

## **India: Group of councillors hails Coca-Cola plant**

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### ***'We welcome the company, as it will give direct employment to 300 persons'***

A group of councillors of Maanur panchayat union, who is "quite convinced that the functioning of a Coca-Cola manufacturing unit in their area would not be detrimental to environment and groundwater," has welcomed the setting up of the plant.

Speaking to reporters here on Saturday, the vice-chairman of Maanur panchayat union, Balakumar, said 15 of the 21 councillors of the union embarked on a trip to Plachimada in Kerala on October 20 to personally assess the "impacts" of the Coca-Cola manufacturing unit there "as some political parties and other organizations were campaigning against the proposed beverage unit" at Gangaikondan SIPCOT Industrial Estate.

"We did not see any adverse impact caused by the unit (at Plachimada). The groundwater remains unpolluted and they meticulously treat the water used in the preparation of beverages. The yield of coconut trees irrigated with this treated water is excellent. Hence, we reject the ongoing negative campaign and welcome the company as it will give direct employment to 300 persons," he said.

Asked the union chairman, Vijaya, who was not present in the press conference, was supporting their decision, Mr. Balakumar said she was also quite satisfied with the functioning of the coke plant at Plachimada and intend to visit one more plant near Chennai before issuing the final clearance to the plant. Another councillor of Maanur union, C.S. Mani, who is spearheading the anti-Coke agitation, also abstained from today's press briefing.