Rakesh Madan,

Barry Castleman has written to me suggesting that you could write us an account of your visit to the Hindustan Ferodo plant. I presume you know the background to the tale so far, but I enclose copies of New Scientist with Barry's original article and the subsequent correspondence, as well as a further letter we have received direct from the General Manager of the company.

I would like you to write a maximum of 1000 words (for which we can offer £80). I do not yet know what form the finished piece would take, so I suggest you write assuming that it will be a news story - i.e. as concisely as possible with as much eye-witness account as possible. Would you be willing to let us use your name over the piece?

We would appreciate the article as soon as possible since the sooner it appears, the more people will remember the original article and correspondence. I hope you can undertake the article for us and look forward to seeing it.

Yours sincerely,



Lawrence McGinty,
News Editor.

Enc.

SHREE DIGVIJAY CEMENT COMPANY LTD

897264-65-66-67

(ASBESTOS PRODUCTS DIVISION)

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CABLE 'JAMCIMENT' AHMEDABAD
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P. O. DIGVIJAYNAGAR
AHMEDABAD 382470
(INDIA)

REF.

April 06, 1981.

Michael Kenward, Esq.
The Editor,
New Scientist,
Commonwealth House,
1-19, New Oxford Street,
LONDON WC1A 1NG

Dear Sir,

We have been rather astonished to read Mr. Barry Castleman's article on our Unit Shree Digvijay Cement Factory (Asbestos Products Division) at Digvijaynagar, Ahmedabad in your issue of 26th February, 1981 under heading 'Double Standards Asbestos in India'. To the best of our knowledge, neither Mr. Barry Castleman nor any authorised representative of your journal visited our plant.

The allegations made in the report are far from truth. As an employer, we are conscious of industrial hygiene and we provide adequate working conditions to safeguard health of our community. The Company has provided in the factory expensive Dust Extraction equipments. Besides this, several other measures have been taken and are also in the process of implementation and we feel that the conditions described by you are rather imaginary.

Workers are periodically examined by Doctors and during 18 years of our operation, we have hardly found a case, as alarming and serious as magnified in your article, which can be attributed to the working conditions in our plant.

Local Government Factory Inspectors, Officials and Doctors periodically visit our plant to check whether we comply with the Indian Rules & Regulations or not. Therefore, such an article in a magazine like yours has not only estranged our feelings and that of the entire Indian Asbestos Industry, but have also challenged the authenticity norms, rules and regulations of State and Central Government of India.

You will please appreciate that improvement in any Industry is a continuous process, and we are quite alive and conscious of our responsibility in implementing innovations and improvements for the betterment of the workmen and community.

We are surprised that without taking the trouble to at least check with us the truth, such wild allegations could be made against us and a misleading article should find a place and patronage by a magazine like yours. We must say, you have been more than unfair to us, M/s. Johns Manville, U.S.A., our Collaborators and to the entire Asbestos Industry in general, and to India in particular.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,
for Shree Digvijay Cement Co. Ltd.

REGD. OFFICE : DIGVIJAYGRAM, VIA JAMNAGAR.

(S.R. BHANDARI)
GEN. MANAGER.

Same language
as HF/T+N
letter

new
improvements?

don't deny
that there has
been disease

wrapping the
industry in the
flag of India
indignation

pictures?

chutypah

L.
Any comment?
Rf.
Ack