



## Problems of Labour in Granite Industry in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh

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### ABSTRACT

*Chittoor district was one of the most imperative producers and leading exporters in terms of tonnage of granite stone in Andhra Pradesh State over the past decades. Chittoor district traditionally exports large quantities of raw blocks, rough slabs and standard tiles of granite. Because, copious of granite resources, attractive and qualitative raw granite products, cheap labour, interested entrepreneurs, are available in the Chittoor district. Chittoor district is a national leader in terms of granite production. Granite stone exports from Chittoor district, comprise mainly granite cut blocks, granite slabs and tiles. Hence the granite stone industry is more profitable in the Chittoor district, at the same time the granite quarrying and processing industry has creating a number of issues and problems in relation to labours. So the labours are facing some problems and working under the inauspicious conditions. This paper highlighted the issues of labour occurred in granite stone quarrying and processing industry in Chittoor district.*

**Keywords :** Chittoor district, Granite industry, Labours, Processing, Quarrying, Workers.

### Introduction

Granite quarrying and processing industry play a central responsibility in the economic development of Chittoor district. Granite processing industry encompass the advantages of generating additional employment, with low investment, diversifying the industrial pedestal, plummeting regional disparities through dispersal of industries into rural, semi-urban and backward areas. Granite units are the large, medium and small scale units which are play a catalytic role in achieving the national or state, regional level objectives of increase industrial production, generation of additional employment, more evenhanded distribution of income and means of production and reducing regional disparities. Recognizing the suitability of granite industry has been accorded due priority in the Chittoor district.

The granite processing industry has an imperative function in small scale industries for industrial development in the district. The Chittoor district with 265 granite units among these units 240 are came under the small- scale sector. Vast resources of granite are making all out efforts to exploit and optimize granite production establishment of small-scale industries and undertake value addition. Granite industry has identified in small scale sector as one of the growth engines for overall development of industry and infrastructure in Chittoor district.

Granite deposits are accessible in Chandragiri, Tirupati, Chittoor, Gudipala, Anupalli, Kuppam and Western Parts of the district. Granite is the hardest and most durable of the building and monumental stones and is the most difficult to quarry and to finish. The development of the granite business into a small-scale industry had to wait on the invention of more powerful and more efficient tools and machinery to deal with this obdurate stone. The production of granite processing industry has a significant place in small-scale industries in Chittoor district. The granite industry produces 80983.5 tonnes of the production by 2010-11 in Chittoor district. Now a days the stipulate for the granite stone from the people increases in the district. Because of several people make use of the granite stone for building construction and polishing purposes in the district. There is existence of granite units, both in the large or

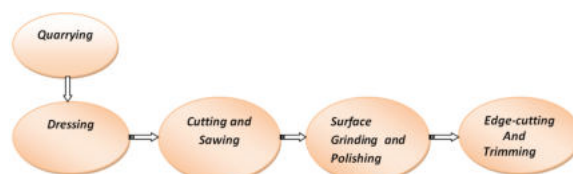
medium and small-scale sectors in Chittoor district.

The Chittoor district with cosmic mineral potential has worked out certain strategies to explore, exploit and develop the granite industry with the constructive cooperation of both private and public sectors. The district has paying attention on the inventory of mineral resources, key issues of legislation, objectives and strategies in time with the National Mineral Policy in accelerating the growth in the liberal regime and thereby leading to overall development of the granite industry.

### Granite Industry- Production Processes

Granite is extracted through open excavation or so-called 'open pit' quarrying. Below, production processes are discussed in more detail. The following figure revealed the granite production chain and an assortment of production processes, depending on the product are depicted.

**Figure: 1**



### Granite Quarrying Phase

Granite is extracted through open excavation (open pit mining). The quarrying of granite involves two central stages of procedure:

- Actual block splitting either from sheet rock or boulder. This is done either by digging, cutting or blasting processes by means of explosives.
- Further activities involving different items of work, such as amputation of weather-beaten zones or overburden, opening up of rock faces, lifting of cut blocks, transportation and other ancillary work.

Work in the granite quarries is mostly performed manually. In

some cases semi-mechanized methods are used for lifting, cutting, and transportation. There are only a very limited number of quarries that use contemporary technologies for block splitting, such as flame jet burners and wire saws for cutting, compressors and drilling machines for drilling and blasting, cranes for lifting big blocks, and dampers and trucks for transport. For drilling and channeling, hand chisels and hammers are the most frequently used tools, even though granite quarrying is characterised by the production of blocks of considerable size and weight.

However, another source maintains that many quarries do deploy mining machinery nowadays. This seems plausible, as one of the reasons that developing countries have increased so much in importance as supplier countries of natural stone worldwide at the expense of traditional European countries is the access to and possession of advanced technology.

#### Manual Operations

- first, overburden is removed (digging)
- then block or slab is extracted (drilling and channeling, using hand chisels and hammers)
- block or slab is split manually
- block or slab is loaded into trucks manually

#### Mechanized Operations

- first, overburden is removed (blasting)
- block or slab is extracted (drilling, using compressors and drilling machines)
- block or slab is split using (semi-) mechanized techniques
- large blocks are loaded into trucks by cranes

However, the development of granite industry is in somewhat satisfactory but the position of labours those who are working in granite quarrying and processing industry are not good. The labours of granite industry are in front of number of issues and problems either in quarrying or in processing activities in their work place.

#### Problems of Labour in Granite Industry

The problems relate to labours of granite stone industry in Chittoor district that instantaneously necessitate to be addressed contain. The most central problems applicable to the labours of granite stone quarrying and processing industry assessing in Chittoor district are as prearranged the following.

Figure: 2



#### a. Hazardous Working Conditions

In granite quarries, workers are exposed to a high incidence of the fatal occupational diseases silicosis and tuberculosis in non-mechanized processing units, these diseases are also common. Accidents at work place, sometimes resulting in the death of workers, occur frequently in industries. The labours are working under the circumstances of over lauded sounds which may create hearing problems. Workers are also required to carry very heavy weights, mainly in shallow quarries and in non-mechanized plants. Indispensable safety provisions, such as dust masks, are largely absent. This is an infringement of human rights especially in the case of indus-

trial labors in Chittoor district.

#### b. Labour Associations

Labour in granite stone industry in Chittoor district is largely unorganized. Consequently, in many granite stone processing units, labour unions are non-existent and labours are not organized. Accordingly the labours do not having more of bargaining power in fixation and hiking of their wages and other allowances. So granite industrial entrepreneurs embittered the benefits of labours and they deteriorate the position of workers.

#### c. Migrant Labour

In Chittoor district where the price of granite products has increased over the past years, people who have a preference to invest the revenues in a business of their own instead of working in a granite stone processing industry. As a result, various granite stone processing units now and afterward exclusively give employment to migrant labours from nearby districts and from Tamilnadu and Karnataka States. These labours are come largely from underprivileged rural communities. Generally the labours belong to the lower class, or other designated castes or backward classes and are typically landless and moderately poor. The entrepreneurs have a preference to give employment to the people from outlying districts as they can easily be made to work longer hours. Those who have had to migrate in search of labour usually do not bargain or argue about their employment circumstances, and infrequently ask for leave. So the migrant labours in Chittoor district could not get reasonable wages for their services.

#### d. Generating Child Labour

The preponderance of the granite stone processing units is predominantly employed by migrant labours from nearby the districts. Some of these migrant labours fetch their families with them. In the district some of the granite units, there is substantiation that families of migrant labours, including their children, are frequently also employed in the granite stone processing industry. However, it remains unclear which tasks they are set to perform. As women and children are in general considered unfit for employment in stone processing but the root causes of women and child labour are acute poverty and the lack of child-care amenities. When bonded labours die, their debts are often conceded on to their families or to their children. These children are then mandatory to go out to work in order to clear ancestral debts.

#### e. Problem of Additional Working Hours

Nowhere in Chittoor district do workers in the unorganized segment be given additional remuneration for the overtime they put in. This also applies to workers in granite stone industry in Chittoor district. In some granite quarrying and processing units overtime is compulsory, to the extent that labours in general challenge not reject to put in overtime for fear of losing their employment. Generally the entrepreneurs have shown the details of wages on paid holidays in company accounts. But the actual statistical information papers on paid holidays could not be found individually in the district.

#### f. Remuneration

The basic minimum wage in Chittoor district is Rs. 150-175 per day, but states can set their own minimum wage levels. Some granite stone processing units pay wages beyond the minimum. At the Stone Track Corporation, for example, basic wages of permanent workers start at Rs. 5000 per month and supervisory staff earns Rs. 10,000 per month or more. However, labours in wrapping are compensated on a quantity rate basis. It is not comprehensible whether these wages are in fact living wages, e.g. sufficient to cover the basic needs of a modest household, without the need for children to go out to work in order to supplement the household income.

#### g. Bonded Labour

Even though the occurrence of bonded labour is more frequent in granite stone quarrying and processing units in Chittoor district. Labours are not obligatory to deposit money

or identity papers with the owner of the industry. However, labours are inclined to accept advances from their employer, which may consequence of high levels of indebtedness, forcing the labours into bonded labour position. Advances are frequently conventional as a means to ensure regular employment and full payment of wages.

At times of high financial need, such as marriages, funerals or illnesses requiring medical treatment, labours may take out higher loans from their owner. Labours rarely manage to fully repay these higher debts and employers tend to take advantage of the situation by paying out lower wages. Some employers actually wait for opportunities to extend their loans to workers in order to obtain contemptible labour. These workers are subsequently obligatory to remain in the employment of these employers for at least another five years or more, at abridged wages. Although bonded labour is common in practice throughout in Chittoor district, prosecution of this punishable offence is rare.

#### **h. Problem in Access to Insurance and Compensation Benefits**

All the granite processing units have Employee State Insurance (ESI) schemes in place, granting access to amenities. Conversely, this scheme is not general practice. A key predicament is that many units repudiate to keep a register of work-

force to keep away from responsibilities towards employees. In granite quarrying, when accidents occur in the work place, compensation is generally not paid out. Statistical information on accident reimbursement expenses in granite stone processing units could not be found in Chittoor district.

#### **Conclusion**

This paper has concluded that the granite industry in Chittoor district is being well on economic point of view. As well as granite industry has been generating additional employment opportunities to growing labour force in non-agricultural sector and for people in rural and semi-urban areas. Although the living conditions of workers are very poor. The labours of granite industry are associated with a lot of problems. The labours working with noisy and dusty environment it is harmful to health. Workers, especially the migrant labours are cheated by entrepreneurs by made of overtime with low wages this is due to absence of strong labour associations. Government legislations are failed in preventing the child labour and in effectively implementation of employee insurance schemes, and compensation benefits to labour families particularly in granite industry in Chittoor district. So the government intervention is necessary to avoided all the above such problems and for protect the labour and human rights.

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