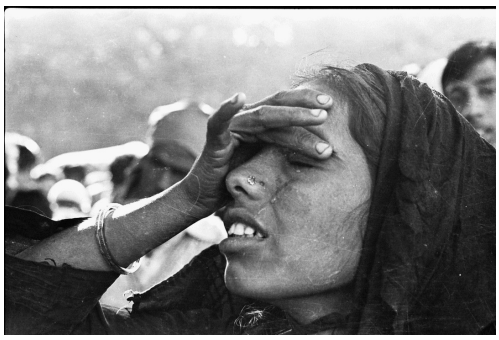

BHOPAL : LITIGATING DISASTER

Director(s): Ilan ZIV

Writer(s): Ilan ZIV

It happened over 30 years ago, on the night of Dec. 2nd, 1984, in the heart of the ancient Indian city of Bhopal : a murderous cloud of toxics leaked deadly gas into the still night air. More than 3000 people were killed in the initial leak and a further 100 000 people suffered gas poisoning... It was the biggest chemical disaster of all time.

For more than twenty five years after the catastrophe, there had not been any justice - but on 7 June 2010, in a verdict in India, eight Indians (former employees) have been convicted of "death by negligence. The trial was split following the refusal of the then chairman Union Carbide, Warren Anderson, who is American, to return to India to face charges.

Ilan Ziv's film had been made 20 years after the disaster. It is an account of the events, with personal testimonies, and it is the story of an attempt - by one lawyer, Rajan Sharma, to bring charges and some kind of closure to the victims.
Rajan Sharma was 14 years old when the disaster occurred. He became personally committed to the cause of the Bhopal victims even before graduating from law school. 15 years later, he found himself in the Federal District court in New York filing a complaint on behalf of the Bhopal victims against Union Carbide.

Filing was only the first step, he knew a trial might be years away . But in the empty court room, Rajan could already imagine parts of his opening statement to the Jurors...
"Litigating disaster" is the story of a clash of two cultures - a clash between the culture of Business and the culture of Justice.

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