**REIMAGINING THE GOOD CITY FROM ENNORE CREEK**

Interview Transcription

**Interview Information**

Interviewer/s: Karen Coelho and Gajendran V

Place of interview: Seppakkam

Date of interview: 12 May 2023

Transcription by: HS

**Interviewee Information**

Name:

Pseudonym: Respondent

GV: So this is for a research purpose .We are doing on How a Good city will be and people if Government introduces development project but many times the people's concept of inclusiveness is always questionable.So what we thought is how people perceive about development projects and Good city.So that when we inculcate that when we propose plans which are inclusive in nature it will be people's plan .So next is What is Good city? In what aspect do people think about Good city? How was the city before?How is it now?Is it changed.Like any differences before and now.How is it going to be in Future?How do people think it should be in the future ? So that's it.What's your name?

Respondent:Nagamma

GV: Your name brother?

Respondent:Sai Prasana

GV: Please have your seat.How many house are there

Respondent:Now it is 78.

GV: In this village?

Respondent:Before here it was around 150 to 160 houses there.It was many houses before.Who are you ?

GV: I'm a college professor.

Respondent:Which college?

GV: Madras Institute of Development Studies.you won't know that.

Respondent: Research means what sort of research you're doing here.What duty they have allotted for you?

GV: Not duty

Respondent:What they told to Gather ?

GV:They weren't told to gather ; We're gathering .

Respondent:No you're coming from an Institute right what aspect you're coming here?

GV: So people here think of plans introduced by the Government whether it's good or bad.So we document that and filter the positive aspects from that.

Respondent:So it was 180 individual houses before.Around 200 houses.All of them was own house now the total package is out of site.Only 88 people houses only.

GV: Why did they leave? What's the reason behind that?

Respondent:Before that it was agricultural land.When the construction company and the Ash starts leaking in water it turns alkaline ,so the land gets spoiled.We recorded everything in Camera.Is it camera?

GV: No it's a voice recorder.

Respondent:Like this the Ash comes outside to mix with water and affects the whole environment and we build houses by hard work and days of toil.If this fly ash affects your property will you accept this ?Say madam.So that's why people went.

GV: When will this be built?

Respondent:Around 30 years.

GV: They constructed the wall?

Respondent:No they built the sand

GV: So like a pond they are enclosed with sand.They've been dumping like this for 30 years.

Respondent: Yes .For 30 years the Ash is arising like this.The temperature is much higher than the sea water.When we dig for some distance we're getting salt water.We don't get good water.If we want to get the solution for the local people what's the way?We want to drink the salt water.Many people came here

GV: What changed after that?

Respondent:Nothing got changed.There are many drawbacks here.

GV: Have anything they have undergone like should not deposit the fly ash here.

Respondent:No nothing changed.They sell the fly ash.Stop about all that.So they allowed the house to spoil like that.So they house is spoiling like this man holes are forming,what if it suddenly got broken.Take the photos how the floor is deforming.Cracks are happening like this .So who's responsible for something that happened like this?As we built the house with 2.5 lakhs and who's responsible for this..People who earn can earn whether it's a politician or a rowdy that's unnecessary.Provide a solution for the house which is to be lived.Did you got my point.What if these things are like this.We don't know when it'll fall off.What if the sand from sea shore are extracted?Go inside and switch on the light and see.It will become like this.If it's rainy season, it will become wet and water will come inside.

06:22

GV: Has this situation prolonged for many years?

Respondent:Yes it prolonged for many years.We have constructed the house just now and it's a new house.It is just 5 years old

GV: 5 years old?

Respondent:Yes, five years old became like this.Yearly we do white wash.I've been there in this town for 20 years.It is just 2 years we built the house but the situation is like the house was built 8 years ago and something.

GV: Have you been here since childhood?

Respondent:I've been here around 22-23 years ago.I've been born and brought up here.

GV: How is the village when you're a kid?

Respondent:The bund is there since our childhood.Before agriculture was happening there.Shall I something.If I bath in the water in the village for 20 years the hair will turn something blant red.What can be done?You say?This is my Mother-in-law's place .I came here for 5 days after marriage for Maruveedu.I stayed here for five days and the results are getting reddish hair and whitening of hair.What can be done?My daughter is getting red hair.Shall I bring and show her now.What is my question is you're doing public service is that provide a good solution for that.Whoever comes they ask and go but everything went in vain.Everyone came many like MP Kanimozhi.There is a vehicle right if that goes the building will shake we fear when it will fall off.

GV: What business do you people are doing?

Respondent: Everyone is a daily coolie here.Some are in jobs in other companies.

GV: Does anyone in the company have a contract?

Respondent: Yes everyone in contract?

GV: Is that a daily wage job?

Respondent:Yes it is.If we go there's a chance of getting income.

GV: So it's a daily wage in the company?

Respondent: Yes the salary is paid by the employer who takes the contract not directly by the company.For example if I go for Railway,he goes for foundries and he goes for chettinad if we all go to job we'll get income.If we don't go there's no income even though it's a government contract.If the company is holiday for four days there's no income at all.As they took the agricultural land from us they didn't pay the right compensation as well as the employment opportunities.Yes it is they didn't pay us the money .

GV: From whom they took the land?

Respondent:From all of us.

GV: As they took so they didn't pay back?

Respondent:No they didn't provide compensation and they said employment at least in every household but they didn't provide both.

GV:To whom did they sign the agreement ?

Respondent:They signed with the Electricity Board people as they took land through them.

GV: In this Village who had signed the agreement.

Respondent:The land owners did .In my family my father and his brother signed.

GV: Did your father have the document?

Respondent:Yes he had.He filed a case .

GV: When he filed a case.

Respondent:They filed a case when they took the land and someone told that case got succeeded but the compensation didn't receive.

Timing 10:50

GV: Do you know which advocate handled the case?

Respondent:No I don't know.

GV: Do you have the judgement?

Respondent:Yes my father has.But it's still there.

GV: Shall I be able to talk to the elderly?

Respondent:No he went outside.He might have gone for grazing goats.

GV: Who are the contractors here? The persons who took labour contracts.

Respondent:They usually took outside .

GV: Not from here?

Respondent:Here only one person took the contract.If they want to employ people they can but they won't.The Chairman of the village,Ward members no one is doing rightful.They tend to be generating income for them.No relatives is at help.Only the Government can take a stand to do such things.That is how you two people reach the government and explain the happenings here.Do the report process properly .See we can't sleep peacefully in night as we fear when this will fall off.All the children were unemployed.

GV: You didn't get a job for ten days?

12:25

Respondent: The job is really hard as we employed in coal.In Chettinad company this is the work

GV: What sort of work is either loading or unloading work?

Respondent:There will be a conveyor moving so we need to load that on the conveyor.There are no safety measures like a mouth pad for workers working there.

GV: Does the company provide any sort of safety measures like mask and some other

things.

Respondent:No they just want the work to be done.Everything is our own property.For example our shoes,helmet ,googles,hand glove and mask.Even the security allows if you have all these if you don't have he won't.If we go for work we'll get Rs.400 per day.They provide mask and what they will say is to use the mask for a week or for a month.How can anyone use a mask for a week or a month.If we use the mask for few hours it will become ash spread across.We don't know how much ash does our body contains.

GV: If rain comes, does the Ash come outside?

Respondent:No it doesn't come.

GV: What's this?

Respondent:This is also ash .If rain comes it becomes full and water logging happens here.They made it just now.Water logging happens still.

GV: Is this before agricultural land before 30 years?

Respondent:Yes.

GV: Do you have water facilities here?

Respondent:They have made RO plant.Just now they have built so water flowed just now as they took water from some nearby villages.

GV: When did they establish this?

Respondent:Around 3 years ago.

GV: From Ro plant you need to fetch water from there?

Respondent:Yes for drinking water we need to.For domestic use we have a tap inside our houses.From nearby villages around 10 kilometres away there's a borewell where they open water for us to reach the tap. It is for domestic use like bathing and some purposes.

GV: Is the tap water in your house good for use?

Respondent:No it's good.If it's from our place it will be salty just because it's from smoothee area it will be fine

15:30

GV: Are the electricity services fine?

Respondent:No, that's not at all an issue.

GV: Is seppakkam a word?

Respondent:Yes this is a ward

GV: So here 78 families are here.Is there a councillor?

Respondent:In our panchayat a councillor is for 8 wards.

GV: Do you know what all the places are?

Respondent:Sepakkam,Kattukulli,Kattukulli Kuppam,Kaalanji,Ora Kuppam,Sattankuppam,Two areas in Kattur.Sethuraman is the leader.

GV: There are no ward members?

Respondent: this village is a ward.

GV:Is there a ward member?

Respondent:Yes he's there.He might have gone outside.

GV: Is he doing everything like establishing an RO plant?

Respondent:Yes he has done all these things .

GV: What about school facilities for kids?

Respondent:There is no school facility and hospital facilities for us.For us hospital we need to travel 5 kilometres.There is no bus facility only depending on the bike we have.

GV: For Hospital and school it's Minjur?

Respondent:Yes in Minjur and in Athipattu.

GV: Is that 5 kilometres from here?

Respondent:Yes Minjur is 5 kilometres and Athipattu is from here.

GV: As you have lived since childhood, what are all the changes that have happened here.About Seppakkam .It will be different .It was good in childhood and after 20-25 years how did it change ?

Respondent:It is both positive and negative.At First we suffer for water there won't be tap inside our houses.They established this around 6 months ago.For drinking water we bought water for 30 rupees but now we use RO.Most of us drink this water.

GV: So for each house a tap.

Respondent:Yes for a street a tap and for each house there will be a tap.

GV: Other than Water facilities what's other positives?

Respondent:That's all none other than that.There is no transport facilities and like other one such as schools , hospitals and other facilities.No employment opportunities we came for employment but there's no such opportunities.We expect more on employment just because we have employment we have source of income of it's not there what can be done?

GV: What are all the negatives?

Respondent:The ash came right.Pollution arises and due to that many hazardous symptoms such as scars , skin itching,Hair fall and many other happenings are there.You saw that ash took from here they spread behind that road if not it keeps on circulating and causes huge pollution.You can't sit .You would have become entirely Ash deposited.

GV: Why doesn't it circulate ? Just because of the water around it.

Respondent:Yes not many vehicles are transporting the Ash only few are running so there's a less pollution happening here.Sometimes many vehicles might running so huge dust will pollute.The village might be spread with ash only

GV: Now they're depositing cash in vehicles and previously they deposited through pipelines right?

Respondent:No, the Ash will come out of the pipeline and they used to sell that ash.

GV: How long has it's happening?

Respondent:It's been happening for years when EB came in.

GV: Now if you want to see how tomorrow will be the place you're living in future, what are the things you expect?

Respondent:We have no desire to live here even though it's our own place ,we desire to move out of the place.If they relocate to some other place what is necessary is housing and employment.If they provide that we'll surely go.But some people say the Government will provide. you housing but not employment.What will we do there with only housing?.The company is nearby we can employed for companies contract work and how if we relocated to longer areas?If they provide both we'll go happily.There is nothing important to be here.But going to contract jobs there we can stay here itself.

GV: But you said the place is so dangerous

Respondent:Yes that is due to ash.And we don't know how the new place should be .So if they provide housing and employment it's far better . We're asking the government to provide housing as well as employment opportunities.We don't ask any other thing other than this.Whatever it is the employment is the main right.If they provide Electricity,Ro and water facilities getting employment is a must right.

GV: Did they say where they provide this?

Respondent:Talks regarding that haven't aired yet.The MP came and said the place has been chosen, we'll build it in your desired place.

GV: Which MP? Kanimozhi?

Respondent:No this Constituency MP;Jayakumar.Congress.

GV: Did he come?

Respondent:He came,Kamal came, Kanimozhi came.Many people came.Seeman came.

GV: So these many leaders came and enquired. Is there any change?

Respondent:No change at all.Are you a Media person.

GV: No, we're researching people.

Respondent:By doing research will you produce on TV?By asking the petitions of these people will you do any whistleblowing to the public regarding this?That's what I'm asking.

GV:Yes we're planning a Public exhibition.

Respondent: I'm asking whether the people are petitioning many grievances will you be able to publicise the issues? That's my question.

GV: By this year end the research will end.By the end of January what we plan is to organise a public exhibition.Not only Seppakkam the entire Ennore's issues can be gathered irrespective of positive and negative.So The plan made by the officers is not better than inclusivity of people's choices.

Respondent:You should show all these things in the exhibition.

GV: Surely we will show.

Respondent:Just because many things are happening and issues are undergoing so don't forget.

GV: We can take good photos and display it . So what are all the effects happened.So according to a Academician like us what's a project or plan regarding development is it might be good if it's people's plan or project.What the people perceive about projects?In my perspective it's good for yours it's bad.From my perspective I can keep on going good actions but how it's bad for people.So involving others opinion that plan should be like that.We are planning on January.

Respondent:As you're seeing whether it's good or bad?

GV: How can it be good action?

Respondent:So you should ask my suggestion and publish the results.

GV: What's your name ?.

Respondent:T Rajendran

24:11

GV: Have you protested for demanding employment?

Respondent:Yes, someone filed a case regarding compensation and employment.The case got won .I don't know the name of the advocate.Since then the advocate handled the case.Actually all the cases were handled by the advocate and his subordinates handled some minor cases.

GV: So even though they took the land they didn't pay the compensation and did not provide the employment facility.

Respondent:Yes.

GV: As you said when you're going for a relocation, how do you think the place should be?

25:06

Respondent:The place should be ash-free , accessible to transport facilities,schools and hospitals.So if you for emergency it causes hectic and fatigue.So if you have fever we can drive bike and go and what if any emery happens.What happens if we go half the distance.

GV: There are no shops here right?

Respondent:Yes yes there are no shops . Few bunk shops are here.Whatever the things we have to go to the Minjur.For example if any emergency incase of children and elders here they won't care.We need to go Ennore.In Ennore now only they've started or else we need to go to Tiruvotriyur which is around 10 kilometres.We don't know whether they will survive or die while travelling 10 kilometres.

GV: What jobs do the people in your Village do?

Respondent:All of them were daily wages.People who all living in the village do daily wage jobs.No body is working as a staff in a company.People who are working as a staff went outside.

GV:All of them working in the company?

Respondent:Yes in the coal factory half of the employees are from our own village.

GV: So everyone is under contract?

Respondent:Yes there is no staff in the company from our village.So in that coal factory everyone works as a daily wage.Not only that coal factory they go to around 4 to 5 factories.

GV: Which time do you feel it's better, the agricultural era or the industrial development era?

Respondent:We feel better during the agricultural era as it has no pollution and doesn't cause any harm to anyone.

GV: Other than agriculture what are the occupations they employed in?

Respondent:We don't know what others did.In my family they did agriculture.Mostly agriculture and cattle breeding.Even now some people have Cattles there are no fields to graze.Everything is shaded with ash.They can't drink water.Most of them sold the Cattles as well as the land

GV: Here in which community people live maximum?

Respondent:MBC community.Sir please don't ask like this .Don't ask like these among the people.Just be secular.

GV: Just a minute I'll explain.I'm a Sociology professor.So while taking the class we used to explain how the society exists how the social structure exist,how people live .We teach to students like these.Why we're teaching means You should see the people as one not as separate.We teach them like that.Whatever we teach people are like that right.

Respondent:Human is Human Sir.You're saying that you're a social professor.Let me say from my study experience . I'm 12 years out.There is no need of community.Public service is public service there is no social community conflict in TamilNadu.I'll say as you asked in this area maximum is Vanniyar population.98% is Vanniyar.

GV: It is a need for us to understand the community.So if we go to a place ...

Respondent:If you search on the map it'll appear that the person in Sembakkam is Vanniyar only.

GV: How much distance do you think you want to move forward from this place?

Respondent:We don't know

GV: Do you like this place or do you think that you feel better when some good changes happen in this place?

Respondent:If some good thing happens it's more than enough.

30:08.

GV:What do you need in this place

Respondent:We need to be an ash free environment.We don't need anything other than that.

GV:Why will I be here and I can't go?

Respondent:We adapted to live here so that.If we go somewhere else it takes time to adapt and we didn't get freedom like this.Even if they give jobs and compensation we didn't receive the life that we live here.If we want to go from here the place should be with employment opportunities.

GV:So many people say that we don't move from here..

Respondent:Why we planned to move just because of the Ash.

GV:If there's no ash you will be here and you planned to move because to live in an ash free environment.

Respondent:Yes but the Ash can't be controlled.It's 100 percent impossible.Just because it's prone to North Madras so the areas get spread with ash dust.

GV:What do you think about Industrial development here in North Madras? As you get affected, what do you think of it?

Respondent:There is no development only the drawbacks are there.People whose plans for development are getting developed.We didn't get developed.

GV:So do you think that the benefits of the development haven't been reached?

Respondent:You can do industrial development.If you give employment we can go somewhere else.You understand it.The ash can't be controlled by anyone that's the major reason.If the sun shines more it'll spread to a larger extent.That can't be controlled.

GV:How many kids do you have ?

Respondent:Two sons one in 8 th standard and one in 10 th standard.

GV:How did you send the guys to school?

Respondent:One son is studying in Athipattu and one is studying in a nearby village. After that we need to shift him to areas like Atthipattu,Meenjur or some other areas.

GV:What's the source of transportation for students here?

Respondent:By walking and they ask for lift from anyone who goes through the bike.

GV:So you don't have any source of transport?

Respondent:No .We don't.Usually we had buses here as per timings.When we came the buses were there and the village was good.There is no salt water like here before.

GV: As you said you came here 20 years ago, what did the village look like?

Respondent:It was good actually but the village was not like that before.Those days you can't find a place without plants.It was filled with greenery.The ash comes from the company also looked better.As a salt company was there before,the village was inside that first.It's still there.If you go there upside and view it's still there.There is separate tank,temple,and the colony.The area looked great during those days when everything was there.There is a canal from this end to that ed people used to bath in that.When ash try to enter slowly into the canal the water get spoiled and total destruction happened.You are like people in Citizen movie comes to document .We need employment and the situation here is true.They can mind their own business but there is no need to publicise these issues.Everyone belongs to struggling families.No one except us won't talk to you.If you go somewhere nearby they won't talk with you people.Other than us no one will speak.Because they don't know general knowledge.Many people like you came here but mostly they approach us and spoke the issues happening Because many people got frustrated that everyone comes and records and goes and nothing changed.If 100 people came a change should happen right but nothing got changed.Once CITU partymen came and told that we can organise a protest.And then they made us to sit in front of the EB main gate.In Front of the gate they protested.When they called for discussions and consultations the scenario got over nothing had changed anymore.

GV:A little more change hadn't happened?

Respondent:No change.

GV:How long before the protest took place?

Respondent:More than around one year ago.

**35:35**

GV:Is this Tangedco constructed?

Respondent:Yes it's EB.Everything is EB around that.Totally 4 stages.

GV:Could you tell the future of yourself and the village?

Respondent:How that it should be means it should be there should be a school and the environment should be without ash.All the struggles should be wind off as per our generation and the next generation should be better than us.That's the reason that I should plan to move from here.Just like we're like that our children should not be like us.We believe that all the future should be happening good.

GV:You think that it's good if the past things get completed as soon?

Respondent:Many people are graduated with ITI,Grade 12, College degree.Even a student pursuing 3 year degree course works as a contract labour in the coal factory.Even the students completed ITI is doing the same.Many electrician,plumber many people are there but all of them were into contract jobs.There are many companies around here people from unknown areas are working there and the inhabitants of the village didn't get employment here.

GV:Why is that?

Respondent: Everyone is relative that's why.Many people are there panchayat president,ward member, councillor and many persons but everything went in vain.If there's no job mostly they'll go to Chettinad company for employment. follows.

GV:What's the reason behind that?

Respondent:If anyone does some wrong there they won't provide employment to their family members and relatives and hence the cycle.If we want to go to city it takes hours of preparation for everything and that time it's hectic for us to manage families.Now they have installed all lights now but before when it was dark during night time.It is so fearing to enter the houses.Many robberies will happen here .If you cut the Sivaji road from here you can clearly see.At first it wasn't like that but it's numerous now.

GV:Why is that happening? Is that robbery undertaken by locals or someone outsiders?

Respondent:Mostly the North Indians but we don't know clearly whether the North Indians or Tamils but It's North Indians I guess.

GV:Where are they staying?

Respondent:In MGR nagar in my village around 10 people were staying.Around EB complex which is 1 kilometre from here ,there you can see around 2000-3000 people.They use these way for transportation.Even the Tamils are identifiable but the Hindi people are unidentified because they have similar face structure.Don't mistake me.If we ask employment to government they don't provide.So if the higher officials say to them then only they introduce the contract people.If the MD of the company is North Indian he'll import labours from his own territory which includes tickets as well as the accommodation.Whoever emerges here ward councillor or as many people only the company people will provide employment.

GV:If anybody goes for work there you should inform the leader and he'll let you know?

Respondent: Whatever company it is they require NOC there and also for aadhar card and everything.You shouldn't have no cases atleast .If you have you're rejected.

GV:Even for contract work?

Respondent:Yes, that's for everything.

GV:They ask for it to be mandatory?

Respondent:Yes, that's mandatory brother.

GV:So if you are working there for a contract you need NOC.Why didn't they ask?

Respondent:Not for fear.The North Indians immerse around us and they'll rob things right.Even Tamils are doing so.Per day I'll earn 400 rupees If I go for a job.Only 400 but they can work the same work for 250 or 300 rupees.

**40:50**

GV:So they're working for less wages than you.

Respondent:So if you give them a tent and provide the rice and groceries , he'll work for 250 rupees and rest inside the tent . You're asking like that you're seeing first time you would have been taken like this for around 1000 people.Don't mistake me I'm a opentype person.I said you're returning back to older story.Create some new story.If you want the people to be happy create facilities such as hospitals, schools and other transportation facilities so that people may live in this village and like that give this petition to the Government.There are no advance we're asking from you guys.

As you took interview provide a proper solution behalf of us

**42:12**