

## “The Public Eye Awards 2006”

### **Nomination form A** **(for companies that have excelled in socially and environmentally irresponsible behaviour)**

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*The nominations will be made public before the Awards Ceremony. Handing in a precise, detailed and formulated nomination (please do not just send keywords, but full sentences) in the given form saves us a great deal of (editorial) work!*

**Nominated company or corporate group**

*Name:* Coca-Cola company

*Headquarters:* Atlanta, United States of America

*Turnover / net profit:* \$22 billion revenue

*Branch of trade:* Beverages

*Owned by:* Shareholders (Warren Buffet is largest shareholder)

*Number of employees:* 39,000

*CEO:* Neville Isdell

*Further information/data on the company/corporate group:* Coca-Cola is the most recognizable brand name in the world. McDonalds is a distant second.

**Nominated in the category (please do not tick more than one category):**

- (yes) environment
- social rights (human and labour rights)
- taxes

**Reasons for the nomination:**

The rationale should include detailed information and, if feasible, it should be listed according to below aspects of irresponsible behaviour of the nominated corporate group. In addition, your rationale should include a list of sources. Moreover, enclosures such as studies or newspaper articles on the case as well as film material are most welcome.

### ***General information on the case and characteristics of irresponsible corporate behaviour***

The Coca-Cola company in India, through its subsidiary, Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages Private Limited, is in serious crisis as a result of its operations in India. A massive movement, rooted primarily in rural India and involving thousands of people, has emerged to hold the company accountable for its crimes.

A pattern has emerged as a result of Coca-Cola's bottling operations in India.

- **Water Scarcity:** Communities across India living around Coca-Cola's bottling plants are experiencing severe water shortages, directly as a result of Coca-Cola's massive extraction of water from the common groundwater resource. The wells have run dry and the hand water pumps do not work any more.
- **Water and Soil Pollution:** When the water is extracted from the common groundwater resource by digging deeper, the water smells and tastes strange. Coca-Cola has been indiscriminately discharging its waste water into the fields around its plant and sometimes into rivers, including the Ganges, in the area. The result has been that the groundwater has been polluted as well as the soil. Public health authorities have posted signs around wells and hand pumps advising the community that the water is unfit for human consumption.
- **Distribution of Toxic Waste as Fertiliser:** In two communities, Plachimada and Mehdiganj, Coca-Cola was distributing its solid waste to farmers in the area as "fertilizer". Tests conducted by the BBC found cadmium and lead in the waste, effectively making the waste toxic waste. Coca-Cola stopped the practice of distributing its toxic waste only when ordered to do so by the state government.
- **Selling Products with High Levels of Pesticides:** Tests conducted by a variety of agencies, including the government of India, confirmed that Coca-Cola products contained high levels of pesticides, and as a result, the Parliament of India has banned the sale of Coca-Cola in its cafeteria. However, Coca-Cola not only continues to sell drinks laced with poisons in India (that could never be sold in the US and EU), it is also introducing new products in the Indian market.

### ***Consequences***

**Destroying Lives, Livelihoods and Communities:** Water shortages, pollution of groundwater and soil, exposure to toxic waste and pesticides is having impacts of massive proportions in India. In a country where over 70% of the population makes a living related to agriculture, stealing the water and poisoning the water and soil is a sure recipe for disaster.

Thousands of farmers in India have been affected by Coca-Cola's practices, and Coca-Cola is guilty of destroying the livelihoods of thousands of people in India. Unfortunately, we do not even know the extent of the damage as a result from exposure to the toxic waste and pesticides as these are long term problems. Most affected are the marginalized communities such as the Adivasis (Indigenous People's) and Dalits (formerly untouchables), as well as the low-income communities, landless agricultural workers and women. Taken in its entirety, that's a lot of people in India.

Coca-Cola is destroying the food security of the people of the land, and by stealing the water and poisoning the water and soil, it is also responsible for ensuring a life of misery for future generations to come.

### ***Current status and demands made to the company***

Coca-Cola simply refuses to admit responsibility for its crimes, and even continues to deny the crimes. This, in spite of report after report, including those commissioned by the government of India, find it guilty.

The grassroots movement continues to grow in India, with active campaigns in at least 5 different communities spread across India. They are in the process of unifying under a national platform.

The demands being made to the Coca-Cola company include

- They must permanently shut down the bottling facilities in Mehdiganj, Kala Dera and Plachimada.
- They must compensate the affected community members.
- They must recharge the depleted groundwater
- They must clean up the contaminated water and soil.
- They must ensure that workers laid off as a result of Coca-Cola's negligence are retrained and relocated in a more sustainable industry.
- They must admit liability for the long term consequences of exposure to toxic waste and pesticide laden drinks in India.

### ***Sources / references***

[www.IndiaResource.org](http://www.IndiaResource.org)

[www.cseindia.org](http://www.cseindia.org)

<http://parliamentofindia.nic.in/ls/jpc/jpc-prsfb.htm>

<http://www.scmc.info/reports/kerala/scmcsecondkerala.htm>

### ***Information for the organisers:***

**Nomination submitted by:**

**Name of organisation:** India Resource Center  
**Name of contact person:** Amit Srivastava  
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The contact person may be contacted for any follow-up queries from the organisers. In addition, it is planned to make this information available to the interested public in the course of the publication of the nominations (on [www.evb.ch/publiceye.htm](http://www.evb.ch/publiceye.htm)) Please tick below if you do not wish your contact details to be made public.

Do not publish my contact details

## Award's Ceremony in Davos

If the company you nominated is awarded a price, would your organisation be in the position to send a person to Davos to give a speech and to conduct a workshop on the topic? This person should have expert knowledge on the nominated company because she/he has written a report on it or carried out a campaign on the topic. Travel, accommodation and expenses of the spokesperson will be covered by the organisers.

*(yes) A presentation of the case in Davos at the end of January 2006 is possible*

**Name of the person:** Amit Srivastava  
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Send your nomination(s) to: The Public Eye Awards, Berne Declaration, Quellenstrasse 25, PO Box, CH-8031 Zurich, Switzerland; email: [publiceye@evb.ch](mailto:publiceye@evb.ch); Fax: +41 (0)44 277 70 01.

The deadline for nominations is 26 August 2005. An earlier submission or announcement of a submission (if detailed information cannot be submitted until close to the deadline) will help us with the organisation of the Award Ceremony. For announcements and questions please call: Tel: +41 (0)44 277 70 06.