

The next day one hundred of the women gathered together. They went to the outskirts of the village and stopped a toddy-cart. 'You cannot come into the village', they told the cart driver strongly in unison and stood in front of it. 'Throw all the toddy away.' Each of them offered him a rupee to do so. The driver got scared and left the village.

Then a jeep with arrack packs arrived. The women surrounded it and demanded that it returned without unloading the arrack. After two days the police were called. They said that all those who bid at auctions have the right to sell arrack. The women stood unmoved. They said that they would go to the Collector and will not keep quiet if arrack was sold in their village. The arrack contractors got cold feet. They made several plans, but nothing worked and they gave up.

These events gave strength to the women. All this happened only because the women united and struggled strongly to get rid of arrack from their village.

The story of Dubagunta spread in the form of an agitation to other parts of the district.

In the literacy classes of other villages teachers started sensitising the community through puppet shows about the problems caused by arrack. They also shared the story of Dubagunta village.

Women of other villages had also suffered a lot. There were quarrels every day in their families. They survived only by taking refuge in neighbouring houses. Daily, for two-three hours they had to put up with this situation. There was not enough food for their children. So, women in other villages considered doing in their village what the women in Dubagunta had done earlier. The members of three literacy centres discussed this issue. The teachers supported and guided them. Finally, they also attacked the arrack shops.

They too managed to stop the arrack business in their village. The women in Dubagunta initiated and led a movement in which women from other villages joined and ultimately the situation changed for the better.

Chipko Movement

The Chipko Movement was initiated in the Uttarakhand region of India by a group of villagers who opposed the commercial cutting down of trees. The movement was led by women who were influenced by Mahatma Gandhi.

For rural women, saving the environment is crucial to their economic survival. As primary food, fuel and water gatherers, women have strong interests in reversing deforestation, desertification and water pollution. The women made a living in the Himalayan foothills, using its forests as sources of food and fuel. They faced a particularly severe challenge in the