**Interview Information**

Interviewer/s: Gajendran V. (GV)

Place of interview: Kattukupalli kuppam

Geo Coordinates: 13.330358 N, 80.334839 E

Date of interview: 18.04.2023

Transcription by: Raju K.

Audio

[230418\_Housing\_KattupalliKuppam\_Resettlement\_Site\_Int\_Aud\_1\_GV.m4a](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1b_Fc1oU-TUkNLbZrorE9xMbA5yn4J1LY/view?usp=sharing)

**Interviewee Information**

Name: Anonymised

Pseudonym: F

**Transcription Note:** The responder is using the term ‘Company’ to identify the Kattupalli port.

In this transcription and in this case, I wasn’t using gender neutral terms. I entered as stated by the responder as ‘He’ to address the corporations (L&T and Adani)

**Interview note:** The responder is a fisherman doing a private travel business portraying the struggles and cons of the resettlement, which explains the impacts of neo-liberal policy on the local community. Being part of local governance of the village panchayat.

**-00:00:00**

Q: Can you tell me about your old village?

F: Kattupalli Kuppam was in a forest, even if any neighboring villages were at a distance of 10 kms, we were wealthy. From our village we would only walk to Ennore, after catching fishes, we would carry the fishes to Ennore by walking. In the future, by the year 2000 - 2001 there were some sought of road infrastructure. The Panchayat head of that time helped us by laying roads, then fishers were able to go to Ennore and Athipattu Pudhunagar to trade their fishes. That was a good time for us. After Tsunami, our situation was too good.

Q: Were you all good after Tsunami?

F: Yes. Only after the tsunami, many institutes were only aware of the Kattupalli Kuppam village's existence at that place. It’s the only village, we have to go 10 km either side (north or south) to reach any other village neighboring us. Many agencies were providing boats, nets, and a lot of other things to support our life after the Tsunami. Many institutes like WC, Nesakkaram and many bodies helped us. They have even sponsored a tuition center for childrens.

It was all good then. In 2008, L&T came to our village and informed us that our village would be evicted. We resisted them saying,”we won’t accept this, we are fishermen, our fishing village is important for us”. Later the District collector came four times to our village. Then we also responded,”Our village is important to us. We are fishermen, we don’t know any other job, so we can’t move from here. We don't need any other jobs. We would stay here by doing our fishing work”. After 3 to 4 visits of the District Collector, there was more pressure stating to evict us. We got stuck as only a village and were only 150 families. It was the government that was forcing us. It was only TIDCO that was forcing us to evict us and acquire our land. L & T also tried to evict us only to some extent, it was the TIDCO that fully worked out this thing.

Government informed us that they would provide employment in EB, and other provisions to evict us; they canvased the people’s mind and changed people’s mind. They created more desire in people’s minds. So, people thought of the development and accepted the government's compensation. In July 2009, they negotiated with our village stating about the employment, houses and other things and finalized our eviction. The Collector signed all the concerning documents; our village was evicted after the collector passed the G.O.; it included the permanent employment, they have passed individual G.O. for employing 140 people (140 G.O.s), not just one collective G.O. for all 140 individuals. Everyone was given a ‘bonded document’ after passing the G.O. for employment. We were also registered with the employment office before evicting and employing us. They informed us that we would have permanent employment in 18 to 24 months after joining the job. We also thought it was fine as they gave the assurance for permanent employment and also we were thinking,”We can get our lives developed and how long would we live as fishers?”. People had more desire then and thought of living an elite life. These (current) houses were built by L&T; in the old place we had better houses built through a women's help group supported by ‘Sheelu madam’ from an organization. Those houses were excellent ones.

G: When were those houses built?

F: It was started in 2005 and completed in 2006.

G: Then you left those houses as it is and came here?

F: Yes. All those houses were demolished and the company was established.

G: So the house was demolished in just 4 years since it was raised? (3 years in fact)

F: It was demolished in 4 years. Then we were thinking that they would make us permanent in 2 years. i.e. We were evicted in 2009 and in 2012 we are asking for permanent employment. They respond, “we have not yet commenced the company, only civil (construction) work is happening. Give us two more years time”. Then another agreement was signed among us; company, Collector and people (fishers) in 2014 stating we (company) would get permanent employment.

-00:05:10

Again in December 2013, we are asking them again about the permanent jobs stating that your company has started functioning and asking them to comply with assurance. Then they are saying that, “our company is not running”, but we can clearly see that their company is running actively. We said that “your company is running, you have to comply with the assurance of permanent employment”.They said,”we can’t do that now, you have to wait”. Then we striked on December 22, 2013 in the objective of,”fasting till we die”. For one week we were fasting; one week we were sitting without any food. Whole group was able to manage for a 2 days of fasting strike; on the 3rd day we also managed, but on the fourth day people started fainting. Even then the government hasn’t not taken any steps. We were mobilizing with a proper approach by presenting our grievance, concerns to respective officials and departments. We approached the District Collector, DSP, SP and we were sitting in front of the L&T company, but there was no response. Then 4 to 5 people were admitted to hospital due to illness, at the same time a meeting was happening with the company leads. They(L&T) were asking us to represent some 5 people from the community and lead the meeting. On negotiations we started to discuss our demands with the company officials; later the government approached us only after people were admitted in the hospitals. Officials from RDO (Revenue Divisional Office) representing the Government informed us that,”we would coordinate with you (community)” and requested us to stop the strike and join the negotiations. Then we joined the negotiation meeting with RDO officials in 2014, company officials also joined the meeting.

We were requesting permanent jobs. L&T company responded that “we don’t have a source to provide the permanent jobs to the community (Kattupallikuppam); as of now, we are ready to raise their salary. We would provide the permanent job after training them for that job”. Till then, Adani wasn’t holding shares with this port. Then again we are signing another agreement for the next two years that states that ”employees would be trained in this tenure of agreement made and would be employed permanently”. Those words were followed by the company, they were providing training to all the 140 workers for the next 6 months and we were also hoping that we would have a better life. Company was providing training in all 3 shifts, i.e. one full day; 40 plus workers would be in one shift. By that time while we were waiting for them (the company) to make us permanent employees, time elapsed to the year 2017. By 2016, Adani is intervening to acquire the Kattupalli port. There were 50 people’ allotted employment in the Adani’s portion of the port; those workers were not consulted if they wanted to work in the L&T ship building yard or to be transferred to the Adani port. Only L&T has hired us all for employment, but they traded 50 workers with their consent.

In the same way, in 2017 we were stressing the government to provide us permanent jobs. We are not bothered about L&T or Adani; the government is the important stakeholder, because it was the TIDCO that acquired our land; eviction and rehabilitation was done by the District collector. We only engaged with them (TIDCO and Collector); we don’t know who the L&T and Adani were.

**-00:10:00**

We were asked to work in the company, we did that. We made a strike in 2017. While we were on the strike, again we made negotiations in the Collector office. Again the company was asking for more time to provide us permanent employment. We already have given enough time to them. Again they requested more time, we got convinced as they said “the company wasn’t running in the good phase”. So, we gave them more time again. They promised that “we would

definitely take you all (Kattupalli kuppam 140 fishers) as our permanent staff in the year 2020”. Again an agreement was made at that time, it became the 5th agreement. The Collector is also singing, RDO is also signing, the company GM (general manager) and we (Kattupalli Kuppam fishers) are also signing the documents. Only in the year 2018 officials representing the Adani portion of the port also signed our agreement; other than this agreement Adani (official’s representing Adani Kattupalli port) wasn’t signing other agreements signed prior to that. We weren’t sure of what was going to happen to us; In 2020 we were organizing many protests to claim to employ us permanently by the year's end. We made different protests, demonstrations, blocking roads, and we fought as much as we could. In 2021 we made a strike and we were all prisoned; all 140 were detained in that strike. People were made to struggle worse, people were just asking their rights, the government failed to protect people’s rights. Any government is protecting the corporate companies and supporting them. Government is abandoning its people. Corporates are providing promises and withholding those promises; at least the government has to fulfill its promises, the government has to pressurize the corporates to fulfill their assumptions. In the beginning, how did the government evict us? What did you (government) tell us? What ever he (corporates) might say? You are a government? What profit that company is going to provide the government by evicting the it’s (government’s) people? Government is functioning for his (companies) profit. People have gone through severe hard phases, they have come across different law issues and people's souls have been broken. We have to live this acceptance or else we have to die. Even some decided to die in front of the company gate by setting themselves on fire, then the police would come and stop us. If the company (L&T or Adani) comes to know that we are organizing for our demand, they would intimate the police and the police would come directly to our village entrance and stand there to stop us. They are making us not organize in any way for requesting permanent jobs. Then people are tired. Then he (port) brings a document stating,”you (workers) don’t have any connection with the company (port) and district collectorate”. That was the last agreement. Company would give us a salary and we have work. It also states,” this is your ultimate, not can’t be done more; you have to sign the document or else we (company) would stop you all from your employment”. Government is not stopping acting or taking necessary steps for this. Would people not be afraid of thinking,”we also lost our fishing (as work), what we would be doing if we also lost our company job?”

When the company was taking us to those kind situations people got very afraid. 20-25 people were ready to even protest after this situation; youngsters were ready. Other people were afraid of what we would do if everyone lost their job saying that,”you (youngsters) folks are youngsters, you can survive anywhere, what would we do if we lose our jobs?”. In this kind of situation even we (aspirants) also have to get contained. We (so aspirants) can’t protect 140 families, we can only protect our family. How can we protect 140 families from a republic nation? At a time people couldn’t do anything, people got tired. The institute helped us well.

Q: What institute?

F: Poovulagin Nanbargal (PN). They helped us well and they pitched many routes to tackle this. People are accepting those only to some extent and not completely. If it’s decided to act, that can be done completely. Can’t the government make it if it has decided to do it. But after their (PN) guidance, we approached Collectorate, Petitioned to the CM cell, Labour ministry and all of them had discussion with us. Even then nothing was fulfilled; from the other government offices, all the petitions are directed only to the collectorate office. The Collector is again blaming us.

**-00:15:11**

He (collector) is not inquiring about people's situation. We are not sure if the company is providing any money or other provision to the Collector. Only the Labour Ministry listens to what the Collector would direct. We have attended more than 20 meetings with the Collector. These meetings seemed like the Collector organized the meeting by listening to the Port managers. Port Management is blaming us by saying we: the public are not cooperating to accept the solution.

Q: What kind of drawbacks, they were saying?  
F: Company Management says,”They (workers) are not working efficiently; they are not educated, how can we employ these people. How can we employ uneducated people? We can’t employ them permanently”. Company is forcing the Collector with all these things and making us ‘Dummi’. It’s been 12 years, there are workers who know nothing about the ‘posts’, now he has knowledge of how to ‘bend the posts’ (technical works in the port). Can’t a person learn how to work in 12 years? A person can easily learn a work in a year even if he is not literate and surely get the knowledge of the work. Welder, fitter just doesn’t know about literature(reading and writing) but they would learn the knowledge of the in 1 year. There are many more works that don't require reading and writing.

What is the work of the educated person, they have to enter the details of the worker and kind of work in the computer, they just deal with the computer. That’s their only work. What about the not educated folks; they would do welding, fitting, pulling rope and other kinds of hard skilled jobs, they would all do that. He (workers) is capable of employing 20 workers in just 10 years. The management would change the work of the employees every 4 months; they (employer) would keep on changing the employees’ training to a specific work. They (company) did not try to let anyone learn one particular work in the course of the training.

Q: In all these years before; while signing the agreement, they have only mentioned ‘ready to provide permanent jobs’. Then they would have known all these things like, you (employees) are not skilled.

F: They would have known all these things. We are raising the same issue? When you (company) told that,”we would permanently employ all the 140 people”. Don’t you have any knowledge then? (raising question towards the company). You should have said all these words when you evicted us?. If you decide that,”I can only employ people based on their eligibility”, then only 10% of youngsters would have been educated. At the maximum only 20 youngsters would have completed Diploma course, Mechanical (engineering) and any degree courses. All others would have been educated only below standard 8 or else to standard 10. Most of us at the maximum would have only completed 8th, 9th or 10th standard. At that the education was accessible only till 8th, 9th and 10th standards. That’s it we could get literate. If anyone thinks of studying colleges from fishers’ community in that situation, it is hard. If we were living in Ennore, we could go to college. At the time of completing the 10th standard, they (students) would be 15 years old. We would be going to the sea (for fishing) by the age of 12, that is our (fishers) life.

Q: Would you start fishing in the sea by the age 12?

F: We would start fishing even by the age of 8, that is our only job. If my father has no companion for fishing, he would be alone, he would ask me to join stating.”I alone, you join me”. Everyone would start fishing like that from their childhood. We would learn swimming by the age 8 or 9. By the age 7, I learned to swim by taking Kattumaram with me.

Q: Where would you learn to swim?

F: Yes, we would learn to swim only in the sea. Even then there is no history of children dyeing because of drowning.Because of that we are not afraid of the sea. Even then they (company) are hiring us more and they are also hurting us even now.

Q: What they (company) has done?

R: A person from our community is working, he has not done any mischievous things.They are accusing him stating that,”you have done mischievous things” and asking him to terminate his work. If he might have spoken anything against the company, he would have spoken against the company while or before signing the agreement. They (company) have all noted his resistance at that time, and terminating him after the agreement was signed. We could do nothing about this. Government is also supporting them (company). The government is not for the people (employees). We could organize any protest since then.

-00:20:00

If the government is strong, we could protest and win the company. But while we are protesting, you (government) are deploying the police fully in the protest site. They ((government) are not even providing us the right to protest. If we just plan for any protest, 100s of police officials are coming directly to our village and deployed there; even Commissioner level higher police officials are coming here. They are a local company, we are the land provider for them (company). If we are protesting, you (government) should let us protest (or organize). It’s good to have companies and industries, but because of that company, the impacted people should have any demand? You (company) have to fulfill their demand. The company was established only because of us, you (company) should do what needs to be done for people responsible to establish the company. You (company) have evicted only one village; if you have evicted 100 or 150 villages, you can’t do anything (in terms of employment) and that can be accepted. But you have only evicted one village and not doing the things needed to be done for the village, what kind of impossibilities is that? It’s too bad.

Q: You told about the Poovulagin Nanbargal, how do you know about them? What help did they do to you (community)?

F: Saravanaa, at the initial time introduced them. We/I would know the characteristics of the people when we/I interact with them. We have known Saravanan for a long time and only after we were resettled here.

Q: Not Saravanan, you told about Poovulagin Nanbargal? Sundar Rajan?

F: Are you talking about the advocate? The advocate would have some beard. His name .. … …. I only know Saravanan at first. Through Saravanan, we/I came to know their team one by one.

Q: You told me about the land, some Poramboke land is allotted to resettle you. What kind of Poramboke is that?

F: Thoppu Poramboke (garden Proamboke).

Q: Whom does the land belong to?

F: Even if it belongs to someone, It’s completely a government property.

Q: Does it belong to Panchayat or does it belong to District administration?

F: This land only comes under Panchayat Administration; categorized as Thoppu Porambokke (Garden Poramboke).

Q: What was present here before (the housing)?

F: It was Kaadu like that (Kaadu is Tamil name for the forest, referencing jungle or abandoned lands with shrubs, not just the forest land under the constitution; he was saying by pointing to the dense shrubs and trees at the back side of the village). All that (trees/shrubs) were removed and made it to the village.

Q: Who did that?

F: It’s the company. All the houses were built by them, only the houses that were built that side (new sheet houses) were not constructed by them. Our people who have arrived newly have built the houses on their own and settled there.

Q: Don’t the allotments?

F: No, they don’t have allotments.

Q: Then only 140 houses were allotted here?

F: No, only 110 houses were built then. Even in those houses, 11 houses were built in the first floors, in total only 99 houses were constructed.

Q: Are the 2 floors (ground floor and first floor) 2 families?

F: It’s for a father and son’s family (extended family).

Q: In the same family, if the family is extended with their son’s family. They were allotted 2 floor houses. Is that right?

F: Yes they have one house on the ground floor and another house on the first floor.

Q: Then in total only 99 houses were built?

F: 99 houses means, 99 houses in the ground floor and in that 11 houses were in the first floor. In total it was 110 houses.

Q: What is the spread of the houses?

F: It’s 20\*18 sq ft.

Q: That means the houses are 360 sq ft.?

F: Yes.

Q: Are you paying any monthly charges for these houses?

F: No, we don’t. Even our own house (in old Kattupalli Kuppam) was larger than this. But at that place, we had only some 80+ houses, here we have 110 houses. In 2005, when there were some unmarried persons, the agency (missionary or NGO helped with housing post Tsunami) only built 85 houses. After that when we were resettled here, 110 houses were built as people got married by the time we were resettled.

**-00:25:13**

Q: So, only allotment documents were given only to 110 houses?

F: Yes.

Q: What kind of allotment is that?

F: These houses were built in just 2 months. Only in 2 months, all the houses took only 2 months to build. In the starting after moving to these houses, rain water would be leaking from the ceilings. Then people spent money from their pocket to repair their own allotted houses. People have just patched up the houses in many places. These houses are not worthy enough. If the government builds houses for slums, if we just rub the wall, the cements would fall. Our houses were in the same stage, not enough water was used to make the roof strong. If someone is building their own house, at least for one month we would let the water stand over the roof to make it stronger. But no such procedure was followed. They came, started to build, coated with cement, completed and left. It was completed in just two months. How a house can be built in two months. As per procedure, if a roof house is built, it should be watered for at least 18 days. Then how can a house be built in just 2 months?. All the houses were built, painted and given into our hands. If the houses were painted before enough water was absorbed, it's a waste. If the houses were left without painting it, then naturally the unpainted walls would have absorbed water and become stronger. As the walls were painted water didn’t get into the walls/roofs. So, while we rub it cement would come in our hand. We were all cheated and they left. People can’t protest. How we people can protest against one legend. Only if the government provides some support and encourages people, can they protest against them (company). How can people do that if the government itself is pushing down the people?

People don't think anything even if you (government) don’t support them. But, it’s the government that is stopping the people’s protests. It’s fine if it's a fight between the company and people. But people are being stopped. We are not inviting any other people; it’s only our village people who are protesting, but you (government) is not letting us. Our livelihood is withheld by the company, so we are requesting them. What is the matter for the government to intervene in this. Government should help people or it should just watch what is happening. They (government) have given in total 5 documents (agreements), they are passing Government Orders (G.O.s) for those documents; all the 5 times the District Collector is signing the agreements. People have all these 5 documents that were signed by the government officials, So you (government) can’t support all these and get us the permanent job. If you can’t do that, you atleast have to just let the people protest and watch. They (government) should have left us, it’s company vs people. We would struggle on our own. You aren’t letting us do that. You are calling for negotiation, but in the negotiation meeting you are making null and doing nothing in the name of negotiation and hurting people. If we go to a meeting, they (government) would say, “come next week”. But this time the meetings were happening for at least two years. At the minimum, people would go to the Collectorate office 100 times. From here Thiruvallur (town) is 70 kms. If we catch a taxi from here, we have to pay 5000 rupees for the trip. Just calculate 5000 (into) 100 or 120 times. How much would it cost? People who are going have their food expenses, visiting expenses and all that have to be calculated. How much expense would it take? In general, one time (per trip) expenditure would go up to 12,000 or 13,000 rupees. For just these, people have to spend 12 lakh rupees. Just for the petitions, agreements. Even sometimes 80-90 people have gone to the Collectorate. What would be expenses at that time? All these made people think that,”how can we make such huge expenses” and people’s hearts were broken. They (state) would call the people who all were striking to some other places for negotiations, in there we have to produce some letter to the officials. The Police are fully supporting the company.

I would say even now, to the 95% that the Police are not for the people. If we (people) do anything wrong they (Police) directly take us to the Police station to detain us. If we (two individuals) get into a fight, the Police would take me directly to the Police station. He (company) is doing wrong, why are you (Police) not calling him. Why can't the government do that? Government can tell,“you (company) are doing wrong, you have to correct it”. In such a way, only if the government makes him scared, the company managers would fear the government. What fear does the company people (corporates) have?

**-00:30:00**

Because yearly he(company) would give some 20 crore or 30 crore or 50 cores per year as a CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) fund to the government. Government is getting benefits out of it, they (the government) are not benefited by the people.

Q: You think that, as the company is giving the CSR funds to the government; government is silent on them (company)?

F: Yes. Even during the Corona time (lock down) L&T is providing 200 crores to the Government. Then what is happening? Government is thinking,”what is going to happen because of people? They (people) are only going to cast one vote and their story is over (with the government). Only he (company) is providing 200 -300 crores per year. With that, the government is getting satisfied. Government is also just driving the people’s time. “What impact have people gone through? What losses are the people facing? What are they doing?”, if the government thinks about all these, they would not take such decisions.

Q: Are only the people who were given house allotments, reside here or else any others like reside in the rented houses?

F: No one is residing in the rented houses, but one thing with fisher's community is that fishers would migrate and reside in other other villages too. Likewise some people have come here and settled here and people might also have migrated from here and settled in other villages too. Around 40 such families are residing here.

Q: Are all of them from Fisher's family?

F: Yes, all of them are fishers. Only one SC (scheduled caste; Dalits) family is residing here. He was residing with us from the old village. During resettlement, he moved to this village from the old Kattupalli Kuppam village. He (the family) was originally from Kattupalli village next to the bridge (Kattupalli is another village and Kattupalli kuppam is fishers village). Since then he (the family) has been united with us and he also complies with our village system. So, we have no issues with him. Now he is working from here. Other than him all are from fishers community.

Q: What is the difference between houses in the old village and houses that are built here?

F: There is nothing much difference. But I don’t like this village (current Kattupalli kuppam) to 80%, compared to our old village.

Q: Why are you saying this?

F: That village had natural geography; the shore is just walkable distance (Kalloram: Shore). At nights we used to sleep on the beach sand. Like that we had plenty of celebrations in that village. Compared to the old village, 80% this is not our village; The friendship we had at the time, the jolly living was there in the old village. This is not even a village.

Q: Can you explain more about that?

F: During my childhood, I did get education, I only completed standard 5 in Kattupalli village. We used to play well; Kattupalli Kuppam is well known for good Cricket and good kabaddi playing. In the Ponneri taluk, if other teams from Pazhaverkaadu (pulicat) come to know that Kattupalli Kuppam is playing that game they would have the scary sense of getting defeated. We are fishers, we go to sea and come back; our profession is hard skilled oneWe would go fishing in the early morning by 3 am into the sea and we would be back by 7:30 in the morning. Once we are back, men would not have any other work to do. Only women would take the fishes and trade it to the market, at that time men would not have any other business. They (women) also face hardship and we (men) also face hardships. When we (men) come back after fishing, women have to go to Ennore by walking to sell the fishes. They have to face more hardships. Then time changed, when motor vehicles started coming, they (women) started to commute with vehicles. At that time (past) we were mad at cricket and Kabaddi games/sports. Morning and evening, that's our only work. If we are playing cricket in the morning, evening we would play kabaddi. There were 2 fields to play Kabaddi and 2 cricket fields. If we play one sport in the morning, then we play another in the evening. Only after 6 or 7 PM in the evening we would get free. We would not even sleep in the evening and we would go to the shore and play ‘run and catch’ games, many small games like ‘eyes spy’ in the white sand shore. It’s hard to revive those lost times again now.

**-00:35:02**

Q: Are those games not played here by the children?

F: No, those can’t be played at this time. The time has changed, those times would not come back. At that time, we men and women played together. In this village there are no places for the women and men to play together. From our village, the shore is just 300 meters, both sides of the village are empty land. Backside also we have land, we would play on any sides of the village, we would also play inside the village. Those cultures are completely lost. It’s hard to make that possible in the current time. If you go to any side of the village, the owners are saying,”it’s our land, don’t come inside”. Where we would go to the ground and play. But in the old village we are king (Raja) of the shore. In the 300 m between the village and the shore, we would play anywhere. Even, we had a concrete floor in between to play. One side we have a cricket ground, on the other side of the village we have a kabaddi ground. Backside of the village, it would be full of grass and insects (pullu poochi). While coming back from the sea after fishing (vala adichitu), we would get down on the shore and would start playing instantly after giving the ‘Pari’ (palm leaf basket) to our father; they would take the fish and go. We would play till 10 am in the morning without even having our breakfast; without even brushing.

Q: Are you able to access the sea for fishing?

F: We only laid the road to access our boats on the shore for fishing. Even now there are 60-70 boats on the shore from our village. Some are going fishing; many are going to work in the port, so they would also do fishing when they find time. But the kind of fishing that was done in our old village can’t be done at present and we (fishers) don’t have any fitness that we had earlier.

Q: Why do you say that fitness is lesser?

F: We have to be in company at exactly 8:05 AM. We can only come outside the company at 5:45 PM. Then what would happen to us? We don't find a good time to go fishing. If we are back to shore after fishing by 7 or 7:30 am in the morning, we can’t get time to get ready and appear in the company by 8:05 am. The shore is 3 km away from here. We have to take the bike and come home to get a bath, get ready and go to the company by 8:05 Am. If it even took 8:10 am in the morning to reach the company, they would chase us out of the company. So, it’s hard for us to make things (fishing) happen. Some fishermen who work in shifts would do fishing sometimes.

Q: What kind of work is done in the company?

F: II am not sure about it.

Q: In general what kind of job is done?

F: Some would have to lift the iron rods, some have to tie the ship ropes or some mechanical jobs. The work is based on the interest of the company. The company would force them to do the specific job. Even if a person is a diploma graduate or degree holder, he has to lift the iron rod if the company says. Even individuals who have completed 2 degrees are lifting the iron rods now. They (company) are not growing those workers' skills; they are not letting the R&R workers learn skills and grow.

Q: What is R&R?

F: people who are employed after resettlement.

Q: Rehabilitation and Resettlement?

F: yes. The name (R&R workers) was given by them. Even if the employee is educated with Diploma, Mechanical or or qualification, workers have to do whatever work that company allots. There is no employment based on the education we had. If a person is educated and they (company) has to employ them based on the education, I am educated only till 5th standard, I have to listen to the company; if they let to lift any load, I have to do that, as I was not educated and I would not the knowledge required for some jobs. It’s not fair to make the educated individual do the same work as the others do. Here, the management is like ‘Hitler Rule’. What Hitler did to the people in the past, the company (L&T) is doing the same to people here. There is no difference.

**-00:40:02**

Q: What are the good features and cons of these houses that were built here?

F: Good feature means? I don’t understand.

Q: Can you compare it with old houses in the old village?  
F: 95% it lacks the facilities that we had in the old houses that were built in our old villages.

Q: Why do you say that? What’s the factor behind it?

F: If we hit these houses with a Hitachi (a demolishing machinery), this house would completely fall off in single hit. In the old village, it took one whole day for the Hitachi (machine) to demolish a house. Those houses were that good.

Q: This means the stability of the current hoses are lesser.

F: The stability is lesser, ‘the slabs’, steps and all those things were set up (ready made ones) during construction and those were not built. Nothing was done properly, every roof and slabs were ordered and installed with the houses.

Q: Are these assembled houses?

F: Yes.

Q: What are you doing?

F: I am a businessman.

Q: What kind of business?

F: I run a travel business.

Q: Do you have a drinking water facility here?

F: We have installed R.O. plant.

Q: Was it installed by the Panchayat?

F: It was installed by some company’s CSR (corporate Social Responsibility) funds. They helped to buy an R.O. machine which was installed in the building; it was not done as separate work, it was installed with an already available facility. Our Panchayat has installed the water taps to every household connected to water tanks. Every house owns borewell motors to draw water. All the 110 houses have their own motor, here we get natural water from it. There is no issues with water.

Q: Does the Panchayat water come from the borewell?

F: Yes, the water is drawn from two bore wells, one is inside the village and the other one is outside the village. We use it alternatively, if one motor gets repaired we would use the other one. We have control over it under Panchayat.

Q: How can this village be made into a good place to live?

F: They would not do anything to this village. It's our fate that we have to live like this and die like this. But we (panchayat) as a Panchayat are doing what is required for the Panchayat. Government would not do anything to us; there are no chances that the government would do good things to us. Governments don’t find time to do welfare for the people, they have their own business to do. They would not hear grievances of the people and support them. We were remanded for going on strike asking for a good road to access our village. If the company (L&T) gives a complaint, the police would only accept their complaint not ours. The road was laid for the public, but the company is using that road and if we request the company to lay the road, they are not laying the road. We protested saying that, as the company vehicles are using these roads, it’s getting ruptured and we striked the company vehicle saying,”company vehicles can’t use these roads, our roads are getting impacted. You (company) can use the road after replaying the road”. At that time we were letting the public vehicles cross our strike, we were arrested for our demand to the company to lay the road or stop the company's heavy load vehicles to use the road. Company has made a complaint to police against us stating ‘we are paying taxes for the vehicles to the government, people are stopping the vehicles, we are facing some crores of rupees’. We are striving for a good road. Police should inspect the cause for the strike and speak to the government about the issue and request the government to lay the road or request the company to lay the road. Without doing all these, what would happen to us if they directly file an FIR. Company is pushing police officials to file FIR and they are also filing. Then people started to have more fear in their struggle against the company. The prisoned people could also become ‘rowdy’, they would lose the fear if the were sent to jail for more than 2 times.

**-00:45:20**

Only some people would bow to the action taken, some would get more resistance; what if he became rowdy later? If 30 people are protesting and if 20 people become ‘rowdy’, what would the government do? They are taking us in such a hard situation.

Q: What other struggles have you gone through?

GV: For roads and for our employment. Other than that I don’t remember any other struggles.

Q: Do you think there are environmental impacts because of this port?

F: Yes, definitely. What is the use of this port for us? Who benefited? If it has some benefits to the people and paying taxes to the government is fine. But actually it has no benefits in general. Before the port was established, people were just cooking and eating their own food. Even after the port was established, people are doing the same; they are cooking and eating their own food. Before the port, a family could be run just by 8,000 or just 5,000. But at present, a family needs at least 20,000 to live. Even before that, 3000 rs per month is enough for a family to buy one sack of rice, a rice sack would be just 200 or 300. One person’s earnings are enough for a family. But at the current situation, it’s not enough even to earn 10,000 rupees each. There are more expenses for the income we get. So, we can’t say that,’because of the company, our livelihood has grown’. No benefits have been received from them (government and company). We just moved out from our place. The company is not running effectivelyThat is why they are giving the company to others (Adani). Why should they (L&T) sell it to Adani after bringing the project (port) with thousands of crores. They have sold the part of the port to Adani (business) for 1500 crore rupees. They (L&T) should have utilized the company efficiently. They (company) have to fulfill the promises made, if they have fulfilled we would be a nicer place than this. There are people, temples; while they were evicting there was a big temple in our old village; the temple has been demolished. Like this (showing the opposite temple) there were 3 big temples in our old village. They have demolished all the temples and they even built a temple here; I can’t they haven’t not built the temple. But our (people) sins would possess the company.

Q: What temple is this?

F: It’s an Amman (goddesses) temple.

Q: What’s the name of the temple?

F: Chinnamman.

Q: What are the other two temples?

F: There is another temple: ‘Perumal temple’.

**-00:48:47**

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