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Global News Wire
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The Economic Times
January 4, 2003

LENGTH: 302 words

HEADLINE: GREENPEACE MAPS TOXIC HOT SPOTS

BODY:

HYDERABAD: Nearly 18 years after the Bhopal gas tragedy, Greenpeace India undertook a journey through 25 toxic hot spots of the country to sensitise people about the "toxic bomb" they are sitting on.

The 'No More Bhopals Jatha' highlights that even today there are a "Thousand Bhopals happening across India, some potentially disastrous and others continuing toxic crimes in slow motion." "Our Jatha's demand is that there should be no more Bhopals. It is a journey to enlighten people and expose corporate crime," Greenpeace's toxics campaigner, Manu Gopalan told The Times of India on Thursday.

He was in the city to conduct an interactive session on 'Environmental Hotspots in India with the team members of Thousand Bhopals Jatha' at the Secunderabad PG College.

In Andhra Pradesh, Greenpeace India visited Patancheru, Visakhapatnam, Warangal, the treatment, storage and disposal facility at Dindigul and Musi. "We met people, documented the lives of the victims and collected soil and water samples, all of which will be presented at an international forum soon," he said.

"The organisation is travelling to various parts of the country by bus as all areas are not accessible by ship," Gopalan said. The Jatha was joined at different places by people representing affected communities, organisations fighting toxic crime and other concerned citizens.

The first leg of the Jatha began on Nov. 10, 2002 in Bangalore and ended in Bhopal on Dec. 3. The second leg began in Kolkata on Dec. 10 and ended in Hyderabad to coincide with the Asian Social Forum meeting, to be held from Jan. 3.

Issues of environmental toxics and health will be raised at the Forum, he said.

Numerous activities like midnight vigils, human chains and signing of petitions were taken up at various hot spots.

JOURNAL-CODE: WETI

LOAD-DATE: January 4, 2003

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