

## Green activism can go too far

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Natural resources, however bountiful, are bound to be depleted beyond repair if industrial progress is driven for long by a hedonistic pursuit of profits. The industrially advanced countries took more than two centuries to realize that material progress has been achieved at the cost of a clean environment. That, however, is no reason why India and other such developing countries should ignore or tolerate environmental degradation in the cause of development. It is only to the good of the country and humanity if the gap between development and environment is narrowed down to the minimum. To this end we need an alert public opinion, a vigilant press, a responsive industrial leadership and a non-compromising government policy on the environment

Four decades of planned industrial development have been accompanied by an uncontrolled emission of effluents, however, of late there has been a sudden increase in awareness of the environmental damage caused by this energy-intensive and technology-dominated industrialization. A 'green movement' has caught on; there are protests against industries causing environmental damages. An activist policy governs the approach of environmentalists. Some of the environmental activism-or 'green activism' – is fraught with grave social consequences.

Several industrial establishments in Delhi were recently given the option by the supreme Court of relocating or closing down their units. The owners preferred to close down, thus adversely affecting the workers who were rendered without a job or severance benefits. The owners made a good packet as the land costs in Delhi have soared. The victims of many such decisions of the 'green judiciary', given the present framework of industrial laws, are the worker rather than the offending industrial management.

Green activism can, in other words, go too far; so far as to prevent fresh. Investment in the industry.