What do the issues of safe food and risky nuclear power have in common? A lot, as it turns out.

We’ve spent a good part of the last few months fighting two proposed laws. The Biotechnology Regulatory Authority of India (BRAI) bill will create a single-window body to clear all genetically modified (GM) crops in India. The Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage bill will let corporations supply risky nuclear technology to India without bearing the financial or legal burden of potential accidents.

In both cases, our government is putting the interests of multinational corporations above the people of this country. In both cases, large corporations will benefit at the cost of the health and security of India’s people and environment.

A transparent, truly democratic process led to the moratorium on Bt Brinjal. So how does the GM lobby sneak past the united public opposition to GM in Indian agriculture? Simple: keep the choice and information out of people’s hands - and that’s what the BRAI bill is trying to do.

Limiting the compensation for victims of nuclear accidents is similarly disempowering. The Bhopal judgment once again exposed the vulnerability of common people against corporate might. When I contrast this with the British Petroleum verdict in the USA, the rules really do seem different for Indian lives. Can we let this disparity be written into our laws as well?

When bills like these get so dangerously close to becoming the laws that govern our lives, the time to stand back has passed. We must raise our voices and question our democratically-elected government. We must ask difficult questions about responsibility, about justice and fairness. About the future. Because if we want answers, we have to ask questions.
Greenpeace exists because this fragile Earth deserves a voice. It needs solutions. It needs change. It needs action.

Greenpeace is a non-profit campaigning organisation that acts on the most crucial global threats to our planet’s biodiversity and environment. In over 40 countries around the world, Greenpeace campaigns to stop climate change, defend our oceans, protect ancient rainforests, create a toxic-free future, and promote sustainable agriculture.

At Greenpeace, we strongly believe in the power of non-violent direct action. We expose environmental crimes and confront the criminals fearlessly. We point at problems and promote solutions for a clean and safe future for the Earth and all life on it.
This May, Greenpeace radiological experts found dangerous levels of radioactivity at the Mayapuri scrapyard in Delhi - after the government declared the area safe! The government is planning a massive expansion in nuclear power - but is it prepared to protect citizens from its dangers? Clearly not.

Nuclear power is extremely risky. And high risk equals high cost. Our government is pushing a law to dump the costs on Indian taxpayers - while foreign nuclear corporations get off easy.

To strengthen the fight against the problematic clauses of the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage bill, we've

• lobbied politicians to oppose these clauses
• gathered support from eminent jurists and law networks
• got over 2.2 lakh people to sign our petition

(You can add your voice at www.greenpeace.org/india/unlimited-liability)

Greenpeace and allies organized people’s consultations on the bill in Mumbai and Hyderabad. Popular verdict was clear: the government cannot compromise the health and security of thousands of people while giving complete immunity to multinational corporations.

The Bhopal judgment shows that in fights between common people and corporations, the odds are tilted heavily against people. And that’s one more reason to make the bill people-friendly, not pro-industry.
For four years, our Tox Tech campaigners have worked to get a law to regulate and manage e-waste in India. We’ve reached out to consumers, built pressure on manufacturers, lobbied hard with the government - and it’s paying off! The Environment Ministry has drafted a rule to manage e-waste and opened it for people’s feedback.

The E-waste rule is a good start because:

• It makes producers of electronic devices responsible for the entire life-cycle of their products - from design to waste. This means producers have to make sure their products are safely recycled when no longer usable.
• It forces producers to reduce the use of hazardous substances in their products. And that means less PVC, less BFRs, less heavy metals in our ecosystems and bodies.
• It bans all imports of second hand electronic & electrical products. So developed countries can’t dump their toxic junk on India.

But…

• Exporting e-waste must be banned - or producers could use this loophole to put their trash in other countries instead of cleaning up.
• The rule needs to ensure that every producer pays for recycling its products, instead of passing on their obligations to the group.

We’re still working on… removing loopholes and making the rule even stronger. For this, Greenpeace and allies held high-level consultations between manufactures, recyclers, government officials and other stakeholders in Bangalore, Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi and Pune.
Before you bite into that bar of chocolate, or slather your hair with conditioner, check the label - chances are, you’ll find palm oil listed among ingredients. To meet the rising global demand for palm oil, suppliers like Sinar Mas are expanding into Indonesia’s forests and peatlands with total disregard for the devastating environmental impacts. As a result, the country has one of the fastest rates of forest destruction on the planet and is the world’s third largest greenhouse gas emitter.

On 17th May, Nestlé announced that it will stop using products that come from rainforest destruction. The move followed a persistent two-month Greenpeace campaign that cut across countries and garnered the support of well over 1 million consumers.

So what made Nestlé change? We exposed their role in the destruction of some of the world’s biggest ancient rainforests. We showed up at their factories in orang-utan costumes to remind them how their policies are threatening the endangered species. We pulled off monkey acts on streets to draw attention to the wrecking of orang-utan habitat. We rappelled down the ceiling at their annual AGM and appealed that they give the rainforests a break. We started an online campaign that hundreds of thousands of people around the world joined, urging the company to chuck rainforest-destroying palm oil. And that’s what they’re doing!

When the world’s biggest food and drinks company sends a clear message against rainforest destruction, other global players can’t afford to be left far behind. So here’s to more victories for forests and all that they sustain!
ARREST THE BILL!

The biotech brigade is back. This time with a law that will compromise
• your right to choose what you eat,
• your right to know what’s in your food,
• your right to say NO to risky genetically modified (GM) food.

When the media leaked out the first draft of this law, we found it could even imprison and fine people who speak out against GM crops! To tell the government what Indian citizens think of this, we released an opinion poll on GM food. 78% people in 6 major cities wanted all information about GM crops, and 89% asserted their right to protest government decisions on GM. We then showed up at the Ministry of Science and Technology demanding an immediate withdrawal of the bill. Our point: the minister must put safety first, not corporate interests.

We once again debunked the tall claims biotech companies make about GM crops with the ‘Picking Cotton’ report. Our on-field research in southern India indicates that as compared to Bt Cotton, organic farming practices give farmers better yields and more financial security. So much for Monsanto’s promises!

“SOIL”ED

Chemical fertilizers are killing our soils. It’s time to change India’s fertilizer policies and save our soils. Greenpeace has been meeting farmers unions and civil society groups all across the country to build a strong coalition that can force this change. In April, we organized a conference on ecological alternatives to chemical fertilizers. We’ve been lobbying ministries and the planning commission with the results of this conference. The momentum is building, and we’ll bring you big news soon!
Large ports devastate marine species and habitats. They threaten the livelihoods of coastal communities. Over half of India’s existing infrastructural ports are under-utilized - offering no economic advantage to the country. And yet, 300 new ports are being planned.

Greenpeace continues to lobby politicians and work with key allies to stop this kind of destructive development. We got Parliamentarians to bring up Dhamra port’s violation of the Forest Conservation Act. On Earth Day, we put up billboards across Kolkata to remind our leaders that they must act to save India’s coasts before it’s too late. Result: the Environment Ministry is now officially looking at the ports issue and we will keep up the pressure to ensure it acts.

Turtle mortality has dropped by 60% in Devi, Orissa! This is thanks to steps like improved patrolling to keep mechanized fishing boats out of protected areas. We’ve been campaigning for these steps to prove how marine reserves are a win-win solution - they protect endangered species and the livelihoods of local fishers. Every success in Orissa makes our case for marine reserves across the country stronger.

On World Oceans Day, Greenpeace India demonstrated in support of anti-whaling activists Junichi and Toru who are being tried for exposing corruption in Japan’s whaling programme. Over 16,000 Indians and several law and human rights networks are part of our campaign to get justice for the ‘Tokyo Two’.

Should’ve, Could’ve

Defend whales, go to jail?

Good news for turtles & marine reserves
The latest edition of the Greenpeace Guide to Greener Electronics rates Wipro as the greenest electronics company. Every quarter, we rank brands on three criteria:

- What are they doing about toxic chemicals in their products?
- Are their products energy efficient?
- How do they handle e-waste?

The results help consumers choose greener products, and pressure major players to lead the industry by greening their products and operations.

In April, Greenpeace also released the new version of the Cool IT Leaderboard that ranks global IT giants on climate leadership. Cisco and Ericsson are proving that IT solutions can reshape energy use and help tackle climate change, while Google still refuses to disclose its carbon emissions.

To prevent runaway climate change, nations across the world need to sign a Fair, Ambitious and Binding (FAB) deal to curb greenhouse gas emissions. BASIC countries - Brazil, South Africa, India and China - are four of the world’s most influential emerging economies. When ministers from BASIC countries met this April, we demonstrated outside the venue urging them to use their position to get that deal at the UN climate summit in Cancun.

WIPRO IS GREENEST
What does campaigning for the environment mean in India? Greenpeace Resistance Academy (GPRA) is a 6-month course to give young activists a grounding in the political, social and economic realities of India. 18-year-old Rachita Taneja shares what drew her to GPRA.

With a lot of time and not much to do between college semesters, I decided to build up my positive karma by working for Greenpeace. During this very long internship (I’m still here), I’ve learnt that a lot of deliberation, grounding, imagination (and jargon) goes behind everything done here and that a Greenpeacer, whether holding a banner on the street or working at a desk from 9-5, is an activist in the truest sense.

As time went by, the work only became more interesting and the wish to be a part of the organization grew stronger. So when asked if I wanted to be a part of GPRA, I didn’t need to think twice to agree. GPRA has taught me things my formal education (badly) failed to. Sitting among well-informed, talented and immensely creative speakers and participants made me feel a bit ignorant at first, but after a couple of sessions, I began to understand problems I didn’t even know existed. It’s overwhelming to look at these issues from the point of view of those working towards solving them. Becoming one of those people is what I hope to achieve with the help of Greenpeace.
That's not all

Activists get advanced climbing training for non-violent direct actions.

Team 50+! Seniors volunteer at waste management workshop.

Greenpeace’s media team makes sure you get the news that matters.

Kolkata fundraisers organize a rocking concert on Earth Day.
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