

# 777

The newsletter of the Bhopal Medical Appeal, Spring 2006



Medicine works better  
when given with love





## Bhopal, a brief background

THIS FAMOUS, TERRIBLE & TENDER PICTURE was taken by MAGNUM photographer Raghu Rai on the morning after the night of horror in Bhopal, on December 3, 1984, when a huge cloud of poison 500 times more toxic than cyanide spewed from a factory belonging to Union Carbide Corporation.

Thousands died in the most hideous ways. As the sun rose on streets full of corpses, Raghu found himself in a stony graveyard where a man was burying his young daughter. The father had covered the tiny body but then, unable to bear parting from her, brushed the earth away for one last look.

For the Bhopalis this picture has come to symbolise twenty-one years of unimaginable suffering, an injustice that has never been righted, crimes that continue to go unpunished, and a community that most of the world has forgotten.

Today in Bhopal, well over 100,000 people are still chronically sick from the effects of *that night*, while some 20,000 others are suffering from illnesses caused by contamination of their wells and stand-pipes by chemicals leaking from the abandoned plant, which to this day remains derelict and full of poisons. Union Carbide and its owner Dow Chemical continue to deny responsibility for the water poisoning and refuse to clean up the factory.

### WHY IS THE NEWSLETTER CALLED 777?

777 in Hindi and Urdu is *saat saat saat* which with a slight twist of the tongue can also mean *together, together, together*. The Bhopal Medical Appeal is a joint effort of ordinary people around the world to bring free medical relief to victims of the gas and water disasters. Who are we? We're survivors and Sambhavna Clinic staff in Bhopal, we're donors, volunteers, supporters and organisers in the UK and elsewhere. We're all equal, all together, and all together we're the Bhopal Medical Appeal.

### GIVING SOMETHING BACK

We have learned a great deal about treating chemically- and industrially-induced illnesses with therapies that do not add to the body's toxic load. We are looking to share knowledge with people and organisations all over the world who may benefit from it. Ideas welcome.

### DONATIONS MAY BE MADE DIRECT TO OUR ACCOUNT:

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### CONTACT 777:

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**Bhopal Medical Appeal**

A project of the Pesticide Action Network UK, Registered Charity No. 327215.

# 'Medicine works better when it is given with love'

THIS OLD AND BEAUTIFUL AYURVEDIC SAYING expresses a wisdom that is often forgotten in modern medical practice. How a sick person is greeted, the respect they are shown and the care and courtesy with which they are treated often has as profound a healing effect as herbs, drugs and surgery. This is particularly true in Bhopal, where those who suffer worst are poor, illiterate, and often treated as if they don't matter. In one hospital established supposedly for the benefit of gas-victims, the sufferers are contemptuously referred to as 'gassies'. They are segregated from private patients, given scant attention and inferior medicines. It's striking that so many of the people who come to us marvel at how differently they are treated at Sambhavna. For all that, there are conditions that we can't cure, and treatments we are not equipped to give.

### Laccho (cover story)

In this issue you will read the story of poor Laccho, whose picture appears on the cover. Years of savage misfortune have been too much for her and her mind has given way. There are thousands in Bhopal who are teetering on the brink of mental collapse. Panic attacks



are a common problem – palpitations, heavy sweating, immobility, fear of the unknown, a sinking heart – all these can strike together without warning, for example while crossing a street, and the effect is devastating, yet mental health is not a priority for the authorities. With perhaps 60,000 people in need of psychotherapy, the government hospitals employ not one psychiatrist.

At our Sambhavna clinic we do have a consultant psychiatrist, but we need to expand this work.

### A special appeal

Also in this issue we launch a special appeal for a Idris (pictured above), a gas-victim who urgently needs a heart operation to save his life. We do not have the necessary surgical facilities, nor the budget to pay for the operation to be done privately. The story is on pages 6 & 7. A generous response to our appeal will mean we can set up a fund to provide life-saving operations to those who need them.

### Dominique Lapierre

It is a pleasure, long overdue, to introduce you to best-selling French author Dominique Lapierre, and his wife Dominique. The Lapierrés support numerous charitable projects in India and have been great friends to us. Out of the royalties of his book *Five Past Midnight in Bhopal* Dominique has endowed a gynaecology unit at Sambhavna and equipped it with a colposcope. His support also enables us to run miniclinics in two badly-hit communities plus a village school.

Last, some brilliant news. There are now 10,000 of us Bhopal Medical Appeal supporters in the UK and we can be very proud of what all of us together, through the work of the clinic, continue to achieve.





# Laccho now lives in a world where no one can reach her

LACHHO BAI SITS IN THE DOOR OF HER HOUSE, cradling a garment that belonged to her daughter. She's speaking, but what she's saying, no one can tell. She breaks into song, gives a laugh. Sometimes, she cries.

'She's been thus for years,' says a neighbour. 'All day sitting in the doorway, holding that cloth, talking to God or whoever will listen.'

Hearing our voices, Laccho turns and surveys us with empty eyes, then gives a toothless and unexpectedly sweet smile. To look at you would think she was in her eighties, not forty years younger.

Laccho was born in Bhopal in 1958. At sixteen she was married to Laxmi Narayan, a hotel waiter. There was never enough money. Laccho earned a few extra rupees rolling leaf cigarettes but the couple were always hungry. Having no money to buy a hut, they built a shack of planks near the fine new American factory that had opened in Bhopal.

Laccho never knew much joy. She lost four children, each at less than a year. Her fifth child, a daughter, was two years old on the venomous night of December 2nd, 1984.

'On *that night* there were four of us,' says her husband. 'My wife and myself, our little daughter and fate – we all fled together.'

The events of *that night* have often been described – the screams, panic, street lamps reduced to pinpoints by thick clouds of poison, dying figures stumbling past in a tobacco light – but we can never know what it was like to be there. Those who survived find it too terrible to remember. 'We ran,' they will tell you. 'The gas burned our eyes, we were choking. We fell. We knew we would die.' But these stories are mere words, formulae that mask how it really was – the horror and deep fear – that people can't bear to recall. A study in 2000 by the *Fact Finding Mission on Bhopal* discovered that nearly six out of ten survivors had afterwards suffered significant losses of

memory. When Mahesh Matthai's film, *Bhopal Express* was screened in the city, the audience wept.

Laccho was heavily pregnant and could not run fast. In the crush she fell unconscious. A few months later she gave birth to a daughter. By this time both were too ill to work and fell into the most wretched poverty.

In 1995 Laccho lost her mind.

'She strays in the alleys,' says her husband. 'Often improperly dressed. Some make fun of her, but most feel pity. So many here have lost their wits, living beings who are no longer aware of their own existence.'

A study by the *National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences* found that at least half of those exposed to Union Carbide's gases suffered from mental health problems. That was in 1985. Since then, there have been no more government studies.

'When we lost Laccho,' says Laxmi, 'our daughters, needing a mother's care, had instead to look after her. Now they're married I do my best to keep her clean and cook our meals. I can't hear well, my sight blurs, my limbs are numb. I take any work I can get, yet I can't fill our bellies.'

Laccho listens with a smile. Some trace of a forgotten life stirs in her, she feels the urge to offer us tea and gropes for a strainer and glass.

'She can no longer see,' says Laxmi sadly. 'It's the final cruelty. In June last year, she was betrayed by her sight. For her there's no more day, just night everlasting. She sits at the threshold crying senseless words for this world with no one to feel her agony, other than me, and these eyes of mine are soft with sorrow.'

NISHA PUNEKAR

*Mental illness is not recognised as a consequence of gas-exposure in Bhopal, sufferers get no compensation or treatment from the authorities. The government hospitals between them employ not a single psychiatrist. Sambhavna does. There may be little we can do for Laccho, but we can bring comfort to many many others.*





# Urgent appeal to save the life of a kind & gentle man



IDRIS IS A SOFT-SPOKEN MAN OF FORTY-FIVE. He was 21 when, in 1982, he and his wife Anisa left their village in Bihar to come to Bhopal. Like so many others, he dreamed of finding a good job and having a comfortable life. Instead he found the nightmare of Union Carbide's gases.

Around midnight on December 3rd 1984 Idris-bhai (Idris-brother) got home from his work at the Hotel Anjum. Anisa was asleep. Their neighbour Hassan was coughing violently. Idris went to see if he was all right.

'Some idiot's frying chillies,' Hassan said. Idris' nose and throat began to sting. He too began coughing. As he went back to his house he saw people running down the alley shouting 'Run! Get out!' The narrow alley filled with frightened neighbours. As the gas thickened people panicked and began to flee. Idris and Anisa ran too, caught in the stampede. Their lungs felt as if they were on fire. Anisa started vomiting. Idris took her to the Hotel Anjum, which was deserted. Somehow the night passed.

In the morning the streets were full of dead bodies. Thousands had died. The corpses of cows and dogs lay alongside human victims. Idris and Anisa went home to find that leaves of trees had turned black. Their eyes were burning, it was hard to breathe. Two weeks later

Idris went back to work, but the fire in his chest never stopped burning.

Years passed, Idris and Anisa became parents. The whole family's health was bad, and further misfortunes followed. In 1992 an army of Hindu fundamentalists tore down a mosque in Ayodhya, sparking riots all over India. After attacks in their neighbourhood, Idris and Anisa, moved their family for safety to a friend's place. Their empty house was ransacked and all their personal belongings, including documents, were destroyed.

By 1996 Idris was coughing badly. He felt very ill, and developed a fever that would not abate. A doctor at DIG hospital said he had TB and put him a course of injections. After one of these he collapsed and fell unconscious. The treatment was discontinued. As time passed Idris grew steadily more breathless. Soon he needed an inhaler. He was sure he was about to die.

A SAMBHAVNA HEALTH WORKER, RAMESH MISHRA, met Idris while carrying out a health survey of his neighbourhood, and brought him to the clinic where he was seen right away by Dr Qaiser. Idris complained of chest pain. His breathing was ragged and Dr Qaiser called in Sambhavna trustee Dr Trivedi, a noted heart specialist. Idris was given a cardiac test, and discovered

to have an atrial septum defect (a hole in the heart). This was the root of his problem, but his condition had been made infinitely worse by his exposure to Carbide's gases. His lungs are severely scarred and by now have lost half their function.

'I was amazed,' says Idris, 'at the attention I got from the clinic staff.' People were concerned and friendly.

Health workers Ramesh, Ritesh, Masarrat, Aziza and Diwarkar kept in regular touch with him and other gas victims. Sambhavna's managing trustee Sathyu used to visit his family, and often brought Idris to the clinic – and once took him to an eye camp – on the back of his motorcycle.

We at Sambhavna are giving Idris the best treatment we can, which, thanks to generous 777 readers, is absolutely free.

We have managed greatly to ease his breathing and lessen his discomfort, and we provide him and his family the medical and social support they need. But the scars in his lungs can't ever be healed and the hole in his heart needs mending.

THE HEART SURGERY IDRIS NEEDS IS AVAILABLE at the Bhopal Memorial Hospital. It was established (with funds raised by selling Union Carbide's Indian assets) supposedly for the benefit of gas victims, but Idris has been told that he must pay for the operation.

He does not qualify for free care, say the hospital's administrators, *because he is not a gas victim*. But of course

*Idris can't afford the heart surgery that will save his life. It costs 100,000 rupees (about £1,200)*

Idris is a gas victim. There are dozens of witnesses to attest to the fact and Sambhavna has written to confirm that Idris's deterioration is gas-related.

Sorry, say the hospital bosses, if he is a gas victim, where are the documents to prove it? Vainly, we point out that the papers in question have been ashes these fourteen years. Forcing the authorities to issue new papers will take court action, maybe lasting years and time is running out.

Idris himself is bitter, but fatalistic. 'I guess the burning fire was my destiny, which I can't defeat. It must be the will of God, what else can I say? Yet I'd like to ask the Upstairs-One, what did I do? Why punish me? Lacking papers also means I have received not a penny of compensation. Others have been paid, but not me. My papers are destroyed, I can't magic them back. Hardly can I afford to bribe officials, with my family going hungry.'

Idris and Anisa have six children, of whom five are sick. We are treating them at Sambhavna. The family live in a tiny two-room hovel in an area near the Union Carbide factory. They have now been issued with an eviction notice because their home stands on railway land and is to be demolished. The government says it will settle them in a new spot, miles away from the city. Travelling to and from Bhopal to work would cost 40 rupees (50p) a day, more than Idris or any member of the family has a hope of earning.

Idris is far too ill to work. He weighs just 94 pounds. He's too sick even to eat, and anyway there isn't enough money for proper food. He can't walk for longer than five minutes. Recently he was hospitalised for a month and had to wear an oxygen mask day and night. His chance of life depends on the surgery he cannot afford.

With thousands needing free medical help in Bhopal, Sambhavna's budget is too small for us to spend a large sum on one person, and there are others who need surgery. But we cannot just stand by, so we are making a special appeal for a donor, or donors, to give Idris the operation he needs. It costs £1,200 pounds.

If as we hope, the response is generous, any surplus will go to a fund for others who need life saving operations.





# 'My life was a nightmare, then



I USED TO DREAD WAKING UP. Every day of my life was a battle against pain. At first it was just now and again, in my abdomen, but gradually it grew more severe. It could strike at any instant, often at night. It was unbearable, I felt that my abdomen would burst. Periods were agony. I couldn't work, or eat. I'd go hungry for days.

I got to know all of Bhopal's hospitals. Blindfolded I could lead you round those awful places, every government hospital I tried, plus a few private clinics. None helped. Hamidia Hospital sent me to Sultania Hospital. From one to another I staggered. The private clinic charged 70 rupees a visit and told me to buy medicines, but I had no money left.

One day Manuradha, a health worker from Sambhavna, came to our neighbourhood to talk about women's problems. I had not heard of Sambhavna so I went looking for it. This was the old clinic, it was in a small building. It did not look like a hospital and once inside, nor did it feel like one, it wasn't what I was used to. The staff seemed pleased to meet me and treated me politely, as if I mattered. They listened carefully to all I said and asked lots of questions.

Sambhavna gave me a book and in it wrote my name. They said it would be a record of my illness and my treatments, so I could be properly informed about my own health. No one had ever done this before.

Sambhavna's doctor prescribed some tablets, and asked me to go back for tests. The drug made me feel better but I never completed the course and did not return. I felt too embarrassed. I found it hard to talk about my condition, because with the pain came a white discharge. Many women in our area suffered from the same thing, but hardly anyone dared to mention it.

In due course my pain returned. Then Sambhavna's follow up team arrived to see me. This amazed me. With so many sick people in this city, how come they cared enough about me to come looking for me? Anyhow, they took both me and my husband to Sambhavna and this time we followed instructions. In a few days, my pain vanished. It has never returned.

WHEN SHE FIRST CAME TO US Rajshree was suffering from painful inflammation of cervix and vagina, which can occur as an allergic or irritative response to chemicals. She lives in Atal Ayub Nagar, a locality where the water is contaminated by chemicals leaking from the Union Carbide factory, half a mile to the south of her house.

Rajshree was not a gas-victim. She grew up far away from Bhopal in the neighbouring state of Uttar Pradesh, the daughter of a cobbler.

At 13, Rajshree was married to Brahma Kumar, who was then 23. 'Brahma is a graduate,' Rajshree says with pride, but in their home town he could only find work as a casual labourer so in 1990, six years after the gas-disaster, the pair came to Bhopal and moved into a hut in Chhola Road and Brahma got work as a security guard.

# I got the Book of Sambhavna'



RAJSHREE and Brahma worked hard and by 1992 had saved up enough to buy

their own small hut in Atal Ayub Nagar. Just 200 meters away were the open air ponds where Union Carbide had dumped thousands of tons of toxic chemicals. Before the move, Rajshree had had no health problems, but nightmares lay ahead.

'We got our water from a hand pump,' Rajshree recalls. 'The pump was painted red as a warning that the water was contaminated, but it was all we had. Soon I was sick. All around us people were ill. Pains, headache, breathlessness, cancer of the womb, all these were common.

'In those days I knew nothing of what was going wrong with my body and none of the hospitals I visited would tell me anything. I now know that the white discharge is called leucorrhoea, and that it is not an illness, but a symptom. The cause is elsewhere. It cannot be a

coincidence that where the water is poisoned, people fall sick. In our area there are many still-births.'

In the next few years, Rajshree lost four babies. One miscarried at four weeks, a second was born not properly formed. Two more died, one after twelve hours, another after six months. A dark cloud of pain soon blotted out her life.

'AFTER I GOT BETTER I TOLD all my friends about Sambhavna. Ram Bai, Santoshi, Hira, Kala Bai, Meera, Kusum, Bhoori, Rakhi Bai, Rajni, all had similar problems to mine. Santoshi hadn't had a period for months. They were shy about discussing these things.

I reassured them. People in this clinic do really care about us. They want to make us better. Go there and get the Book of Sambhavna. It's your own health record, all the details right there, properly written down. Plus, I told them, you won't have to pay for a thing because all the treatment and medicines are free. Sambhavna is the only clinic

in Bhopal that gives free treatment to people poisoned by the water. If you need a test they can't do, they will send you to somewhere clean and decent, and pay the fee.

I said to these women, just think how many times you have seen doctors in hospitals using the same instrument on one person after another without cleaning it? In our clinic, they never use an instrument without sterilising it. I convinced all of my friends to visit Sambhavna. Now they are all getting better and just about every woman I know has Sambhavna's book.'

LAST MONTH RAJSHREE and Brahma sold their hut and moved with their two sons and daughter to a two-bedroom 'cement' house which they bought for 50,000 rupees, every penny of it saved from Brahma's 2,200 rupee-per-month income. Rajshree says her life has been transformed, thanks to the Book of Sambhavna.

## DOMINIQUE LAPIERRE 'CITY OF JOY' GYNAECOLOGY CLINIC

*In 2001, the year Rajshree first came to Sambhavna, the clinic benefited from the endowment of a gynaecology unit by French author Dominique Lapierre.*

*Sambhavna is the only medical facility in Bhopal to own a colposcope, which helps in diagnosis and surgery. French doctors Hélène le Menestral, Françoise Baylet-Vincent, Régine Coudane, Angela Bertoli & Sylvie Jung gave up holidays to train our staff. We are extremely grateful to them and to the Lapierrés. See the articles on Dominique's work (14-15) and Oriya basti school (16-17).*



# The scent of herbs, the drowsy

THIS IS OUR FIRST SEASON WITHOUT TERRY (see pp 12-13) and we miss her presence in the garden. There are other new developments. For one thing, we're now beekeepers. Honey is always needed at the clinic, as it is much used in herbal medicines.

We began with two hives and the bees were quickly at home. Instead of flying for miles to find pollen, they simply stayed in the garden, which all day long is full of buzzing. Ratna and Mukesh, our gardeners, who look after the bees, explain to bemused visitors that our home produced herbal honey is medically more valuable than anything you can buy. The bees themselves are amiable sorts who don't appear to mind sharing the fruits of their labours with us, we have already collected the first batch of honey, and it was *delicious*.

Our pond is proving to be a challenge. It doesn't hold water all year round, we won't use plastic to line it and cement is too expensive. The pond has been well-landscaped in broad terraces, which we now use to grow herbs and plants when the water dries up.

In and after the rains, when the pond is full, herbs like naagarmotha and bach, which are good for the treatment of coughs, colds and respiratory problems

have been planted on the lower slopes, as they need lots of water. Balaamool, used in panchakarma treatment and in many medicines does not require much water, so it grows on the higher slopes.



Ratna, Mohan and our new medicine-man Rashiraman, made a journey to Arogyadham herbal research centre in Chitrakoot. More than 500 species of herbs are cultivated there and our team learned to identify an impressive number. They also studied drip irrigation and vermi-composting with earthworms. They returned from Chitrakoot full of ideas and enthusiasm, bringing us a new variety of ashwagandha, seeds of kateri, chiraya, sarpagandha and mainfal, plus seedlings of pipli, krishnapadni, khuraasaani ajwain, nagarmotha and sanaya, all of

which have been planted and are doing well.

Inevitably it wasn't long before Ratna, Mukesh and Mohan did some worm farming. Four large beds were filled with cowdung and covered with leaves, stem and root wastes from the garden and kitchen. When this was well-rotted, two and a half pounds of earthworms were introduced to each bed. They hardly needed to be told 'bon appetit', and got right down to it, we shall soon be able to collect our first batch of vermi compost. It's good full-bodied natural stuff, which we'll mainly use for our potted plants.

As if this weren't enough, the tireless trio a trying a second way of making manure. A pit measuring 15'x12', and about two feet deep has been dug near the tamarind tree, layered with wood shavings, cowdung, alfalfa and arandi, then topped with banana leaves. After three months the compost will be dug out and spread on the garden. A benefit of this method is that, unlike our present compost heap, it doesn't need turning every ten days.

The clinic's boundary walls will soon be glowing green, as herbal creepers like nisoeth (good for jaundice and other liver ailments), shataavari (general tonic) and giloy (for fever,

# hum of bees making honey

malaria and also for jaundice) spread their vines along the warm brick. Nirgundi (for joint pains), and neem (amazing all purpose medicine) grow by the Ayurvedic consulting rooms, and the area in front of the canteen is thick with tulsi, pudina, gudhal, and lemongrass, all growing just where they're handy for the ladies who run the canteen.

Next to the airy lounge where people waiting for treatment sit, we have made a pond with a little water fall, home to a tortoise and several fish. Surrounded by aloe vera, roses, adusa, lemon balm, tulsi (basil) and sadaa-suhaañgan, the pond with its gently splashing water is a refreshing sight for those whose bodies and spirits are weary.

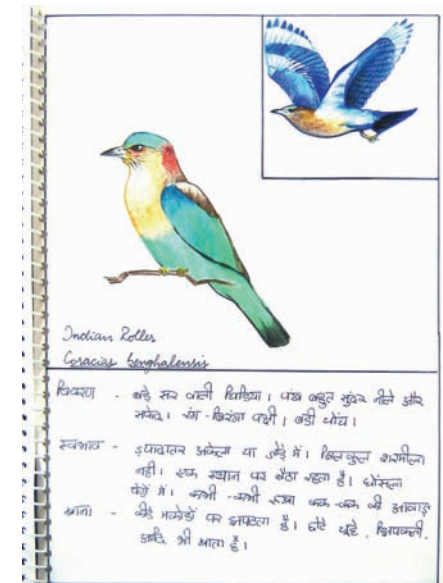


The last few weeks have been harvest time. Self-seeded chandrasoor gave us about eight hundred grams of seed. Ashwagandha produced more than thirty kilos of root, enough for four months. We got two kilos of coriander and ajwain, also self-seeded, gave us more than a kilo. Of sauñf (fennel) and shataavari we had four kilos each. Haldi (turmeric) and safed musli have yet to be harvested, Mukesh and Mohan are looking forward to a very good yield.

Summer is now on us, with temperatures above 40°C. The garden looks dry, but we are tilling and weeding, for within weeks, possibly even as you are reading this, the sky to the west will darken, lightning will flash and the downpours of the monsoon will begin. The pond will fill, the cobras and black water snake will be happy and we'll see kingfishers again.

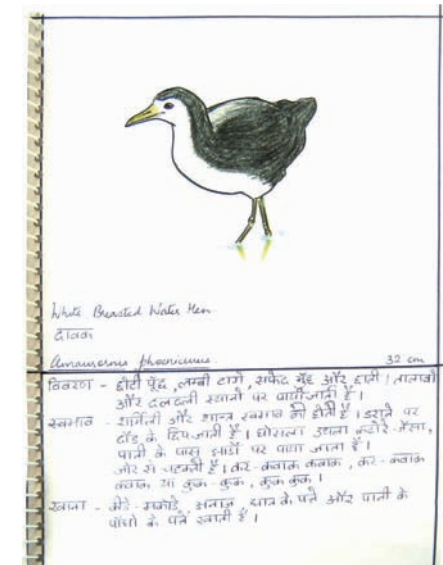
## GARDEN VISITORS

INDIAN ROLLER  
*Coracias benghalensis*



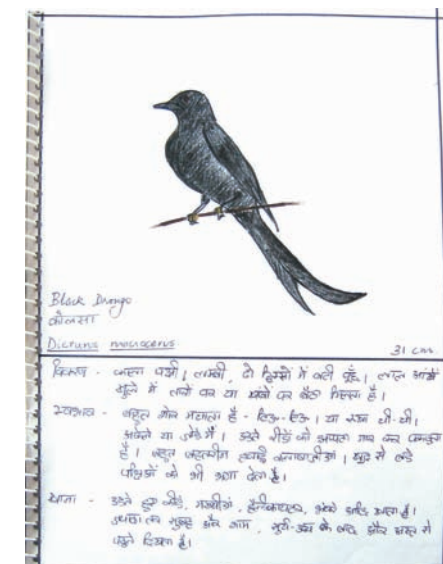
A big headed bird. Beautiful blue wings. Colourful. Big beak. Solitary or in pairs. Not at all shy. Likes sitting in one spot. Builds nests on trees. Occasionally caws, *kek kek*. Pounces on large insects. Eats small mice and lizards.

WHITE BREASTED WATERHEN  
*Amaurornis phoenicurus*



Small tail, long legs, white breast and face. Found in ponds and marshes. Quiet and shy. Quick to run and hides herself. Nest like a shallow bowl is built in bushes close to water. Chirps loudly, *karr-kawaak, karr kawaak* or *kuk kuk, kuk kuk*. Eats insects and larvae, grain, leaves of paddy and of aquatic plants.

BLACK DRONGO  
*Dicurus macrocerus*



Coal black with red eyes and long divided tail. Likes sitting on wires and poles in the open. Makes a lot of noise - *tea-u, tea-u* or coarse *chee, chee*. Fabulous trick flier, hovers over burning stubble taking insects on the wing, harries larger birds. Often seen just after sun set and before sun set. Eats flies, dragon flies, bumble bees.





# A sad farewell to our Terry



*Moved by the Bhopal tragedy to become an organic gardener and fight the menace of pesticides, Terry Allan has worked with some of the big names in deep ecology, and has planted organic gardens from Chile to Bhopal. For the last three years we have been fortunate to have her with us at Sambhavna, where she surrounded the new buildings with herbs and medicinal plants and trained a devoted garden staff. Now, with her work completed, Terry is moving on. Where will be the next place to benefit from her healing touch?*

STORY: SARVADARSHI GUPTA

TERRY ALLAN GREW UP IN THE APPALACHIANS where, as the saying goes, ‘the mountains are taller over *yander*.’ Yanderlust certainly called Terry, who has spent years in remote parts of the world, digging, planting and harvesting.

From childhood, she wanted to grow things. Her love of gardening led to a degree in horticulture from the University of California. She might have followed a traditional career, but after a friend told her about the devastating medical aftermath of the Union Carbide gas leak in Bhopal, Terry decided to work against the use of pesticides and became an organic gardener.

She has created a series of organic gardens and landscaping projects around the world.

In 1992 she went to southern Chile to work with billionaire-turned-deep-ecologist Doug Tompkins. His Pumalin estate, comprising 800,000 acres of temperate rainforest, set in breathtaking landscapes between deep



fjords and the ice-capped Andes, is the largest privately owned wilderness in the world, Tompkins bought it to preserve it forever exactly as it was, and moved to a house on Reñihue Fjord without electricity or phones. Communication with the outside world was via short-wave radio and the only way to get there was to fly in to the tiny landing strip.

Terry’s task was to create a working organic farm to feed Pumalin’s workers and staff. To this day visitors to the estate are often lectured by Tompkins on the innovative farming practices Terry introduced to protect soil against the dangers of over-farming and erosion.



BHOPAL COULD HARDLY BE A MORE DIFFERENT environment from the glaciers and lakes of Chilean Patagonia. Set in a burning plain, the summer heat climbs over 40°C, but winter nights often hover just above freezing. For three months of the year we are drenched by the monsoon.

Terry found a site baked and cracked by the sun, and deep in rubbish. The first task for her and her staff was to go over the two acres, picking up every vile plastic bag. All of us watched in amazement and no small delight, as out of the wasteland emerged a garden remarkable for its beauty, fragrance and medicinal value.

The wisdom of herbalism is that you do not make your medicines from imported plants, but from those that grow naturally where you are. So Terry had to put aside her knowledge of American and European herbs

and learn the species listed in the Ayurvedic texts.

She taught us that the prime virtues of a gardener are patience and perseverance, and she spent a great deal of time training and enthusing her small staff.

Thanks to the efforts of our gardeners, the clinic can now produce medicines like *pushyanug churna*, which is made from 24 different herbs, and is used to treat the menstrual problems that plague gas-affected women in Bhopal. We make the medicine ourselves at a cost nine times less than the market price and it is of a far better quality.

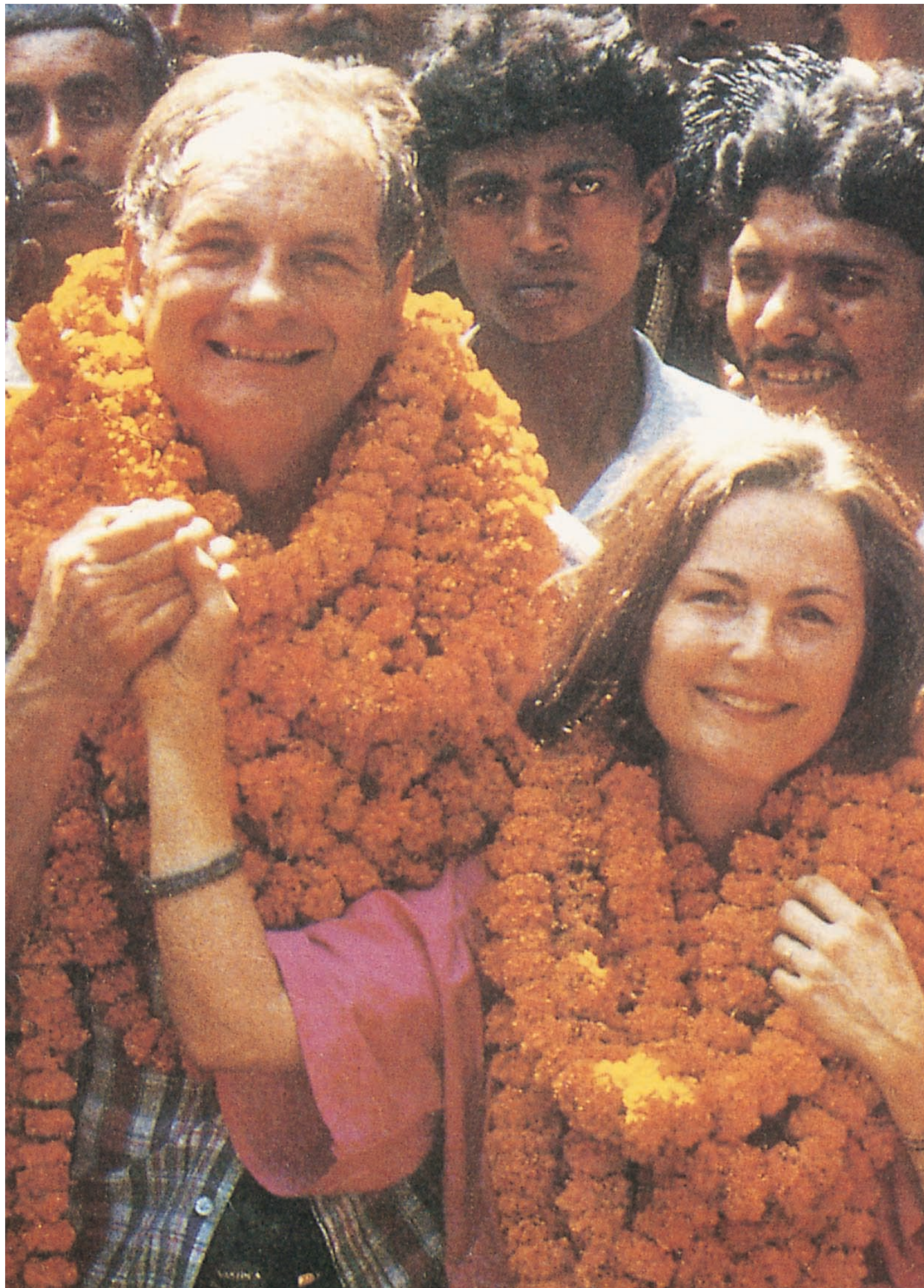
We’re going to miss Terry, her guitar playing and singing, her honesty and sense of humour. We are lucky to have had a world-class gardener create our medicinal garden at Sambhavna and train our garden staff. We send Terry our love and wish her very well.

*Terry can be reached at [terrykisan@yahoo.com](mailto:terrykisan@yahoo.com).*

GARDENS AT OPPOSITE ENDS OF THE EARTH.  
*Above, PUMALIN, CHILE.*  
*Below, BHOPAL, INDIA.*







# Dominique & Dominique: champions of the poor

DOMINIQUE LAPIERRE IS ONE OF FRANCE'S best-known authors. For many years he and his wife Dominique have been good friends to the Bhopalis.

He has used royalties from his book *Five Past Midnight in Bhopal* (reviewed on the back cover of this issue) to endow a gynaecological clinic at Sambhavna. He also funds two community clinics run by us in gas affected settlements and a primary school for the kids of Oriya Basti (article on pages 16 & 17). To complete the list of good works, he championed our cause to the Pro Victimis trust of Geneva, which gave a large sum to buy land and build the new clinic.

A good friend indeed, and Bhopal is only part of his philanthropy. He also supports a home for leper children in Calcutta, runs a health programme in north India which has cured a million sufferers of TB. He has given 540 tube wells to drought-hit villages. His latest project is to rescue children working on Ganges river boats from the mafia that has enslaved them.

All this work is made enabled by the royalties he earns from a string of massively best-selling books.

Aged 17, Dominique left Paris to work his passage on a ship bound for the United States. He disembarked with just \$30 in his pocket, but somehow managed to undertake a 30,000-mile journey around North America. This adventure led to *A Dollar for 1,000 Miles*, which became his first best-seller.

Dominique then worked as a journalist, spending 20 years with *Paris Match*, covering the Algerian war and many other catastrophe zones from the front line.

'In Algeria,' he told *The Guardian*, 'I did some very tough reporting on people dying. They were wounded and I did not pick them up. My first loyalty was to my paper, and my first problem if I had a camera was to do the photos and make sure they got back to my office. I couldn't stop to pick up a child who was bleeding and bring it to hospital. I discovered on the battlefield that one cannot at the same time be Hemingway and Mother Teresa.'

But he was unable to cultivate the detachment that allows a reporter to write about horrors then spend the evening carousing at the Groucho Club. In a sudden moment of remorse, he confessed, 'I had seen so many things, and done nothing about them. It was a great

moment to make amends for all the things I had left undone.'

In 1981, after a visit to Calcutta and Mother Teresa, Dominique set up a foundation to rescue leper children from the slums, and dedicated half his royalties to its support. He told the story in *City of Joy*, which became a film starring Patrick Swayze.

Other best-selling titles include *Freedom at Midnight*, *Is Paris Burning?*, *O Jerusalem!* and *Is New York Burning?* (all with co-writer Larry Collins). He was sole author of *City of Joy*, *Beyond Love* and *A Thousand Suns*. *Five Past Midnight in Bhopal* was a collaboration with his nephew Javier Moro.

The Lapierre method – solidly research-based – is to work from a storehouse of facts and information, and transcripts of thousands of interviews, but above all to experience the subject at first hand. For the Bhopal book, he drank water from a poisoned well.

'Carbide disappeared in 1984 leaving behind thousands of tons of toxic effluents. Each day this poisons a little more the wells of those who still live near the rusting factory. I wanted to reckon the aggressiveness of this pollution by drinking half a glass of the water of one of those wells. My mouth, my throat, my tongue instantly got on fire, while my arms and legs suffered an immediate skin rash. This was the simple manifestation of what men, women and children have to endure daily.'

This is more than a writer doing research, it's a deep personal commitment to the people he writes about.

Dominique is saddened by the lack of interest in Bhopal shown by showbiz-obsessed Indian media and journalists who regard the tragedy as old history.

'The entire world shut its eyes to a catastrophe ten times worse than the New York tragedy. Many, many more people were affected by the Bhopal gas leakage. Here in India an industrial disaster killed 30,000 and poisoned 500,000. It has continued to kill for twenty one years but nobody is interested because it concerns the poor. Thousands of women still suffer from the gas leak, there are malformed children. What have they got in compensation? Nothing.'

'When I was writing my book on Bhopal, one reporter asked me: "Bhopal? Why Bhopal?" So I told her, "Get your arse out of that chair and go to Bhopal, then you'll understand."



# Clashing cultures: a school

ORIYA BASTI IS A SMALL SETTLEMENT ROUGHLY two-thirds of a mile from the derelict Union Carbide factory. *Basti* means 'village', but in Bhopal it is applied to the slums where the poor have built rough houses and formed themselves into communities.

Although, at a glance, the shacks, constructed from planks, clay walls, bits of sacking and tin cans, often look like crude shanties, closer inspection shows how people have tried to recreate village architecture using whatever materials they can find, or afford.

The settlement was badly hit by the gas disaster of 1984, many people are chronically ill, and Sambhavna's health workers, who were frequent visitors, wanted to do something to help the community and particularly the children, who are something of a lost generation.

The first settlers of Oriya *basti* came, as the name suggests, from the eastern state of Orissa. They were recruited in the fifties to work on the Bhopal railway as 'gangmen' and 'helpers', the lowest rung of workers. The vast majority came from tribal villages. Most speak Oriya to each other and retain a live connection with the community back home, but the children are caught between two cultures.

Bhopal is a Hindi-speaking district, so the children grow up speaking a patois. They often find it hard to communicate with their grandparents, let alone with relatives in the ancestral villages. Nor, because it is not spoken at home, are they fluent in Hindi, so they don't easily fit into municipal schools and many drop out.

Sambhavna's wish to help the basti dwellers turned into a Community Centre, opened in 2002, followed by a primary school for the younger children. Both were made possible by generous financial support from Dominique Lapierre whose book *Five Past Midnight in Bhopal* strongly featured Oriya *basti* as the home of the story's young heroine, Padmini.

The school is administered by Gangaram, another of the book's leading characters. Avid readers of 777 may remember him from the last issue, where he was discovered thatching a roof at the new clinic.

Gangaram is helped in the running of the school by Lalita Bai and other elders of the *basti*.

We have recently appointed two young, enthusiastic and dynamic teachers, Upendra and Triveni, who teach on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. There are four classes in the school. All pupils learn Oriya, Hindi, English and Maths, the idea being to prepare them for

entry to mainstream schools and to equip them with language to be used at home and with their clan. The new teachers are particularly aware of the need to enable school drop-outs to rejoin the system.

ON THE 1ST OF OCTOBER LAST YEAR, THREE students from the Bhopal School of Social Sciences organised the children into litter-picking teams. They went all around the *basti*, picking up plastic bags and other rubbish and collecting it one place. The students worked with the children and taught them Mahatma Gandhi's famous song *Raghupati raghava raja ram*.

The next day was Gandhiji's birthday. Upendra and Triveni assembled all the children in the community centre and told them stories from Gandhiji's life, about his love for his mother country and his struggle against foreign rule. The children for their part gave a vigorous performance of *Raghupati raghava raja ram* and other songs. Some recited poetry, and two budding comedians did stand-up routines.

The three college students as part of their degrees are working on further projects. One is trying to get a group of children below 13 years old to stop chewing *gutkha* (a mix of betel nut and tobacco which is a curse among young people throughout India), another is studying the problems of girls who drop out of school and encouraging them to rejoin. The third runs a group focused on the health problems of adolescent girls.

Academically, the school is doing very well. We are exploring possibilities for senior students to sit the 5th Year Board Examination, meanwhile our 35 children take exams set by the teachers. The four classes most recently achieved pass rates of 71%, 88%, 83% and 100% respectively.

Under the guidance of Gangaram and neighbours, pupils have made a garden around the school and are now growing medicinal plants. They have produced 20 kilos of shatavari roots and an almost equal quantity of aloe vera – both excellent for gynaecological problems. In order to focus this work, the teachers are doing a house-to-house health survey of the *basti's* 79 families. The most common symptoms thus far are headaches, pain in the limbs, joints, chest and abdomen, coughs and fevers. When the survey is complete, Sambhavna's Ayurvedic doctors will work with Gangaram and the children to plant the medicines that will do most good for the *basti* dwellers.

# for the children of Oriya *basti*



Above: Oriya *basti* school, with wall paintings by the children. Below: two of our younger pupils







# FC United of Bhopal kicks off

THE NAMES OF STEVE TORPEY, Dave Chadwick & Karl Marginson will soon be inspiring kids in the poorest districts of Bhopal as well as young football enthusiasts across the north west of England.

Steve, Dave and Karl are striker, full back (captain) and manager of F.C. United of Manchester, which after a dream debut season, is being feted as the most exciting club in England. Formed only last July by Manchester United fans disillusioned by their club's hostile takeover by a US tycoon, F.C. United regularly draws bigger crowds than teams in the F.A. League, eight full divisions above them and is already the 88th biggest club in the country.

The club's remarkable success, on and off the field (it has just been

crowned champion of its league) is the appeal of an afternoon out for the family watching live football in a genuinely friendly atmosphere and a rejection of the 'greed culture' that bedevils the 'beautiful game'.

The club is keen to become fully involved with the local community, ploughing energy into projects that benefit disadvantaged youngsters.

What then is the connection with kids in distant Bhopal?

Just this, that a founder-member of F.C. United happened also to be a founder-member of the Bhopal Medical Appeal and felt the two had much in common. Both are self-help initiatives by ordinary people who said, 'We refuse to accept this, if no one else is going to do something about it, we will do it ourselves.'

The Bhopal Medical Appeal thus became F.C. United's first main club sponsor, using the club's matchday programmes to tell a whole new audience about Bhopal. Supporters responded with collections of cash and kit. Outfits for two complete



teams were collected by the charity KitAid and are bound for Bhopal where a new club has been formed to give children from gas-affected areas the chance to play, have fun and learn how to be part of a team.

F.C. United of Bhopal will be run by Mohsin Sultan, who as a baby was severely exposed to Carbide's gases. The story of how his mother Aziza (a health worker at our Sambhavna clinic) fled carrying Mohsin, has been told in an earlier issue of 777. Find it at <http://www.bhopal.org/aziza.html>.

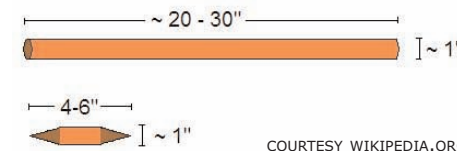
Mohsin already organises a team of kids from his community, who have the use of a stadium standing, bizarrely, in the middle of a shanty town whose water is poisoned by Union Carbide's factory. People were forcibly settled in this place by state politicians who built the stadium as a pointless gesture to ally criticism.

F.C. United of Bhopal will give it the purpose it has hitherto lacked.

Says Mohsin, 'We are very excited about the new club. We'll welcome boys and girls from the poorest areas where there are no facilities for play. We'll practice football and hockey, as well as traditional village sports like gulli-danda and kabbadi.'

F.C. United of Manchester plans to continue its support by finding funds to train coaches in Bhopal. If this happens, it won't be long before the Bhopal club also begins to storm its way up the local leagues.

## Gulli-danda



COURTESY WIKIPEDIA.ORG

This traditional village sport was also known in 18th century Britain where it was called Tip-Cat. It is played by using the longer *danda* to strike the tapered *gulli*, sending it spiralling up then whacking it as far as possible – distances measured in *danda* lengths.



## A club is born

Children in a Bhopal basti play football on waste ground. Areas near the factory are contaminated with toxic chemicals dumped in huge open air 'solar ponds' by Union Carbide over many years. The ponds were lined with black plastic no thicker than dustbin liner. They leaked poisons into the ground water and wells.



The young are excited about the prospect of playing games in proper teams. Everyone still wants to be David Beckham, but all the buzz is about the great new Manchester team.



On April 22 at F.C. United of Manchester's last home game of the season (the day they were crowned champions), Derek Collins of KitAid collected kit donated by club supporters. Enough to equip two teams will soon be on its way to Bhopal.



Meanwhile, the new club F.C. United of Bhopal has already found a solid core in the team organised by Mohsin Sultan of young players from gas-affected neighbourhoods. At present the lads must provide their own kit, which not all are able to do.



This open air-stadium was built as a political gesture and stands empty near Atal Ayub Nagar. Mohsin, himself gas-affected as an infant, lives in the settlement, and plans to use the stadium to stage the future home matches of F.C. United of Bhopal.



# The joy of volunteering: in Bhopal & London

THEY AREN'T GOING TO TELL YOU WHAT TO DO, that's the hardest thing about being a volunteer at Sambhavna. Flip side is, you don't need to bring much – they feed you well, so long as you aren't allergic to lentils. The accommodations are top notch (but use a mosquito net). For the ladies (I've slowly overcome my bitterness at this) the fact is you'll be happier in local attire, so no need to pack much in the way of clothes.

Don't worry about not having enough years or time or skills. Bring your ideas, passion, self-motivation, creativity and persistence. Open your heart and learn from those around you. So much needs to be done – things that haven't even been thought about – but you have to want, really want, to make them happen.

I'm 25 years old. This is my fifth trip to Sambhavna. In total, I've spent over a year volunteering here. The old clinic used to be cramped. The volunteers did most of their work in a flat we rented, slept and cooked at a few blocks away. But the new space is stunning – anyway you know from seeing the pictures. There's so much that can be accomplished from here now, we have the internet, we have tons of space, we have this unparalleled documentation center, we have lovely people cooking for us, and a chance to work with and learn from the staff. Most days I don't even leave the building (some days I am dying to leave the building).

(Which brings me to Bhopal; an ancient, fascinating, complex, socially conservative, polluted and enduringly un-be-live-able city. No Friday nights at the multiplex. Not only do you have to motivate yourself to find ways to work and participate, you also have to be able to entertain yourself (and preferably the rest of us too). Off duty circus acts, harmonica players, scrabble fiends – all are welcome. And please bring some good books. What I do here is research, writing and some teaching.



Ana and Sathya at work in the office



Laure and Valentine, from France

Having a camera helps. It's crucial to remember that a real medical and environmental crisis is unfolding here, day by day by year, eating away at the people – people who will become your friends. In that way, everything is urgent. Whatever skills, energy, faith you have; any technologies you know or tools you possess, will be tested and pushed if you're willing to provide them. You are needed here.

Volunteering at Sambhavna is also about you. You might garden, research, archive, photograph, practice medicine, counseling, epidemiology or programming, but this place can change you. I've seen it and felt it. Some days are tough – this May for example, with days around 43 degrees, was tough. But yesterday it rained, the children all went running – screaming – through the streets. Everyone smiled, the earth turned green, and the air smelled amazing. A new day to try again.

Justice has been slow coming to Bhopal, and it still might take a good while longer. By volunteering at Sambhavna you are part of the process of bringing it here, and it feels like you're a part of something way, way bigger than you. In the end, we hope that when you leave Bhopal you take its story and Sambhavna's energy with you and share them where ever it is you return to. Thanks for reading! Love, Ana

THERE'S MASSES OF IMPORTANT WORK TO DO at the Bhopal Medical Appeal's London headquarters, which are in PAN-UK's offices in Leopold Street.

EC2 is not quite as exotic as Bhopal perhaps, but the work is just as vital. It's here that donations come in and need sorting, processing and recording on our database and it's from that the funds are sent to keep the clinic in Bhopal running.

We liaise with donors and supporters all over the UK and in other countries, and have got to know a lot of extremely interesting and worthwhile people.

Rico and Judy (pictured right) volunteer in the office. Rico is a salsa teacher and Judy is one of his students, hence the picture! Judy has been helping for several years and Rico has been with us a couple of months.



## Who to contact about volunteering

In London, Kate Bootle. 0207 065 0909

[kate.bootle@pan-uk.org](mailto:kate.bootle@pan-uk.org)

In Bhopal, Sathya Sarangi, +91 755 2730914

[sambavna@sancharnet.in](mailto:sambavna@sancharnet.in) or [777@bhupal.org](mailto:777@bhupal.org)



The fine drawings of birds in the Sambhavna garden were made by Ms Kushmi Mukherjee and Mr Sartaj Singh, student volunteers at the clinic in October 2005.

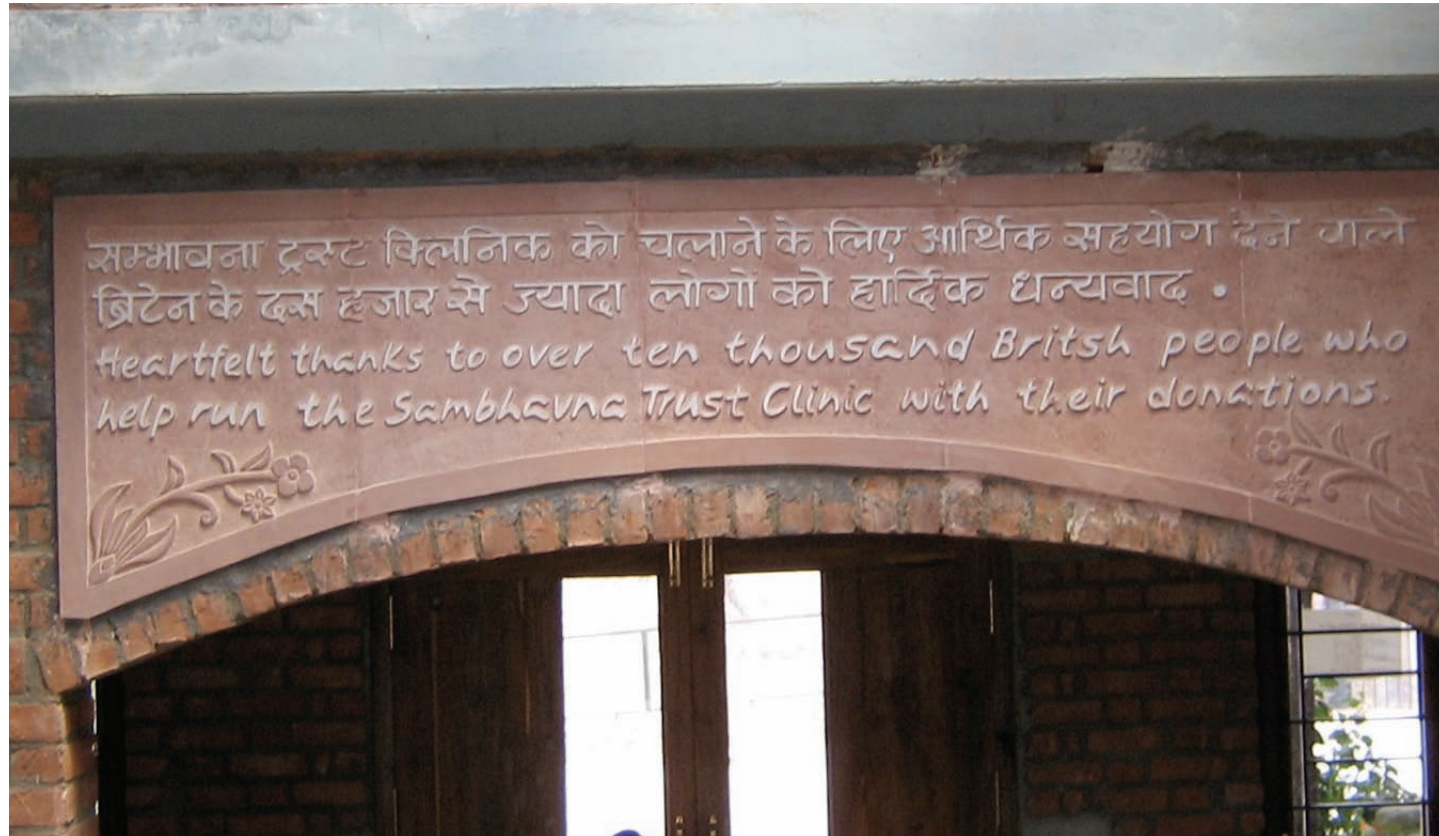
## Volunteers: some recent comments

1. Teppo Eskelinen, Turkey, January 18, 2006  
*The clinic is beautiful and functional. yet the commitment and good will of people working in it seems the most important asset.*
2. Ryan Bodanyi, USA, January 20, 2006  
*Having seen the old clinic two years ago this new building is a revelation. To see the inspiring work done here gives me hope.*
3. Steve Zavestoski, USA February 2, 2006  
*What a beautiful place, the most peaceful building i've visited in India! Amazing work is happening here at Sambhavna.*
4. Matthias Stucki, Switzerland March 17, 2006  
*In this building I've lived and volunteered for three wonderful months. Now it feels like home for me. I will never forget the Sambhavna clinic and the people here.*
5. Radhika Krishnan, Bangalore, April 27, 2006  
*wish sambhavna clinic's new building a very happy birthday.it felt very nice to be here listening to the wind chime, the gurgling water and the birds. you are doing a great job and everybody would surely be cured at their lovely herbs surrounded clinic. wishing many years of health and peace to everybody.*
6. Anne Dubois & Michel Patault, France, May 17, 2006.  
*We want to thank you so much for your warmth and the welcome you gave us. See you again soon.*



There is no justice in the world but there are good people,

that alone keeps us alive – Bhopal survivor



# Thanks to our great British (oops!) friends – and myriad others all around the world

PROOFREADING JUST A'INT WHAT IT USED TO BE. The stonemason offers his apologies and promises to make the correction. The inscription, meanwhile, graces an archway at the clinic in Bhopal and, despite idiosyncracies of spelling, it does express our real and massive gratitude to you.

‘There is no justice in the world,’ says a survivor, ‘but there are good people. That alone keeps us alive.’

The truth is that without your support the day-to-day running of the clinic would be impossible. We can’t name all of you in one newsletter (although we’d love to) but we would like to make a special mention of the following groups:

Lynn Woods and the team at Adastra whom we carelessly omitted from the last newsletter.

Amicus 0245 in Greater Manchester, Prestwich and Whitefield CND, TGWU 1/460 branch Ipswich. Donald Ross & the Whitecliff Quizzers in Co. Antrim.

All those who held special events: Jeff Cox and

friends who raised £300 at a book and music sale in Totnes; our stalwart supporters Fiona and Mike Case and family at the Pilton show; Helen Orme and friends, who raised £945 at a benefit for Bhopal; Trish Marsh and Andrew Morris, who went carol singing in Leominster; stout hearts Denise, Carys and Jack for all their fundraising over the last few years - this year *yet again* tackling the Christmas Pudding 10 Kilometer Run, giving reflexology treatments and a generous amount of pocket money!

We are extremely grateful for a donation made in memory of David Albert Taylor, who lived in Hong Kong and gave generously to the Appeal; and to Helen Elizabeth Wall for remembering the Clinic in her will.

We’re also delighted to announce that the boys of Leys School in Cobham will be sponsoring the salary of Dr Mali, our ayurvedic physician through their non-uniform fundraising days.

Many church groups have raised donations for the

Appeal including St Matthews Church, Dyffryn, Neath; Falcon Lodge Methodist Church, St Anne’s Scottish Episcopal Church, Caldý Valley Neighbourhood Church, the Justice and Peace Group at the Parish of the Holy Name of Mary, Linthorpe; Sisters of Charity, Shepherd’s Bush; Beckenham Methodist Church, The Community of the Transfiguration, Loanhead - while Catton Methodist Chapel and friends raised funds for us at their music and poetry event.

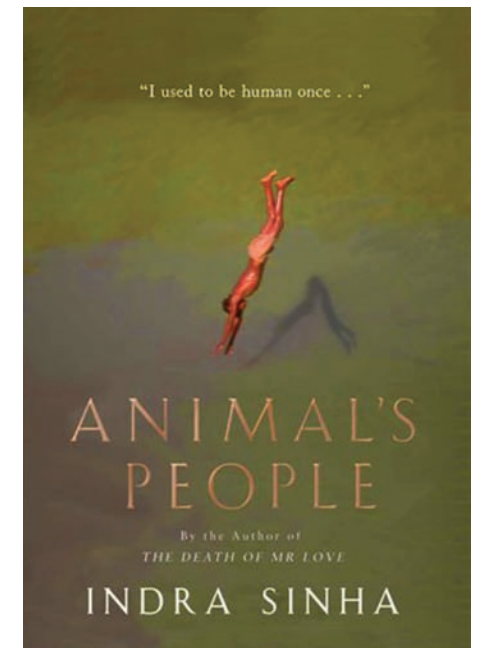
As ever the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) have been good friends to the Clinic and we have received donations from their Preparative Meetings in Swindon, Bakewell, Oswestry, Welwyn Garden City, Bexhill-On-Sea, Hereford and Ealing.

We would like to thank the Paget Trust for their continued support, and are most grateful for generous donations from the following Trusts: P. E. and C. M. Hawkes Trust, Miss K. M. Harbinson’s Charitable Trust, Millward Charitable Trust; Kenneth John Lee Trust; Hillcote Trust and the North Malvern Chapel Trust.

Great thanks to all those of you who asked for donations to the *Bhopal Medical Appeal* in lieu of Christmas and birthday presents: Barbara Turner, Derrick Phipps and Mrs Sydney Haigh to name a few. Thank you also to Peregrine Trading (which supports small traditional Tuscan producers); to participants in an IPSOS MORI survey who gave their fee to Bhopal; Pickering Dental Surgery in Islington; Edward Noble, Robert Leacroft Systems, Grande Properties, L/S F/LEXO Stockport, and Newick Packers.



Our thanks to John Davis who donated his fee for the cover photograph of forthcoming novel *Animal’s People* (set in an Indian city where a catastrophic event two decades ago has wrecked thousands of lives).



*‘I used to be human once. I don’t remember it myself, but people who knew me when I was small say I used to walk on two feet, just like a human being.’ Animal’s People is due out from Simon & Schuster in the UK and Querido in the Netherlands, March 2007*

To all who took part in the Great Manchester 10 Kilometer Run on 21st May to raise money for the Appeal.

To Peter Moulds of FC United of Manchester, and all the supporters, players and staff at Gigg Lane, who have supported us so generously

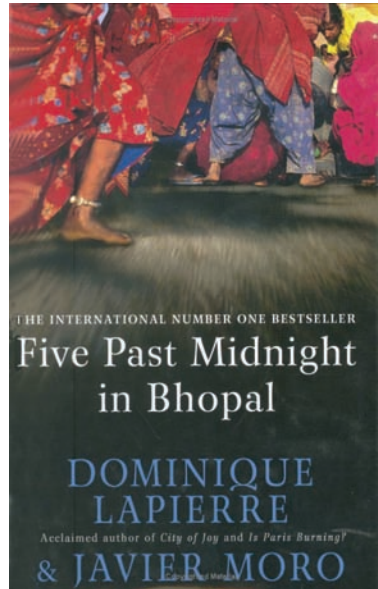
Finally a huge thank you to Derrick Williams MBE, founder of *KitAid*, a charity that sends donated football kit to children and adults across Africa and Asia. Derrick reports: ‘The *KitAid* collection held by FC United on 22nd April 2006 was a fantastic success. A special delivery is going to the *Bhopal Medical Appeal* for the benefit of some of the thousands of kids affected by the deadly pesticide leak in India. (See the story about FC UNITED OF BHOPAL, pages 22 & 23.)

*Left: FC United manager Karl Marginson and defender Kevin Elwin with the KitAid appeal. Photo: Andy McIntyre*

ABOUT KITAID. Derek Williams MBE, started KitAid in 1998 after a visit to Tanzania when he saw how children loved football, but had no kit or facilities. When he got home, Derrick spoke to colleagues and friends and soon the first box of donated football kit was on its way to the children he’d met in Tanzania. This year Bhopali children will benefit.



# Summer reading



- *Hardcover 352 pages*  
(First published on April 2nd, 2002)

- *Publisher: Scribner*

- *Language: English*

- *ISBN: 074322034X*

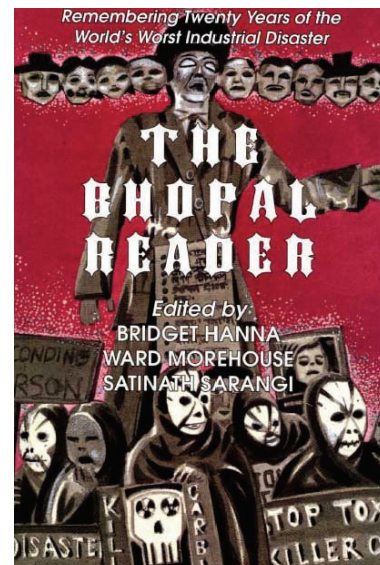
- *Priced £11.57 at Amazon UK*

DOMINIQUE LAPIERRE AND JAVIER MORO FOLLOW in the tradition of Dominique's *City of Joy* with this skilful telling a story which was in great danger of being simply forgotten. The Bhopal gas tragedy and its aftermath are the greatest ever scandal of the corporate world: a chronicle of staggering negligence crowned by a giant American corporation's utter indifference for the suffering of its victims. Dominique and Javier show how Union Carbide ignored their own experts' advice not to build a pesticides plant handling deadly poisons in the middle of a densely populated city, how its sales miscalculations and subsequent attempts to force its Indian subsidiary to cut costs led directly to the tragedy in which tens of thousands died in the most horrifying circumstances. The book brings to life for us the *bastis* of Bhopal near which the factory was built, their vibrant life and many of their characters: Gangaram the leper, Pulpul Singh the moneylender, little Padmini the tribal girl from Orissa whose wedding took place on what has become known as *The Night of Gas* or simply *That Night*. We are also introduced to the people who built and ran the deadly pesticides plant, and are helped to understand the complex sequence of decisions and blunders which led year by year, week by week, minute by minute, toward catastrophe. As a result we feel the full horror of what happened at midnight on 2nd December 1984, as cocktails of deadly gases began drifting in clouds through the densely populated city lanes, killing between and twenty thousand immediately (many of them with eyes and mouths on fire, terrified,

drowning in their own body fluids), leaving more than half a million injured. How the hospitals of Bhopal were crowded with Carbide's refugees, thousands of poor people coughing up their lungs, others rendered incontinent by the poisons with faeces and urine running down their legs.

In their Epilogue Dominique and Javier show how almost from day one, Carbide began trying to evade responsibility for its acts. How, to exculpate itself, it invented a fictitious 'sabotage' theory (a shameful piece of public relations, entirely invented and several times discredited and disproved yet in which it still persists).

They show how Carbide (now wholly merged into Dow) manipulated legal systems, judges and politicians with shameless cynicism and has to date managed to avoid appearing or being questioned in a court of law.



- *Hardcover 307 pages*  
(February 28, 2005)

- *Publisher: Apex Productions*

- *Language: English*

- *ISBN: 1891843338*

- *Priced \$18.95 from cipa-apex.org (see below)*

EXTRACTS BRILLIANTLY CULLED from original source material by Satinath Sarangi, Bridget Hanna & Ward Morehouse, make it an indispensable guide to the twists and turns of the Bhopal issue as it has evolved over two decades. Asked why they had compiled it, the authors said, 'Why we began telling these stories was to move you, dear reader, to take action. Twenty years is much too long and we have had a lot of words. No more interpretations, no more words – the point is to stop the medical disaster in Bhopal.'

*The Bhopal Reader* and other important texts on Bhopal are available online from the Bhopal Library at <http://www.cipa-apex.org>.