



World War III will be War for Water: An Aquatic Analysis of the Tamil Movie *Sardar*

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Abstract

This paper explores the aquatic elements in the Tamil movie *Sardar*. Rajendra Singh, the “waterman of India” and winner of the Magsaysay Award in 2001 and the Stockholm Water Prize in 2015, has claimed that a World War III is on our doorstep, and it would be fought over water if we do nothing to address the situation. P.S. Mithran, the director of the Tamil movie *Sardar*, successfully portrays this water-crisis on screens and invites our attention to look at the ‘water’ issues seriously. The film discusses about the importance of water, the death of children from lack of water. Additionally, it indicates the production of chemicals like carcinogens and Bisphenol A in plastic water bottles and its harmful consequences. It uncovers the corporate approach of creating a corporation on one’s land, bottling the same water, and then selling it to the same people for profit while spreading the erroneous information that the water is contaminated and only the bottled water is fine. This movie will create awareness among the people to be cautious and equip the officials to take necessary steps to prevent a war for water.

Keywords: Aquatic, Awareness, Children, Plastic, World War III.

Introduction

This study examines the Tamil film *Sardar*’s various aspects, including water. According to Rajendra Singh, also known as the “waterman of India”, who was awarded the Magsaysay Award in 2001 and the Stockholm Water Prize in 2015, a third World War is on the verge of breaking out, and it will be fought over water if we do nothing to address the situation. In 2001, he won the Magsaysay Award. The director of the Tamil film *Sardar*, P.S. Mithran, does an excellent job of depicting the current water crisis on screen and draws our attention to the importance of giving ‘water’ problems significant consideration. The film addresses the issue of the six lakh children who lose their lives each year due to a lack of access to clean water. In addition, it sheds light on the fact that around six lakh children die every year as a direct result of diseases brought on by the consumption of water from plastic bottles daily. It exposes the corporate strategy of founding a business on one’s land, bottling the same water, and then selling it to the same people for profit while disseminating the false information that the water is poisoned and that only the water that is sold in bottles is safe to drink. The public will become more conscious of the need to be cautious due to this movie, and the government will be better equipped to take the required actions to avert a conflict over water.

The Importance of Water

“More than any other factors, solar energy and water maintain the life support systems on Earth” (Abdullah 353). Water, in its purest form, is the substance that sustains life. Water is necessary for the continued existence of anything alive on this planet. “Water, water everywhere, Not any drop to drink”, as said in Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The poem that was read earlier draws attention to the predicament of a parched sailor who is surrounded by water from the ocean yet is unable to drink it. The situation now is very comparable. Because of water pollution, many natural resources, including drinking water and other kinds of consumption, are now dangerous. “Water remains a conflictual resource due to its unique characteristics” (Bencala and Dabelko 23).

The Gist of the Movie *Sardar*

Inspector Vijay Prakash lives with his uncle Paavadaisaami. His family committed themselves when his father was deemed a national traitor. Vijay is tasked with capturing a genius who stole a highly secret RAW material from the 1980s. Vijay investigates and learns that social activist Sameera Thomas took the documents. Vijay goes to find Sameera with the aid of her son, Timothy but finds her dead and learns she was a traitor. Vijay investigates and discovers that Sameera was grilled about *Sardar* but did not divulge anything. Vijay discovers on Sameera’s laptop that she protested Maharaj Rathore’s water conglomerate, One India One Pipeline. According to Sameera’s laptop study, the corporation produces poisonous water, carcinogens, and other dangerous compounds. Timmy became sick from the water. Vijay checks a book that includes the Chittagong prison in Bangladesh address he saw with Timmy when he sent a letter to their relative Victor on

Sameera's advice. Rathore phones the NIA and asks the warden to kill Sardar, but he escapes. Vijay discovers a petrol bunk with a secret tunnel from the accomplice's possessions. After a fight with an assassin, Vijay finds a file. Vijay discovers from the documents that Sardar is Chandra Bose. Sardar lived peacefully with his family in 1983 while working as a RAW agent disguised as a theatre artist. Sardar fell in love with Indhra Rani, who also loved him; they married and had Vijay. Sardar was sent to examine suspicious activity along the India-Pakistan border. Sardar escaped with a snapshot and a typed copy of a Chinese file. After describing the file to Rathore and Victor, they discovered China's plot to broadcast fake news about contaminating the country's water through Pakistan and monopolising India's water supply through the One India One Pipeline. They also find that a mole in their agency, nicknamed Laughing Buddha, helped China. Rathore sends Sardar to find Laughing Buddha. Sardar contacted Cockroach and inferred that P. K. Abraham was Laughing Buddha. Bangladesh caught him. Rathore, greedy, killed Abraham. Sardar informed Rathore he would kill Abraham, and he agreed. Rathore falsely framed Sardar as a traitor and resigned from RAW. Rathore afterwards joined China and led One India One Pipeline. Sardar was outraged when he learned of Rathore's deceit but recalled that he had buried the file copies. Sameera helped Sardar complete the objective. After the flashback, Rathore goes to the RAW vault to find out who sent the letter to Sardar, while Vijay finds that Paavaidaisaami is one of Rathore's men. Chief Chandra Mohan orders RAW operatives to grab Victor and bring him to headquarters, while Rathore sends his men to assassinate Victor, but Sardar kills them all. Sardar, accompanied by Timmy to the headquarters as Victor, defeats the other agents and escapes in a vehicle. Rathore realises that the truck is laden with sodium and travels to the water plant to stop Sardar. Sardar defeats the water plant guards. He smashes the pipeline to stop the flow of toxic water.

Aquatic Issues in the Movie Sardar

The Scarcity of Water Marks the Death of the Children

"Our body, like the surface of the earth, is more than 60 percent water" (Witzel 18). It is estimated that around 829000 people die from diarrhoea each year due to contaminated drinking water, poor sanitation, and inadequate hand hygiene. However, diarrhoea is primarily avoidable, and if these risk factors were addressed, it would be possible to avert the deaths of 297000 children under the age of 5 each year. It is estimated that 37.7 million people in India are impacted by water-borne diseases each year, that 1.5 million children die each year from diarrhoea alone, and that 73 million working days are lost each year as a direct result of water-borne diseases. According to research that the WHO conducted in 2008, unclean water and a lack of sanitation caused 7.5% of all fatalities and 9.4% of all disability-adjusted life years in India in the year 2002. In India, children under the age of five have a mortality rate of one-third higher than the global average owing to diarrhoea and pneumonia. Many more children who can survive are left with a compromised immune system due to diseases such as diarrhoea, pneumonia, malaria, and worm infestations. These children go on to develop underweight and malnutrition, which significantly negatively affects their capacity for learning throughout their lives. "The mortality and morbidity due to poor quality drinking water and sanitation are higher among these underdeveloped and developing countries" (Zahid 3).

The Production of Chemicals in Plastic Water Bottles and Its Harmful Consequences

The use of plastic water bottles is associated with several risks and adverse impacts, including those damaging to human health and the natural environment. The boy named Timothy suffers the consequences of the usage of water in plastic bottle. Julie Livingston notes in her essay "Water Scarcity & Health in Urban Africa"

The experience of water-associated disease or injury is bleak. Diarrhea can be shameful, especially for people who must share communal toilets or who have no choice but open defecation. It can also be terrifying. Watching a child grow listless with dehydration. Feeling the water squeezed out of one's body at an alarming rate (87)

Carcinogens can be produced from the continued usage of plastic water bottles. Any chemical with the potential to cause cancer is referred to as a carcinogen. It is essential to determine which substances have the potential to cause cancer so that we can take the appropriate precautions to steer clear of them or reduce the amount of time we are exposed to them. Bisphenol A (BPA), a chemical that is utilised in the production of plastics, is a substance that causes cancer and is emitted by plastic bottles. There are grounds for worry over the potential adverse effects of exposure to BPA on the brain and prostate gland of developing foetuses, babies, and children. Additionally, it may affect the conduct of youngsters. Plastic materials, such as those used to make water bottles, contain certain compounds, some of which have the potential to impair endocrine function. Bisphenol A and phthalates are two examples of these chemical substances. These pollutants have the potential to seep through plastic bottles and into the water that we consume. Chemicals are present in plastic water bottles, and some chemicals can seep into the water they hold. Consumers are at risk of experiencing adverse

health impacts as a result of the leachate from plastic. The continued use of the water bottle will also produce harmful results. Any liquid, solid, or gas that, when put into the water supply, generates, or has the potential to create, a hazard to the health and well-being of the consumer is referred to as a toxic material. Consuming liquids from single-use plastic bottles has increased the risk of chemical leaching and toxicity. Chemical leaching happens when the heat breaks down the chemical bonds in plastic, allowing harmful chemicals to escape into the surrounding water. This implies that leaving water bottles outdoors in the car or taking them to the beach or pool may heat them to a temperature considered dangerous by many specialists in the area owing to the contamination caused by microplastics. However, there have been contradictory reports on the safety of bottles exposed to high temperatures for an extended period of time. The water you are consuming may contain traces of lead, chlorine, bacteria, and pesticides, along with a number of other pollutants that are hazardous to your health. Polyethylene terephthalate is the material that is used to make plastic water bottles. When a bottle is heated, the substance causes the release of the chemicals bisphenol and antimony, which are referred to as BPA. There has been research that points to the possibility that exposure to this chemical might negatively affect the health of youngsters. It can lead to various health issues, including coughing, irritation of the throat and eyes, and allergic responses, which can affect the respiratory system, trigger asthma attacks, and create other illnesses connected to the immune system. "Contamination of drinking water may also occur within the distribution system" (Gorelick 299).

The Invisible strategy of the Corporate

The movie also discusses China's intention to propagate false news about contaminating the country's water supply through Pakistan and implement pipes to monopolise India's water supply through the One India One Pipeline project. Both of these plans are mentioned in the movie. The Corporate is continually spreading fake news to keep the people in fear and maintain their business. The corporate tactic is to plant the fear in the minds of the people that the plain water that is naturally accessible is tainted and of no use and then encourage them to consume bottled water instead of using the naturally available water. However, the truth is that they are simply bottling the same water that can be obtained naturally and at no cost. People often avoid drinking natural water in favour of purchasing bottled versions of it from companies in exchange for money. Contracts for the privatisation of water will be challenged since they are detrimental to humankind. That is precisely what transpired in Bolivia.

A Warning on World War III for water

There are references to impending World War III for water in Sardar. "Water seems an unlikely cause of war, but many commentators believe it could define 21st-century conflict" (Dunn 46). Water intake is one of the essential requirements for human survival; hence, every human need a dependable water supply to thrive. If people are prevented from gaining access to water, they risk dying of dehydration and are consequently more likely to engage in violent conflict. However, the risk of dying of dehydration is preferable to the possibility of gaining access to water through any conflict, no matter how remote that possibility may be.

Conclusion

The filmmaker also successfully weaves in a message about the need to maintain our water supplies and keep them from slipping into private hands without making it seem like he is trying too hard to preach to the audience. The water crisis serves as the focal point for the film's central ethical conundrum. How private companies are profiting off the public good of water by bottling it and selling it to consumers at excessive prices in plastic containers that leach their deadly chemicals into the water supply, putting children in danger. In the same manner, as every other self-respecting eat-the-rich Tamil film, Sardar connects to more significant cultural issues by including footage from Bolivia and the Philippines, two countries in which the water wars have resulted in the deaths of civilians.

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