
Subject: [remember-bhopal] 21 Indian Olympians ask LOCOG and other authorities to reconsider their decision on accepting Sponsorship from Dow Chemical for London Olympics

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Below is the press release. Today 21 Indian Olympians endorsed a petition which asks LOCOG and other authorities to reconsider their decision on accepting sponsorship from Dow Chemical Company for London Olympics. The endorses petition is attached and the name of the Olympians are also attached.

November 14, 2011

Press Conference

At a press conference organized by five Bhopal disaster survivors' organizations today, Olympians Inam - Ur – Rehman, B P Govinda, Syed Ali and Jalaluddin Rizvi demanded that the organizers of the London Olympics 2012 cancel the sponsorship of Dow Chemical Company, current owner of Union Carbide, the American multinational responsible for the continuing disaster in Bhopal.

The Olympians said that in view of the current plight of the victims and the environment in Bhopal, Dow's sponsorship is offensive to the spirit of the Olympic Games. They said that national and international Olympians should oppose the unholy alliance with the poisoner of Bhopal. They presented a list of 21 Indian Olympians who have so far signed on to an ongoing petition addressed to the organizers of the London Olympics 2012 – LOCOG.

The Bhopal survivors' organizations condemned the Indian government and the Indian Olympic Committee for their deliberate inaction regarding sponsorship of the Olympic Games by a corporation responsible for poisoning and maiming thousands of Bhopal citizens.

“It is three months since we requested the Prime Minister and the Acting Chairman of the Indian Olympic Committee to register the country's opposition to Dow Chemical sponsoring the Olympic Games in London next year but neither of them has moved on this.” said Rashida Bee of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Stationery Karmchari Sangh.

The organizations said that as 100 % owner, Dow Chemical is sheltering Union Carbide that is absconding from charges of culpable homicide in Indian courts for the last 19 years. They pointed out that Dow Chemical is also violating Indian laws by refusing to clean up the toxic contamination of soil and ground water caused by reckless dumping of hazardous waste by Union Carbide, USA.

Rachna Dhingra of the Bhopal Group for Information and Action pointed out that the Indian government has blacklisted Dow Agrosciences for bribing government officials. She said that recently the government has also cancelled the registration of three pesticides of this wholly owned subsidiary of Dow Chemicals for the same criminal offence.

“We are certainly not against the London Olympic Games, said Balkrishna Namdeo of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Nirashrit Pension Bhogi Sangharsh Morcha, “in fact we are opposing the besmirching of the reputation of the Olympic Games through its association with a criminal corporation.”

Nawab Khan of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangharsh Morcha said that the survivors of the Union Carbide disaster in Bhopal would observe its 27th anniversary as a day of action against Dow Chemical's sponsorship of the London Olympics. He said that Dow Chemicals would be burnt in effigy in the form of a five headed monster snake holding the Olympic rings.

“Because of Dow Chemical’s refusal to clean up Bhopal’s poisons, hundreds of children are being born disabled. It is indeed shocking that the organizers of the London Olympics have not cared to find out about their sponsor’s misdeeds” said Safreen Khan of the Children against Dow / Carbide.

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