



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON

“ECHOES OF BHOPAL GAS TRAGEDY: FOUR DECADES OF RECKONING AND LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE”



Organised By:

NATIONAL LAW INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY, BHOPAL

in collaboration with

NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (NDMA) &

NALSAR UNIVERSITY OF LAW, HYDERABAD



25th & 26th October 2025



**National Law Institute
University Bhopal, India**



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NLIU BHOPAL



ABOUT NATIONAL LAW INSTITUTE UNIVERSITY

The National Law Institute University, Bhopal (NLIU) was established by The Rashtriya Vidhi Sansthan Vishwavidyalaya Adhiniyam, Act No. 41 of 1997, and substituted by Act No. 6 of 2018, enacted by the Madhya Pradesh State Legislature.

NLIU is recognized by the University Grants Commission and the Bar Council of India. The vision of NLIU is to become one of the world's best centers of legal education, training, and research. The mission of NLIU is to develop and nurture the intellect for the betterment of the nation and humanity through law and justice. The main objective of NLIU is to impart and disseminate comprehensive legal education in order to achieve excellence by way of organizing progressive study programs and promoting research with a focus on improving the ability of students and research scholars to analyze contemporary issues of public concerns and their legal implications so that law learners acquire skills to advance legal education in a professional and a responsible manner.



ABOUT NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

On 23 December 2005, the Government of India enacted the Disaster Management Act, which envisaged the creation of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister, and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMAs) headed by respective Chief Ministers, to spearhead and implement a holistic and integrated approach to Disaster Management in India. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), headed by the Prime Minister of India, is the apex body for Disaster Management in India. Setting up of NDMA and the creation of an enabling environment for institutional mechanisms at the State and District levels is mandated by the Disaster Management Act, 2005. Vision of NDMA includes to build a safer and disaster resilient India by a holistic, pro-active, technology driven and sustainable development strategy that involves all stakeholders and fosters a culture of prevention, preparedness and mitigation.



ABOUT NALSAR UNIVERSITY OF LAW

The National Academy of Legal Studies and Research (NALSAR) was established in 1998 by a Statute of the State of Andhra Pradesh. Since its inception, the University has been home to vital conversations on law and justice. These conversations have acknowledged that questions of justice arise in all legal pursuits whether in the world of courts, corporations, education or administration. Using law as an instrument of social change the University has supported crusades for land rights, disability empowerment and against moral policing and hate speech. NALSAR is committed to the creation of an ethical legal culture, which protects and promotes the rule of law. The social justice agenda is no laughing matter but the University believes that the cause of building a rule of law society is a continuous enterprise, which is sustainable if it is undertaken with optimism and good cheer. The University in all its years of existence has attempted varied strategies to create a vibrant scholastic environment.



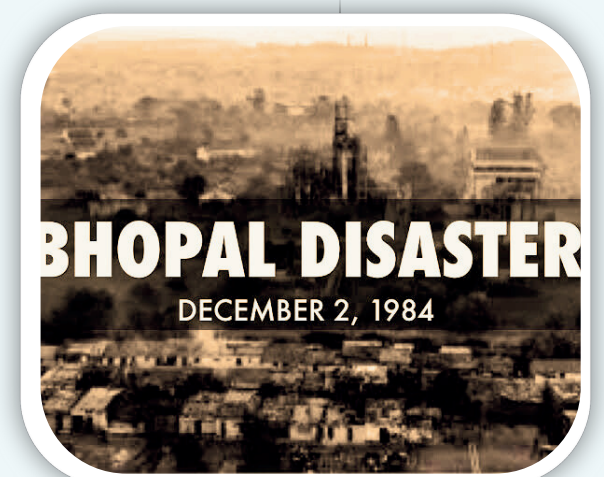
CONCEPT NOTE

On the night of December 2-3, 1984, the city of Bhopal witnessed one of the most horrifying industrial disasters in human history. A massive leak of methyl isocyanate (MIC) gas from the Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) pesticide plant claimed the lives of over 15,000 people and injured more than 500,000 others—many of whom continue to suffer physical, psychological, and economic consequences to this day.

The Bhopal Gas Tragedy was not just an environmental or industrial crisis; it was a human catastrophe rooted in systemic negligence, corporate impunity, and regulatory failure. Its aftermath exposed grave inadequacies in India's legal and administrative systems, including the absence of a clear framework for corporate accountability, industrial safety, environmental protection, public health redressal, and compensation mechanisms.

In the four decades since the disaster, the tragedy has significantly shaped India's legal, policy, and institutional landscape. Laws such as the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, the Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991, and the National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 owe much of their urgency to the Bhopal experience. Moreover, it catalyzed a broader discourse on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), environmental justice, and disaster management, culminating in initiatives like the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and mandated CSR under the Companies Act, 2013.

As we commemorate 40 years since the Bhopal Gas Tragedy, this international conference aims to critically reflect on its enduring legacy of one of the most devastating industrial disasters in history. Beyond its profound impact on India, Bhopal became a global touchstone for corporate accountability, environmental justice, and regulatory reform. By bringing together voices from across jurisdictions, this conference aims to examine how the tragedy reshaped the legal and moral frameworks governing industrial activity—not only in India but around the world. It also serves as a timely platform to assess the adequacy of current national and international legal systems in preventing future industrial catastrophes of a similar scale.





OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE:

1. To revisit the Bhopal Gas Tragedy through a legal, historical, and interdisciplinary lens, situating it within both national and global discourses on industrial disasters and human rights.
2. To analyse the evolution of Indian legal and regulatory frameworks post-Bhopal, particularly in the areas of industrial safety, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), environmental protection, and public liability, while drawing parallels with international legal developments.
3. To evaluate the role of the Indian judiciary in responding to mass torts and environmental disasters, and explore comparative judicial approaches from other jurisdictions in dealing with corporate negligence and transboundary industrial risks.
4. To propose forward-looking legal, institutional, and policy reforms that promote justice, accountability, and sustainability—not only within India's industrial governance framework but also in the context of international standards and cross-border corporate conduct.
5. To foster international dialogue and collaboration on corporate accountability, environmental health, and industrial risk management, with the aim of building resilient legal systems that can effectively prevent and respond to future industrial catastrophes across borders.





THEMES AND SUB-THEMES

1. Mass Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Building: From Commitment to Action

- Chemical Disasters and Industrial Safety System Failures: Human, Technical, and Managerial Errors
- Natural Calamities: Planning for Drainage Systems and Enforcing Earthquake and Tsunami Zoning Regulations, Supported by Resilience Audits
- Natural Disaster Management: Leveraging Traditional Risk-Reduction Strategies.
- Legal and Institutional Framework for Disaster Management in India
- Information Technology and Crisis Communication: Digital Tools in Risk Management and Legal Compliance
- Role of Armed Forces and Emergency Services in Crisis Response: Focusing on Inter-agency Coordination and the NDMA Framework.

2. State Liability and Regulatory Oversight

- The Role of the Indian Government as a Litigant and Trustee of Victims' Rights
- Processing of Claims Act, 1985: Assessing its Effectiveness in Delivering Justice to Victims
- Limitations of Tort Law and Sovereign Immunity Doctrine in Mass Disasters
- Evolution of Regulatory Regimes: From Factory Acts to Environmental Clearances
- Precedents and Prospects of State Compensation Mechanisms: Comparative Models (e.g., Deepwater Horizon Fund, CERCLA in the US)

3. Environment and Public Health: The Lingering Shadows of Bhopal Gas Tragedy

- Post Disaster Environmental Degradation and the Loss of Ecological Balance
- Long-term Public Health Implications and Intergenerational Trauma
- Toxic Waste Management and Environmental Justice: The Role of NGOs and Media in Promoting Public Awareness and Accountability
- Bridging Environmental Law and Public Health Law: Towards Integrated Securitisation of Pollution and Related Concerns (NGO's role)

4. Judicial Approach: Remedial Justice and Beyond

- Critical Analysis of Union Carbide Corporation v. Union of India and Other Key Rulings
- Limits of Judicial Activism in Cases of Industrial Liability and Environmental Damage Curative Petition
- Judicial Innovations Post-Bhopal: Precautionary Principle, Polluter Pays, and Sustainable Development
- Role of National Green Tribunal (NGT) and Public Interest Litigation (PIL) Post-Bhopal Gas Tragedy
- Challenges in Adjudicating Mass Torts: Evidence, Causality, and Procedural Justice

5. International Frameworks Legal Perspectives

- International Frameworks for Industrial Accident Accountability: Lessons from Seveso, Minamata, and Fukushima
- Transnational Litigation and Corporate Accountability: What India can Learn from the Alien Tort Claims Act
- Environmental Constitutionalism: Bhopal Gas Tragedy as a Catalyst for Expanding International Environmental Jurisprudence
- Legal Histories of Environmental Disasters: Bhopal Gas Tragedy in Global Perspective

6. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): From Philanthropy to Accountability

- CSR in the Shadow of Bhopal Gas Tragedy: From Philanthropy to Restorative Justice
- Implementation and Monitoring of CSR under the Companies Act, 2013
- ESG Compliance, Transparency, and the Legal Vacuum in India's CSR
- Comparative Analysis of CSR in Developed vs Developing Nations

*Please note: The above list is indicative and not exhaustive. Submissions on any topic relevant to the mentioned themes and sub-themes are welcome.



EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Interdisciplinary Dialogue** among scholars, legal practitioners, policymakers, health professionals, environmentalists, and survivor groups, fostering a holistic approach to disaster management.
- **Critical Engagement** with Domestic and International Legal Frameworks, assessing the strengths and limitations of existing laws governing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), State Liability, Environmental Protection, and Public Health, while drawing insights from comparative jurisdictions and global best practices.
- **Publication of a Peer-Reviewed Conference Volume** compiling selected papers, expert commentaries and judicial analyses to contribute to academic discourse and public policy.
- **A Digital Legal Archive** of key documents, judgments, and academic writing on the Bhopal Gas Tragedy and related jurisprudence.
- Enhanced **public discourse** through pre-conference media coverage, survivor testimonials, and expert interviews.





SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

The abstract shall be submitted in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Cover Page of the abstract must include:
 - Title of the paper
 - The conference theme relevant to the submission
 - Author(s) name(s), designation, and name of the affiliated institution/university
 - Contact details: Email address and contact number of the corresponding author.
- Abstracts must be concise and informative, with a word count between 200–300 words.
- Keywords: Please include 5–6 relevant keywords
- All submissions must be made in English only.
- Co-authorship is allowed for a maximum of two authors, subject to registration as per the given scheme.
- Google Form link for Abstract Submission - <https://forms.gle/LaVzNrzzXrF8mszAA>

PAPER SUBMISSION

Authors are requested to adhere to the following guidelines for the submission of full papers:

- **Originality and Plagiarism:** Submitted manuscripts must be the original and unpublished work of the author(s). Any form of plagiarism is strictly prohibited. Papers with a similarity index exceeding 10% will not be considered for review.
- **Word Limit:**
The manuscript should be between 3,500 to 4,500 words, excluding references and footnotes.
- **File Format**
Papers must be submitted in Microsoft Word format only (.doc or .docx files).
- **Formatting Requirements**
Main Text: Times New Roman, Font Size 12, 1.5 line spacing
Headings: Times New Roman, Font Size 14, Bold
Footnotes: Times New Roman, Font Size 10, Single line spacing
- **Citation Style:** All submissions must follow the Oxford University Standard for the Citation of Legal Authorities (OSCOLA), 4th edition (Hart Publishing, 2012).
- Submissions not conforming to this citation style will be rejected.



IMPORTANT DETAILS

Important Dates

Last Date of Abstract Submission: 31st August 2025

Declaration of Accepted Abstract: 05th September 2025

Last Date for Registration: 10th September, 2025

Last Date of Submission of Full Paper: 10th October, 2025



ACADEMIC PROTOCOL

Participation is open to Students, Scholars, Academicians, NGOs and Corporate Executives.

The registration fee per person for the conference (including modest shared accommodation) is as follows:

	Indian (INR)	Foreign (USD)
Students/ Research Scholars	₹ 2500	\$100
Academicians/ Practitioners	₹ 3500	\$125
NGOs (02 Person per NGO)	₹10000	\$150
Industry/ Corporate Professionals	₹ 15000	\$200
Others	₹ 10000	\$ 100

Note * Registration without accommodation for **Indians: ₹1500**

Foreign Nationals: \$25

Online Mode: ₹1000

*In the case of co-authorship, registration has to be done separately by each participant.

*In the event of any additional participant being added, the cost shall be borne by the participant.

*In view of availability of limited accommodation allotment will be on first come - first served basis.



PAYMENT PROCESS

Participants must register by paying the Registration Fee (Non-Refundable) through the Payment Link given below and filling out the Google Form.

*Please note that all fees paid are **non-refundable**.

Google form for Registration (Upload Payment details) -

<https://forms.gle/hzyuAMTm1yg4esNQ7>

Participants can make the payment by following the steps below:

1. Visit the payment portal:

https://ums.nliu.ac.in/AccSoft_NLIU/MiscellaneousPayment.aspx

2. Click on the "Outsider" option to proceed.

3. Fill the required personal and payment details.

4. In the "Details of Payment" dropdown menu, select "BGD CONFERENCE".

4. In the "Sub-Details of Payment" choose appropriate participation category.

5. Payable amount will be displayed automatically and proceed the payment and complete the transaction.

DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS



Prof. Giulio Bartolini
Professor of International Law at
Roma Tre University Editor-in-
chief of the Yearbook of
International Disaster Law (Brill)



Dr Michelle Staggs Kelsall
Senior Lecturer in International
Law College of Law SOAS
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Dr. Aniruddha Rajput
Distinguished Professor of Law
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