

Power to EMPOWER

Having been rendering exemplary services towards fulfilling the power demand in the state, Udupi Power Corporation Limited has parlayed its priorities on the welfare of the district through its innovative and effective corporate social responsibilities

M Raghuram

This coastal district had waged many battles for its economic and environmental upheaval. But the struggle seems to have reached a logical conclusion since a large cluster of villages around the industrial belt of the district are glad that there is an industry in their neighbourhood which takes care of their every need, right from the their daily drop of water to the technical education to their children and jobs to their parents.

Thanks to the Udupi Power Corporation Limited (UPCL) promoted by Adani group of Gujarat, there is now a living example of how an industry can spur growth all around and make a positive change in the lives of people in the project catchment.

The UPCL India's ultra modern and state-of-the-art super thermal power plant, capable of producing 1200 Megawatts of power, is situated at Yelluru in Udipi district. And it has taken its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme to the highest benchmark not just in Karnataka state but in the entire country.

The UPCL, during the last five years since it programmed its CSR activities, has created roads, street lighting, parks, and constructed buildings for the Panchayats in seven villages. Panchayat leaders of these seven villages acknowledge that the quality of life in



their villages have improved to a great extent.

"Our first challenge was to provide clean drinking water to the villages around our plant. We looked at several models and came across one model that could give us a litre of water treated with Reverse Osmosis process at Rs. 4. After setting up one such plant initially in Yelluru village, we found out that the villagers were happy about it. So, we set up five more such plants in as many villages and even distributed water storage facility to each house. The total delivery system was put together with a fund of Rs. 23 lakhs each. These plants will be managed and operated by villagers" said Kishore Alva, Executive Director of UPCL.

According to him, they were looking at end-to-end solutions through their CSR activities. "Firstly, we had to create infrastructure for the village improvement, human resources development and promote health and

educational programmes," he said.

But he stressed that it was not a path of roses to carve out such large CSR activity regimen. "We had to plan for 25 years. We had to look at development of green cover, and create basic amenities and fundamental facilities. In fact, this vision of total empowerment of rural people was a complete makeover of the cluster of villages around our plant and in the home district. We got in touch with a Kakinada based biotech company and procured saplings of fruit bearing trees and distributed assorted variety of saplings to students and teachers. Today, I am proud the teachers and students have taken good care of the saplings and we learnt that the survival rate was 98 per cent," Alva said.

The company has also committed itself to the greening programme for the next 25 years. He informed that the entire land acquired for the industrial township



will be covered with orchard class trees. In addition, two lakes have been identified for development into recreation centre one at Mudarangadi and another at Yelluru. Two more lakes, Dhanawanti Kere and Padubidri Kere, have been taken up for restoration," he said.

The school buildings, which were in bad shape, were given structural strength, toilets and drinking water, special school kits were developed and over 10,000 children were given the kits.

"People around the plant have given their lands and many of them were farmers, fishermen,

traditional artisans and plantation workers. Many were unskilled. But all of them have been absorbed into the company. I am glad that 72 per cent of our workers are from the local villages and 100 per cent in the unskilled category are from the local villages," he informed.

The compensation given by the UPCL during the land acquisition matched world standards. The land losers got not less than Rs. 40 lakhs per acre with Rs. 1000 per square feet for the structure. In addition, they were also given sites in the rehabilitation colonies and also a job to one of the family members and

if the family had a semi skilled or skilled member, he or she was also given jobs with an insurance package of Rs. 10 lakhs per person.

The UPCL has also given health cards to the villagers and periodical health check-ups are held in all the seven villages. Gluco metres for the elders, and foldable glasses for those who have vision problems have been provided.

In another CSR initiative, the company has rebuilt temples, mosques, and Churches in villages wherever people had lost their places of worship. The Naga Shrines and Spirit worship shrines have also been relocated.

To take up independent development works, the company has donated funds to the tune of Rs. 3 crores per each of the seven villages affected by the plant and Rs. 30 lakh to the police department of the state to take up police welfare measures.

Gautam, Rajesh and Vasanth Adani had visited the plant and they make it a point to closely monitor the Anna Prasadam in six temples on behalf of the company.

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