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We All Live in Bhopal: Commemorating 30 years of the Union Carbide Disaster in Bhopal

Berkeley, CA – San Francisco Bay Area residents will come together December 1 – 8th to commemorate 30 years of the Union Carbide Gas Disaster in Bhopal, India, and to draw attention to industrial pollution all over the world, including our own backyards.

In addition to promoting solidarity with survivors and their children, [“We All Live in Bhopal”](#) intends to offer the Union Carbide Gas Disaster as a lens to bring into focus the widespread ecological and humanitarian injuries resulting from our global community’s prioritization of profit over environmental and human safety.

The 2012 Chevron Refinery Fire in Richmond, CA is an example of a corporation cutting costs by not replacing corroded pipes, thereby creating a disaster that placed an entire community at risk and sent 15,000 people to seek medical aid.

[Another recent example](#) is the Freedom Institute Elk River Spill in January 2014 where 10,000 gallons of 4-methylcyclohexanemethanol were spilled just upstream from the drinking water treatment plant serving 300,000 people near Charleston, West Virginia.

Despite accidents in California, West Virginia and, most notably, the West, Texas fertilizer plant explosion which killed fifteen people, the United States has done very little to safeguard communities across the nation from the kind of disaster that happened at Bhopal. A major theme of “We All Live in Bhopal” is that a catastrophe like the Union Carbide disaster could easily happen here unless the federal government protects people with regulations that make our chemical facilities safer.

“Restoring justice in Bhopal is a preventive measure to ensure our own safety as corporations all over the world follow how the ongoing disaster in Bhopal is handled,” says Dr. Jayshree Chander, a Bay Area physician with a specialty in occupational and environmental medicine who has spent time volunteering at a clinic for the survivors of the Union Carbide Gas disaster.

The “We All Live in Bhopal” commemorative events will include film screenings, a community art exhibition, staged performance art, panel discussions, and a game show called “Name That Corporation.” These events are being presented by Beyond Holistic, a nonprofit focused on primary prevention through healing, arts, action, humor, and medicine. For a complete list of events, click [here](#).

The themes addressed at “We All Live in Bhopal” include: honoring the survivors & victims; making the connection with other industrial accidents and local impacts; industrial disaster prevention: examining corporate responsibility, obstacles, solutions; exploring non-toxic therapies for toxic injuries; and making conscious daily choices for a less toxic world.

The weeklong activities come on the heels of educational presentations at local university medical centers, high schools, and junior high schools that ran earlier this fall.

The 1984 Union Carbide Gas Disaster in Bhopal is considered the worst industrial tragedy in history. As many as 25,000 people have died, and around 120,000 are chronically ill. The catastrophe continues today with contaminated groundwater and soil surrounding the abandoned factory. A survey suggests children born in the contaminated areas are more likely to have congenital birth defects and neurological damage than the average child in India.

Last year, President Obama issued an [Executive Order creating a](#) three-agency working group composed of Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA); that group is tasked with developing policy options which include new regulations, standards and guidance for chemical facilities. For more information, visit preventchemicaldisasters.org.

Event Endorsed by: The Pesticide Action Network-North America; International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal (ICJB)-North America; University of California School of Public Health; Greenpeace; Center for Environmental Health; Institute for South Asian Studies; Berkeley Community Media; Labor Video Project San Francisco; Physicians for Social Responsibility-Bay Area; Health Care Without Harm; Global Exchange; International Development Exchange; Association for India's Development; Alliance of South Asians Taking Action; Maquiladora and Health & Safety Support Network.

For more information, contact Dr. Jayshree Chander at 415-320-1538 or beyondholistic@gmail.com. For a full list of events and materials, visit the [Beyond Holistic website](#).

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