



**THE TRUTH  
ABOUT IMPORTED**

# **Indian Sandstone**



# THE FACTS

The popularity of Indian sandstone is growing fast. But are the cheaper options really as attractive as they seem?

For example, would you really want a patio that had been made using child labour? Or how about that smart new driveway... would you really feel as comfortable arriving home, knowing that the people who had made the stone setts lacked the most basic protection or even the security of a living wage? Would you really condone such poor working conditions?

When choosing imported natural stone from an unverified source, here's what you need to know:

**FACT:** Nearly 20% of workers in Indian quarries are children, some as young as six

**FACT:** Many quarries in India enforce bonded labour and exploit migrant labour

**FACT:** Illegal quarries are openly flouting international labour standards and safety laws

**FACT:** The environmental damage is disastrous for poor agricultural communities

*Source: Budhpura 'Ground Zero' Sandstone Quarrying in India by Pmadhavan, Dr. Sanjay Raj, commissioned by India Committee of the Netherlands*



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WHERE INDIAN  
SANDSTONE  
ENDS UP...

# THE DREAM

Redesigning your outside space is one of the most exciting transformations you could make to your home.

Creating the right fusion of hard and soft landscaping is essential to good garden design and can offer so many possibilities to suit your lifestyle.

But it's not just getting the right balance between hard and soft landscaping that helps you to enjoy every moment in your garden.

Ensuring that the building materials in your garden are ethically sourced and environmentally sound means you can feel even better about your choices.

After all, there's no better place to help create a more sustainable landscape than in your own garden.

However, most homeowners are completely unaware that much natural stone coming into the UK is from highly unethical sources with a large carbon footprint.



## THE GROWING UNREGULATED MARKET

# THE REALITY

More and more gardeners are choosing natural stone from abroad to landscape their gardens, as it's less expensive than natural British stones like Yorkstone.

In fact, in 2005 over 120,000 tonnes were imported into the UK.

And unless sandstone comes from a verified source, there's no way of knowing exactly how it has been produced – or at what cost, human and environmental.

'A great number of issues in India's natural stone industry need to be addressed most urgently. Clearly, universal human rights, ILO (International Labour Organisation) conventions and relevant national legislation are violated on a wide scale.'

*'From Quarry to Graveyard',  
India Committee of the  
Netherlands, September 2006*



# WHY IS MARSHALLS INVOLVED IN THIS ISSUE?

Many suppliers importing Indian natural sandstone are not engaged in monitoring how their stone is produced. However, these independent checks are vital to ensure that Indian Sandstone coming into the UK is not linked to terrible abuses of human rights. Put simply, buying from an independently verified source is the only way that you can be sure that your imported natural stone has not been produced by young children.

Marshalls is fundamentally committed to sustainable development and to demonstrating a high degree of social responsibility, particularly with regard to ethical trading and the environment.

As the only company in the hard landscaping industry to belong to the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), Marshalls is committed to improving the lives of workers who make our products. Now Marshalls aims to highlight issues linked to natural stone arriving in the UK so that consumers can understand the social and environmental impact of their choices.





# CHILD LABOUR



In many Indian quarries, children work in harsh conditions producing stone setts, carrying heavy loads, wielding sledge-hammers and operating jack-hammers, without protective clothing.

On a recent trip to Budphura, Chris Harrop from Marshalls witnessed for himself the disturbing scenes of children working in quarries to produce paving destined for the UK.

Little girls less than 10 years old perch miserably among the stone setts they have made. This abuse cannot be allowed to continue unchecked.

Anti-Slavery International estimates that roughly one million children work in India's stone quarries (ILAB report, 2003).

Various studies\* suggest that up to 25% of the workforce in quarries was made up of children.

*\*Finnish Institute of Occupational Health: Child Labour in Sandstone Mines, 2002; ILAB report, 2003).*



# BONDED LABOUR

Throughout history, desperately poor people have pledged their labour under any terms, in order to survive. Bonded labour is a system of forced or partly forced labour in which a person borrows money vital to survive, then works to pay off their debts to an employer.

These debts can be passed down generations, so children grow up destined for bonded labour. Bonded labour is a violation of universal human rights. But despite being abolished in 1976, it is thought that around 90%\* of workers in Indian quarries are forced to work in order to pay off their debts.

*\*According to the Indian NGO Mine Labour Protection Campaign*

‘Without exaggeration it can be said that a majority of quarry workers are indebted to its employers and works under conditions of bonded labour. When bonded workers die, their debts are often passed on to their families. Then the children are forced to go out to work in order to pay off these debts, perpetuating the situation of bondedness.’

*‘From Quarry to Graveyard’, India Committee of the Netherlands, September 2006*





# MIGRANT WORKERS



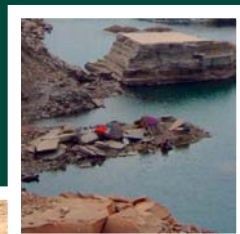
Migrant workers tend to come from the poorest rural communities and are usually landless peasants in search of any work they can find.

Whole families of migrant workers often work in quarries as 'spoil removers' and are paid by the tractor load for the amount of quarry waste they remove.

Migrant workers live among the spoil heaps, without even the most basic facilities.

There are no facilities in place for their health, or the education of their children.

This represents another very serious issue for the sandstone industry – and one which Marshalls is helping to address by funding the voluntary organisation, Hadoti Hast Shlip Sansthan, which aims to improve the lives of migrant labourers.





# ILLEGAL QUARRIES



In the Bundi district, illegal quarries and corruption are rife, with many quarries operating recklessly and polluting the landscape, while evading all legal responsibilities.

At these illegal quarries, young boys and men can be seen working in open sandals, with no gloves, no ear protection and no eye protection.

Even during a brief visit, there is clear evidence that children are working to produce setts and paving.

All around, abandoned spoil heaps devastate the landscape.

Yet in this immensely rural country, even government land and protected areas cannot be entirely safeguarded from illicit quarrying.



# LIVING CONDITIONS



Workers in many quarries lack the most basic facilities to fulfil their needs. Health and medical facilities are desperately needed, as are nurseries and schools.

Housing is poor, without even safe drinking water or sanitation and the most vulnerable are those who suffer most. Women and children are deprived of even minimum wages and welfare.



'While death is sudden in accidents, it can be slow and painful for workers afflicted by occupational diseases. Silicosis, tuberculosis and bronchitis due to inhalation of dust are common among quarry workers... Malaria in Budhpura is a man-made disaster... poverty, overcrowding, poor housing, all these aspects play a role in the slow progress in achieving control over malaria.'

*Budhpura 'Ground Zero' Sandstone Quarrying in India by Pmadhavan, Dr. Sanjay Raj, commissioned by India Committee of the Netherlands.*



# TRANSPORT



There's no doubt that Indian natural sandstone clocks up heavy mileage being shipped into the UK – it's around 4476 miles from Mumbai to London.

The carbon calculator at [www.marshalls.co.uk/sustainability](http://www.marshalls.co.uk/sustainability) has been developed using independently verified product life cycle information to calculate how many tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> – a greenhouse gas everyone's trying to reduce – are generated in the manufacture, supply and delivery of hard landscaping materials.

It shows that Marshalls' ethically sourced natural sandstone products generate 84% more CO<sub>2</sub> than Marshalls' similar product ranges such as Heritage, which looks like newly quarried Yorkstone, but is made from reconstituted concrete.





# ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE

In the Bundi district, years of stone quarrying have left their mark on the land. Travelling towards Budhpura, there are many abandoned quarries and fields of sandstone setts.

Deserted spoil heaps seem to cover an endless area of what was once agricultural land.

Rudimentary attempts by some quarry owners to replant spoil heaps demonstrates that at least some of the environmental damage can be repaired.

But for now, the dust from quarries is causing serious air and water pollution, with degradation of topsoil and scarcity of groundwater making it even more difficult to scratch out a living in this harsh region.

IT IS ALL  
TOO CLEAR  
WHAT EFFECT  
QUARRYING  
HAS HAD  
ON THE  
WATER TABLE







PROPER  
PERSONAL  
PROTECTIVE  
EQUIPMENT  
IS USED



# THE ALTERNATIVE

The only way that natural stone suppliers can guarantee that their products are ethically sourced is by actively managing their supply chain.

Regular independent auditing is essential to ensure that safety, environmental and human rights laws are upheld in quarries producing stone for the UK market.

The Stoneshippers India Masons yard in Kota demonstrates just how different life can be with help from a socially responsible British company like Marshalls.

At this site, proper personal protective equipment is used, adequate wages are provided and child labour is strictly banned.

There is more to do, but the difference between this operation and other sites is already dramatic.



# ETI MEMBERSHIP



The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is a diverse alliance of retailers and brands, trade unions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working collectively to tackle the complex questions posed by ethical trade.

Marshall's is a member of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) and has adopted the ETI Base Code, which is based on the ILO's Conventions and is widely accepted as a model code of practice. It contains provisions based on the following principles:

- No-one should be forced to work
- Workers should be able to join and form trade unions
- Working conditions should be safe and healthy
- Child labour should not be used
- Working hours should not be excessive
- Wages should be enough to live on and provide some discretionary income
- Workers should be treated equally, regardless of their sex, ethnic group, religion or political opinions
- Where possible, workers should be provided with regular employment
- Workers should not be verbally, physically or sexually abused or disciplined

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

# INDEPENDENT AUDITING



"I was very pleased to see that Stoneshippers India is working with the ETI base code that Marshall's has committed to implementing in its supply chain.

There are many areas that I have discussed with Stoneshippers India to improve things further but it must be recognised that they are far ahead of any other producer, either for export or local use."

Chris Harrop, Marshall's Group Marketing Director, December 2006



# HADOTI HAST SHLIP SANSTHAN

# MARSHALLS' COMMITMENTS

In 2007, Marshalls is funding Hadoti Hast Shlip Sansthan (HHSS), an NGO which helps migrant workers to implement sustainable development programmes in the mining areas of Rajasthan.

With Marshalls' funding, Hadoti's immediate priorities will be providing medical aid through a mobile clinic and fortnightly medical camps to help treat widespread tuberculosis, malaria and syphilis.

With match-funding from the Indian Government, Marshalls will also be paying for labourers, social security insurance, aiming to reach 1000 workers in 2007.

Future initiatives will aim to provide safe water, childcare, training and education, as well as supporting rural technology training and micro enterprises.



It has to be recognised that the culture and working practices in India are very different to those in the UK. However, certain working standards are absolutely non-negotiable for Marshalls:

- Its suppliers never use child labour
- Personal Protective Equipment is provided
- Adequate wages are ensured at all sites

Marshalls is also helping the local school attended by the children of workers at Stoneshippers India – and providing new outdoor play equipment to encourage children to attend school.



# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS

Environmental management is in its earliest days in rural India. But innovations like water reprocessing and recycling are already making very real improvements.

At Stoneshippers India's new stone calibration factory, the plant is equipped with a sophisticated water processing and recycling system to ensure that the waste material from the calibration process is managed carefully and not just allowed to run into the local water course.

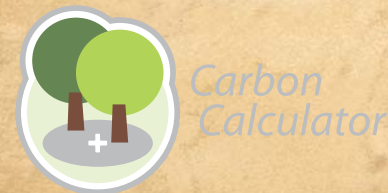
For all the water used in manufacturing stone bought by Marshalls for the UK market, there is a system of filter beds and a recycling system.



Choosing environmentally friendly building materials makes a genuine, significant and positive contribution to the eco rating of our homes.

By balancing hard landscaping with tree planting and other soft landscaping, it is perfectly possible to create a carbon-neutral garden.

Marshalls' carbon calculator at [www.marshalls.co.uk/sustainability](http://www.marshalls.co.uk/sustainability) not only gives details of lower carbon products, but also suggests how many trees can be planted to help offset the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and aim towards creating a carbon-neutral oasis.







# CONSUMER CHOICE

Surely it is simply unacceptable for UK gardeners to buy products that have been made using child labour or bonded labour and without any regard for social or environmental responsibility.

We need to understand how we can all contribute to the sustainability of our own domestic landscapes, by choosing hard landscaping that has fair foundations.

These issues go far deeper than any one producer can address. For progress to be made, it is essential that people buying stone products sourced from India are aware of the very real impact that their choices make.

It is clear that great economic benefit is being gained by the Indian industry exporting product to the UK and the rest of Europe, but this must be balanced with the two other essential strands of sustainability: social progress and environmental protection.

Only when the producers of unethical and environmentally damaging products are denied a market will those products be substituted for products produced in a more sustainable manner.

**YOUR BUYING DECISIONS  
CAN ENCOURAGE CHANGE.**







# Marshalls

*for sustainable landscapes*

[www.marshalls.co.uk/sustainability](http://www.marshalls.co.uk/sustainability)

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