

THE BHOPAL MEDICAL APPEAL

Charity registered in England & Wales, No 1117526

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October 1, 2012

Dear

Here is your copy of *The Bhopal Marathon*: the story of how for nearly three decades some of the poorest people on earth – sick, hungry, illiterate, without political allies or clout – have found themselves struggling for their basic human rights, and often their lives, against one of the world's richest corporations and its friends in the US and Indian governments.

It's an unequal and often hopeless-seeming struggle. The corporation and its allies have it all: wealth, influence, the ear of presidents and prime ministers, battalions of lawyers, PR flacks and billions to spend on advertising and sponsorship.

The nothing people have literally nothing. Yet, plunged into a nightmare of cruelty and pain so extreme that it almost defies imagination, the survivors, with the help of friends like you, opened their own clinics, brought healing out of horror, and returned good to others from the harm done to them. Their brave struggle for justice tells of a better side to human nature, of compassion, fellowship, laughter and the healing power of love.

This is a big document - it has to be to cover almost thirty years in any meaningful depth. We could not have afforded to publish it had not the costs of printing and postage (including even of this letter) been met in full by generous sponsors, so we could save core funds for our medical work. To our sponsors, and all our donors, thank you.

A LEGACY OF DEAD & MAIMED CHILDREN

The need for this report became clear after Dow Chemical was appointed a sponsor of the Olympics. Dow wholly owns and is merged with Union Carbide whose neglected factory caused the 1984 gas disaster, and whose toxic wastes still poison the water of people living nearby.

Please open pages 89-90 for a short list of chemicals dumped by Union Carbide, then turn the page to look at some of the children we have treated. Among them is Rupesh, born in 1997 to parents who had both been exposed to Union Carbide's poison gases. He was nine and a half when photographed here, struggling in his mother's arms. Breast-fed till two, he had ever since drunk water that, unknown to his family was poisoned by Union Carbide's toxic wastes.

The company had evidence of the danger at least 8 years before Rupesh was born (pp. 62-3) but warned no one, denied there was a problem and did nothing to clean up the chemicals.

Aged four, Rupesh suffered a series of fits so violent they left him paralysed. A year later a study found chemicals that cause cancers and birth defects in the milk of nursing mothers, so the breast milk Rupesh drank in his first two years had likely also been contaminated.



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finally revealed the horrifying truth
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After ten years of silence and denial

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A-Z of diseases, Carbide's poisons
& damaged children
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Rupesh's short life was filled with pain. He never learned to speak and had no control over his body. His mind, as far as anyone could tell, was burned away. Weeks after this picture was taken, he died in circumstances so grim that we can't bring ourselves to talk about them.

Lowest left on page 92 is bald, web-fingered, thick-tongued Raju. He too is dead, drowned in





a monsoon ditch rushing with toxic water. Shanu's short life was all agony, her long lashes fringing a livid tumour where an eyeball used to be. She too is gone - as is Imtiyaz whose story echoed Rupesh's. There have been many many others. Their names alone could fill every line of every page of this letter.

COULD ANYTHING BE WORSE THAN WATCHING A CHILD DIE IN PAIN?

Yes. It's the unbearable knowledge that the same thing is going to happen again and again to children as yet unborn, not even conceived and that unless we can shift the world we will not be able to prevent it.

In many areas the ground water is poisoned by chemicals which several scientific studies have traced to hazardous wastes dumped by Union Carbide in and around its factory site. In contaminated areas children are being born damaged at rates many times higher than the Indian average. Union Carbide and its owner Dow Chemical deny that they are responsible for cleaning up these chemicals and refuse to help the families whose lives have been ruined.

The company needs to change its mind and the Indian authorities need to end their neglect. Both sides must quit the game of blaming each other in public but colluding in private.

For this to happen will take a miracle.

IT'S HARD TO FIGHT MONEY & POLITICS

The Bhopal survivors were sickened when Dow Chemical was announced as an Olympic sponsor. Were these not meant to be the most 'sustainable' games ever? Did the organisers not see the obscene irony of Dow Chemical sponsoring the Paralympics and Team GB's paralympians even as children continued to be born damaged in Bhopal?

Many others did. London 2012 Sustainability Commissioner Meredith Alexander resigned in protest. Amnesty International and Greenpeace called for Dow to be dropped and the Indian Olympic Committee threatened a boycott if it

Labour MP Barry Gardiner spoke for a crossparty group of MPs that included the Speaker of the Commons when he said Dow's involvement was 'a stain on the ambitions of the Olympics.'

The London Assembly said it 'caused damage to the reputation of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games' and called on Lord Coe and LOCOG to rethink.

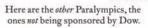
A Guardian poll found 93% wanting to drop Dow as an Olympic sponsor, and a PR industry survey reported that online coverage relating to Dow and the Olympics was 92% negative.





Sambhavna campaigns to bring safe water to the poisoned communities











'Dow's sponsorship of the Olympics,' wrote the investment website MSN Money, 'has turned into a PR disaster for the company.' Investment analysts at *The Motley Fool* dissected and rebutted each of Dow's publicly stated reasons for refusing to assume Carbide's liabilities in Bhopal and suggested that 'Dow can reverse this PR nightmare by taking responsibility for Bhopal on the global stage of the Olympics.'

Of course, it didn't happen. The public may well have felt uncomfortable about Dow's role in Britain's Olympics but no one wanted to spoil the games (incidentally one reason why we left publishing this report until they were over) – and public outrage, anger and revulsion were never strong enough to worry the politicians.

Lord Coe never met us, but during a chance encounter with Bhopal survivor Sanjay Verma (see pages 174-5) it became clear that he simply did not believe what Sanjay was telling him. But why should he? In his briefings from Dow lawyers and executives he had heard a very different story and Dow's CEO Andrew Liveris had stated that the Bhopal survivors' attitude was 'beyond belief' and motivated by greed.

DO-TO-TO AND LA-DEE-DA

What truly is 'beyond belief' is the relentless cruelty with which Bhopal survivors have been treated for almost thirty years.

It's as if the corporation and its political friends blamed them for having been stupid and inconsiderate enough to get in the way of the lethal gases and foetus-bending chemicals.

Our report is full of examples. Here are two. In the first hours, as the dead lay in the streets, Carbide said the gas was not poisonous, people should not have run, or should have run into the wind not away, should have put wet cloths over their faces. Asked why it had never issued warnings or any instructions about what to do if gas leaked, Carbide's chief medical officer was disarmingly candid. (see page 22)

'If I say that I'm carrying a deadly thing in my pocket, people just turn you out of the town. [They] don't allow you to remain there, even though you aren't going to use it... Here people are so emotional... if you tell them, then the next day there will be a big procession and doto-to-to and la-dee-da, "will you please stop this factory we don't want it," even though it is not dangerous. Telling the truth is sometimes a difficult problem in our country.'

200,000 VICTIMS MUST APPEAR IN COURT

Fast-forward one year. In Bhopal previously healthy people are coughing up their lungs and vomiting blood. Pregnant women are full of fear,







Terrified mothers-to-be are driven

advice of Union Carbide





Doctors arrested in midnight raids, police tear down clinic, seize and hand over thousands of confidential patient records to Union Carbide.



Hell's Angels



Carbide dictated the injury categories and compensation amounts, demand immunity from prosecution for itself

The compensation nightmare:

causes and consequences



\$500 is plenty good for an Indian'



because the city is experiencing an epidemic of monstrous births, but the Sunday Times quotes Union Carbide CEO Warren Anderson as saying that accounts of the suffering in Bhopal have been exaggerated. In New York Union Carbide lawyer Bud Holman says the company expects 'a considerable number of fraudulent claims', and blames TB, emphysema and malnutrion for the victims' problems. 'The 200,000 claimants will have to appear in court', he says (see p. 43) and asks the court allow one day per witness.

Given that over 500,000 claims were finally granted by the Indian government, the stream of coughing, blood-vomiting Bhopalis arriving in New York would last 2,000 years. Ridiculous, yes, but Carbide's appetite for delay wins a cheap settlement. In secret talks with Indian politicians it dictates terms, injury categories and even the meagre sums awarded in 'compensation'. (See pp. 40-45) The survivors are never consulted.

COMPENSATION WORTH 7 PENCE A DAY

The Bhopal Marathon documents a marathon of suffering reckoned not in miles but years.

The red booklet (see left and pages 54-7) tells how the survivors were swindled out of their paltry compensation by corrupt officials and contains this poignant comment: Never before in history except in Hitler's gas chambers have so many died at one time from exposure to industrial chemicals. Never before except at Hiroshima and Nagasaki have so many people been maimed by a man-made disaster. Never before have so many victimised people struggled for so many years in the face of repression and propaganda for justice, accountability and the right to a dignified disease-free life.

'For so many years?'

That booklet was published twenty years ago.

\$500 IS PLENTY GOOD FOR AN INDIAN

Ishrat's mind was slow to develop. She grew up a silent, withdrawn child. When, aged ten, her parents brought her to our Chingari Centre, her father, a gas victim who is often ill, apologised for having no money to buy food, much less to take Ishrat to a doctor or pay for medicines.

Ishrat is one of the reasons we now give all our children a nutritious free meal every day. Today she's an athlete and wins races at all-India level. That's Ishrat, on page 177, in the lead.

'\$500 is plenty good for an Indian,' said a Dow executive, when questioned about the pittance Union Carbide paid as compensation.

It wasn't. It isn't. It was always an insult.

And no, Mr Liveris, when the Bhopal survivors ask for justice and an end to being poisoned, it's not greed. These are their basic human rights.









walk of the Bhopali womer





Portraits in pain

For the long-term sick the mo powerful of all medicines is re, because love, even when i

cannot cure, always heals



Dear Mr. Lord Sebastian Coe, here's why we burned your effigy



BEYOND BELIEF

The Bhopal Marathon isn't just about charred lungs and deformed foetuses, corporate crime, political skullduggery and dirty deals, years of neglect, medical malpractice, failed hopes and dishonoured promises, cruelty, corruption and contempt for the poor meted out by police fists, sticks and boots... It's also the story of how a great catastrophe somehow enabled ordinary people to discover that they were extraordinary and do amazing things like thrice walking 500 miles to Delhi through snake- and scorpioninfested jungles to ask for justice, only to be thrice denied (the stories are on pages 50-3, 146-153 & 154-5); like terminally sick people asking that the knowledge gained by treating them should be used to help others around the world suffering from chemically-caused illness.

Perhaps what Dow and the politicians really find 'beyond belief' is that sick, ragged nobodies should find the guts to face their persecutors and fight back; that being treated abominably themselves they should practise kindness and generosity to others and with the help of friends (this is you) open free award-winning clinics and bring healing to thousands whose lives had been hell. Hardest of all to forgive is that despite everything they are still singing and, for god's sake, dancing!

IT'S YOUR STORY TOO, TELL EVERYONE

As one old lady recently wrote, 'in nearly 30 years of struggling for our basic rights, you are the only people who have ever helped us'.

Please help get this story out into the world.

We believe that it has the power to transform the world's understanding of the word Bhopal from grim tragedy to an inspirational symbol of courage, steadfastness, and love that overcomes impossible odds.

If the poisoning of Bhopal is ever to end, it will take a public outcry strong enough to shake the politicians and the corporate bosses.

The means to achieve this is now literally in your hands.

Yours in friendship,

li Kland

Tim Edwards Managing Trustee Bhopal Medical Appeal



An urgent plea from the Bhopal Medical Appeal

The work being done in the two clinics you help to fund in Bhopal is inspiring and demand for our services has never been greater.

Chingari has taken on more staff and extended working hours in order to treat 120 children every day. But with 500 children registered with us, there is a long waiting list for places. Our field workers estimate that a further 1,500 damaged children in Bhopal need the free, expert, loving care that only Chingari and Sambhavna give them.

The worldwide financial crisis has led to a steep increase in the costs of funding the clinics. The 'dearness allowance' (a government figure reflecting the increase in the cost of living) which we, as a responsible employer pay our staff in 2007-8 was 6% of salary. Today it is 44%.

Drugs used to treat diabetes cost 140% more today than in 2007; inhalers almost 40% more. Meanwhile, as with many other charities, our income from donations is down.

We have had to dip into our reserves to maintain our grants and services at the present level but we must replenish the reserves to be able to guarantee that the unique and precious work we do is not interrupted or threatened.

All our work is funded by you, our friends and supporters, and there's a simple, relatively painless way you can help.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A MODEST REGULAR DONATION

(IF YOU ARE ALREADY A REGULAR DONOR, PLEASE SEE PAGE 8 FOR OTHER WAYS TO HELP)

YASHI, 5

£3 a month funds special education sessions to prepare a child for life outside the straitjacket of disability. They learn the basic skills of daily living, bathing, eating meals on their own, learning to hold spoons and cups, utensils and finally a pencil.

£5 a month will provide a free nutritious meal every day for two malnourished children. Ishrat was a frail paper doll when she came to us, aged 10. Her father explained that they

had no money even for food. Now Ishrat wins running races at national level.





£7.50 a month pays for a child's speech therapy training.

Abdullah couldn't speak. At Chingari he began to improve and learned to say 'pa'. 'Pa-pa.'. His father was so overjoyed that he came to thank the staff. And learned that his son had just eaten three bowls of rice pudding.

£10 a month covers all the costs of one child's physiotherapy. Shyam Babu is a brave little lad who refuses to

let his shaky legs prevent him from doing a paper round, walking 4 miles every day. So far he has managed to save up 1,000 rupees, equivalent to about £11.



\$15 a month means that two children and their mums who otherwise would not be able to come to the children's centre can be picked up from home every day and dropped back again in a safe, comfortable minibus. Minakshi and other children from Oriya Basti rely on this service.

 ± 20 a month would pay for the maintenance of our 'garden of senses' which is planted with roses, jasmines

and other scented flowers, and with aromatic plants to help stimulate the senses of sensory deprived children. Rupesh, until his death, was one such child.



Other amounts. We paid £1,700 for corrective surgery to repair cricket-lover Zaid's spine, but a minor operation to free webbed fingers can cost as little as £100 and change a child's life.

If you'd like to help with a regular donation please use the direct debit mandate at right and the enclosed reply-paid envelope. We are grateful for every gift and as representatives of some of the poorest people

on earth know very well that your support is a treasure whose value cannot be measured in money.







Direct Debit Mandate

Name	I wish to donate a regular sum of
Address	to the Bhopal Medical Appeal . The first payment is to start on the 1 st of
Postcode Telephone Email	Payments are to be taken Monthly Quarterly Annually
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Instruction to your Bank Building Society to pay by Dire Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to: The Bhopal Medical Appeal	A DIRECT
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Address Postcode Name(s) of Account Holder(s)	Instructions to your Bank or Building Society Please pay Workwithus.org RE: Bhopal Medical Appeal Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. In understand that this instruction may remain with Workwithus.org RE: Bhopal Medical Appeal and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.
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Please Gift Aid My Donation ☐ If you are a UK Taxpayer, ticking this box will increby 25p for every £1 you give.	ease the value of your gift giftaid it





Ways you can help to get this story heard

The story of the Bhopal survivors' quest for health, justice and a life of dignity has the power to unleash huge energies for compassionate change into the world. Please help make it happen.

- 1. SPREAD THE WORD that an online version of the *Bhopal Marathon* with sources is available at *bhopalmarathon.org/cryforbhopal/index.html*. Please spread this url through the social media and every other possible means. Many of the stories are so truly hard to believe that we have backed up everything we can with primary source documents, news-cuttings and photographs, many never before published. Where a story touches Union Carbide and Dow Chemical, we've preferred to tell it using their own public statements and private documents.
- 2. GIVE OR LEND your copy to someone else if you don't want it, or if you have finished with it.
- 3. PLEASE ORDER COPIES to give to friends, your local library, newspaper, TV or radio station, or to schools and universities. We will supply these at no cost, but you can also sponsor copies.
- 4. WRITE A LETTER TO YOUR MP. We are planning to send a copy of the *Bhopal Marathon* to every MP. If you write a letter and post or email it to us, we will include it with the report.
- 5. SPONSOR A COPY. We would ask you primarily to support the medical work with a regular gift (using the direct debit form overleaf) or a one-off donation (using the form below), but if in addition you would like to sponsor one or more copies of *The Bhopal Marathon* at £3 a copy, please tick the relevant box in the form, and return this page in the pre-paid envelope provided.

The printing and postage costs of the *Bhopal Marathon* are entirely funded by generous sponsors to conserve our medical funds. We kept the cost down by doing as much as possible ourselves: research, interviews, materials, photographs, writing, design and editing. It won't win any glossiness awards and some of the pictures are technically not very good, *but they are all real and in some cases are the only surviving photographs of certain events.*

Make a one-off donation right now using a card FREEFONE 0800 316 5577

Visit www.bhopal.org/donate. Or send a cheque payable to The Bhopal Medical Appeal.

I would like to make a gift to support the medical work of the Bhopal Medical A \$\int\\$5 \ \Bigs\\$10 \ \Bigs\\$50 \		
☐ I'd like additionally to sponsor copy/ies of The Bhopal Marathon at £3 ea	ach.	
I enclose a cheque for a total of £		
Please treat this and future gifts of money as Gift Aid donations. A Gift Aid declaration increases the value of your donation at no cost to yourself by 25p for every £1. You must be a current UK tax-payer paying Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax. HMRC regulations require you to sign the form below.		
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