

Assignment

Business Communication
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AN ASSIGNMENT ON
“WHY BHOPAL TRAGEDY IS BEING DISCUSSED AGAIN
AFTER TWENTY FOUR YEARS”

Submitted to

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Light On Bhopal Tragedy After Two Era

Starting

“1984: In December, a gas leak at a plant in Bhopal, India, caused by an act of sabotage, results in tragic loss of life.” - Union Carbide Corporation just gave the short description in their official web site’s History section. But the pain, suffering and tragedy is much bigger than those lines. The World Wide Web contains several pages on this issue, journalists wrote millions of words, the Indian Government through the local government of Madhya Pradesh distributed total financial compensation of Rs.1548.93 crores along with other rehabilitation program (As on 30.10.2008) but the time before the disaster will never come back, never.

Background of The Story Bhopal & the ‘Union Carbide India Limited’

Bhopal is the capital city of Indian state Madhya Pradesh. It became the capital in 1956, which is also known as the "City of Lakes," and previously known as Bhoj Pal (named after the king Bhoj). The city's economy is heavily dependent upon the markets of jewelry, electrical goods, cotton, and chemicals, however the gas leak terminated most of the Bhopali's easiness for chemical industries. The most imminent trade of all is the art of handicraft, which includes the making of designed handmade Indian outfits, purses, linens cloths etc. Being a capital city, governmental jobs are also a big part of Bhopal. Although education is present in Bhopal, most of it is inaccessible to the masses of under-privileged or poor people. And for this reason most of the jobs are of those jobs which don't need formal education. Most of Bhopal suffers from poor infrastructure. The better parts of Bhopal that have government offices and commercial centers do have cement roads. Common means of transportation in Bhopal include mopeds or "scooters", rickshaws, bicycles, public transport and some people even own cars.

Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) owned, operated and managed on a daily basis the Bhopal plant. UCIL was an Indian company in which Union Carbide Corporation (UCC) held over half the stock. The other stockholders included Indian financial institutions and thousands of private investors in India. UCIL was a diversified manufacturing company established in 1934, when UCC became one of the first U.S. companies to invest in India. Employing approximately 9,000 people, UCIL operated 14 plants in five divisions. Annual sales were nearly \$200 million, and UCIL shares were publicly traded on the Calcutta Stock Exchange. UCIL designed and constructed the Bhopal plant in the late 1970's using Indian consultants and workers. The plant operated by an Indian plant management team was constructed on land leased to UCIL by the Indian state government of Madhya Pradesh. The plant produced pesticides for use in India to help the country's agricultural sector increase its productivity and contribute more significantly to meeting the food needs of one of the world's most heavily populated regions. In 1994, UCC sold its entire stake in UCIL to MacLeod Russell (India) Limited, which renamed the company, Eveready Industries India Limited (Eveready Industries). In 1998, the state government of Madhya Pradesh took over the Bhopal site from Eveready Industries.

The Deadly Disaster

On the nights of December 2nd and 3rd, 1984, a great tragedy took place and its effects continue till today. A UCIL plant in Bhopal, India, leaked 27 tons of lethal gas (known as methyl isocyanine or MIC). It spread through the town, affecting many of the people living there. Over half a million people were exposed to the gas and to this date. Over 20,000 people have died because of it. In addition, over 500,000 people are still affected by the toxic gas and its consequences. UCIL built their pesticide factory in Bhopal in the 1970s. The factory contained three tanks of MIC that held over 60 tons of the deadly gas. Late, on those nights at about midnight, a perished pipe allowed water to enter the largest tank of MIC. The tank was blown off the wall, releasing the chemicals inside. The gas began to spread through the city. There were six safety and security systems designed to protect from such accidents, but through an unfortunate incidence, none of these systems stopped the leak. Everyone in the locality of the toxic substances rushed down the streets, trying to escape the gas. Some were killed by the gas, whereas others were packed down to death by the furious crowd. Many people ran out of their houses wearing almost nothing, fearful to escape the contact of the terrible toxins. The overall effect was a tragedy, where thousands of people died, affected and are still affected by this fateful night so many years ago.

Being Under Spotlight & The Unsolved End

More than 25 years later, on 7 June 2010, a court in Bhopal has pronounced a guilty verdict on the Indian section of Union Carbide and also convicted seven former UCIL (Union Carbide India Limited) officials as being guilty under Sections 304-A (causing death by negligence), 304-II (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 336, 337 and 338 (gross negligence) of the Indian Penal Code. All of them are Indians. They were each sentenced to two years imprisonment and a fine of Rs.100,000 (approximately US\$ 2,097). UCIL has been awarded a fine of Rs. 500,000 (approximately US\$ 10,483). However, there was no mention in the verdict of Warren Anderson, the then Chairman of Union Carbide Corporation who skipped bail, fled the country and has been declared an escapee after he refused to return to India from the US and stand trial.

The Ending

The world observed the one of the worst man-made and industrial disasters in the history of mankind in Bhopal which taught us a big and expensive lesson on safety of commons, industry and human rights. It mostly discussed due to the area of destruction, death toll, long time of trial and debatable verdict from court after a long period of the disastrous catastrophe.

Search Key Words (Searched Using "Google.com")

bhopal tragedy, revisiting the bhopal tragedy, life at bhopal

Words & Character Counting (Main Report Only)

Word: 975, Character (no spaces): 4,932

References

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