

February 15, 2010

Mr. Bijoy Chatterjee
Secretary
Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals
Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
Shastri Bhavan
Dr Rajendra Prasad Road
New Delhi -110001

Dear Mr. Chatterjee,

You will recall that we had written to you in early December regarding our laboratory study in Bhopal to test sludge and groundwater at the Union Carbide plant and adjoining areas for contamination. Our study had revealed a shockingly high amount of contaminants in the soil as well as in the groundwater and as we had suggested that the entire site of the Union Carbide plant would need remediation efforts and urgently.

We are now writing to you as the results have been confirmed by a study by CPCB. The officials of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) had jointly collected sludge samples from the factory premises with us. The groundwater samples were collected separately.

We are appending a summary of the CPCB analysis with this letter. The report confirms the presence of contaminants also at very high levels. It is urgent that government takes steps to effectively deal with this problem. It is not only clear that there is deadly contamination in the factory of Union Carbide and that also these chemicals are the same that were produced by Union Carbide when the factory was in operation. The following needs to be done:

1. Urgent steps to dispose the stored sludge in the factory but only after very careful evaluation of different technologies and options available.
2. Urgent steps to finalise and implement the report on remediation of the entire site. We would like to stress that this is extremely important because, as yet, the entire focus has been on the disposal of the small amount of sludge which is lying in the shed. We believe that the entire site will need remediation and that will involve substantial technology and financial intervention.

1. Pursue aggressively the case against Union Carbide which is ongoing in the Madhya Pradesh High Court as well as the Supreme Court regarding its liability for the disposal of this sludge. As we have stated in our earlier letter this is extremely important because we believe that the cost of remediation of the site will be substantial. We also believe it is important as the chemicals that have been found both by CSE and now confirmed by CPCB are the same that were manufactured by Union Carbide when the factory was in operation, it is very clear that the company has a liability for this contamination. It will be important for us to pursue this case and for government to take a lead in this matter.

I look forward to hearing from you on this and to know about the progress being made.

With my very best wishes,

Yours cordially,

SUNITA NARAIN

Encl: As above

J/-