

Commons Conversations Podcast: Insights into Environmental Justice Movements in India with Radhika Jhaveri

Kenzie Harris

Thanks Radhika for being here. Can you tell the listeners a bit about who you are, what you do and how you got into this work?

Radhika Jhaveri

With regards to the environmental space, I've been involved since 2017. Aarey is a forest in Mumbai. It's the last remaining urban forest in the entire country. It's got leopards, and a lot of state schedule three species, which means species with the highest protection under Indian laws. The Forest is filled with them, a lot of schedule three birds, leopards, so on and so forth. That forest is being targeted by a lot of politicians, builders, and real estate. They want to chop it all down and extend the city even further. One of the ways that they were trying to do that was by changing some laws, because a forest has protection under Indian laws. They've been trying to remove the protection and then open up the land for further city expansion.

This is a forest that my father took me to when I was young. We used to go there when I was very young, and it was a beautiful, beautiful place. Because of these nostalgic memories, when I heard that it was going to get chopped down, I got involved with the citizens movement that started in 2014. I joined them in 2017, one thing led to another and the movement is still going on. The forest is still not safe, my involvement has become larger than just that movement. I got to know about many other such forests across India, that are getting chopped down, unfortunately. And that is what I'm working on now. Trying to protect all the forests everywhere, all over the country. Obviously, it's not only about forests. It's about rivers, wetlands, oceans, everything because destruction is everywhere. So the movement to protect the environment is also everywhere.

Kenzie Harris

That's a big task. There's a lot of rivers and a lot of land and a lot of forest to protect! I'd love to know of the projects and campaigns that you've been involved with over these years, which one are you the most proud of?

Radhika Jhaveri

I guess all of them are, it's very difficult to pick one, right? I mean, they're all important. And unfortunately, we don't really see success that much with these kinds of movements. Because the forces that we are fighting are so big, right? The machinery that we're up against is so big, and it's not just national, it's global. There are movements in India, like the Narmada Bachao

Andolan, started some 30-40 years ago. It's still going on. It is about a river in India, a big river. They wanted to build a series of dams on the entire river. And it would cause a lot of displacement, and a lot of forests would be submerged because of the dam. The people who fought for that and who are still fighting for that, they even brought the World Bank to its knees. They took on the World Bank, because the project was funded by the World Bank and 40 years since they have not seen success and it is still going on. So most of the movements are like that in India.

There is another movement in Orissa, it's another state. The state has a lot of mineral resources. And it is continuously mined and tribal people there in Odisha have been fighting for 40-50 years now. Continuously, one company after another, you see success, like the new struggle that happened in Odisha. 20 years ago, they took over a mining giant called Vedanta. They took them to court. And they won, they pushed the company out. And for some time, it was as if they'd won, and now the company is back again. They're trying to enter again, trying to mine again and the fight has started all over again. So, what I'm trying to say is that I'm proud to be fighting at all.

Involvement of the Urban Middle Class

Kenzie Harris

Yeah, yeah, these are big systems and there are big players. I think like you said, this is global. And there's so much to tackle, it seems the work never ends. I would be curious what kind of groups those campaigns are composed of, or the campaigns that you've been involved in? Because certainly a question that comes up a lot in our communities is, how do we make collaboration happen? So I wonder, you know, are people who are involved in a campaign trying to save the forest, is that you know, all people who would identify as environmentalists or activists, or are they made up of different groups? So what does that look like? And how do you think if there are different groups, how do you think that collaboration happens effectively?

Radhika Jhaveri

You saw this in the Aarey movement, where a wide variety of people collaborated. Aarey has a tribal population of around 30,000 or something. So you have that group that was interested in safeguarding the forest, because their entire livelihood and everything depends on it. And also, because they are so connected with the forest, the gods and everything hailed from the forest. They are fighting all over the country, And they've been fighting for such a long time.

The Aarey movement was the first time we saw urban citizens stand up for a forest. That has not really happened before, the urban middle class coming out and saying, we are not going to allow you to cut and chop down the forest. That is something that happened for the first time. I think it happened because these were all youngsters, and they are aware of the climate crisis.

That awareness may or may not be in depth, but at a superficial level, they do understand that there is a climate crisis, and that the reason behind the crisis is environmental degradation and environmental destruction. And, you know, in order to stop the crisis, we need to stop the destruction, they've managed to make that link between destruction and cause and effect. They've also understood that, by itself, no government anywhere can be trusted to do what needs to be done, and it is only through citizen pressure that a government will act. That made them come out on the streets for the very first time. It had never happened before in India. And these were people who do not call themselves environmental activists. Every day we meet new people joining the movement.

And to say that, no, I don't really want anything, I don't really care about anything, I just want them to not chop the forest, that is all I want. I don't want to know anything, I don't want to talk about anything, I don't want fame, I don't want this, I don't want that. I just want them to not chop down the forest. This is it. It was a very sort of simple idea that brought them out, that we need the forest, and it should not be cut. So that is something that we saw in the movement. And that is something that is now getting replicated sort of all over the country. You're seeing urban people who live in cities that were built on forest land, come out and say that, okay, you know what, you did it once. And okay, I was too young, or I didn't know at that time or whatever. But now we know better. And this needs to stop, this sort of developmental model needs to stop, we can no longer afford to chop any more forests down to build cities, or ports or factories, or it doesn't matter. But we just cannot afford to lose any more forests. That sort of voice is now increasing. And we are seeing people who are coming out from everywhere. They are upper class or upper middle class or middle class, they are teachers, they're doctors, they're architects, they're working class, everybody... they're here from all over the society.

Collaboration, it's not really hard, because once you've decided that this is the most basic, common minimal thing that everybody wants, everybody desires, everything else just sort of falls into place.

It's a very good case study, since it happened for the first time. Usually what has been happening in India is urban middle class is not the one that stands up to the country's representatives. It's usually the Indigenous People who stand up, so even in the Odisha case that I mentioned, it happened between a corporation which is Vedanta, and the tribal group there. Even the Chipko movement that happened in the Himalayan region. There was also something that happened between the timber industry and Indigenous people, mostly women, who were trying to protect the forest. So that has been the environmental history in India. But now, after the movement, which started in 2014, you're now seeing different kinds of people get involved.

So, when the Aarey movement was going on, we had different groups. There was a doctors group speaking about the effects of air pollution on our lungs, and our kids and pregnancies, and it's affecting everybody because the pollution is so bad, and chopping down a forest is only going to make things worse. And then there was an architect group that was coming out and arguing about urban planning, and how too much concretization is not a very smart way of

designing a city. So that conversation happened, and then there were transport experts, who came out and said this is not how you should be planning a city's transport, you should not be having car-centric approaches, you should be having public transport, and the government should be spending money on public transport, rather than, promoting car centric infrastructure.

In India, largely because environmental movements have been led by farmers or tribal communities, the reaction of the Indian government and bureaucracy has been very patronizing. 'Oh, you are a villager, you don't know anything, you're not sophisticated enough or educated enough to tell the government what the government should be doing.' That is something that shifted in the argument, because the people who were fighting back also included people with advanced degrees, or architects or engineers or doctors, and the government was no longer able to use that argument.

Kenzie Harris

So amazing to hear about. And I feel like the listeners will probably have some questions, too. I have a lot of questions, because, well, there's a few things that really struck me. One is that it happened in 2014. I think like you mentioned, and for a lot of us in the Global North, we saw 2019 as sort of this pivotal moment where people started to recognize that the climate crisis was an issue. One thing that I would definitely wonder is if there was, to use the official term, like a moment of the whirlwind, or a political moment, that convinced people that it was the time to take action. I wonder what was significant if there was something significant about that time that led people who wouldn't have otherwise ever taken action to want to want to do something?

Radhika Jhaveri

100%. So the movement for Aarey started in 2014. But five years down the line in 2019, we saw massive protests. So there were protests, sporadic protests throughout the five year period. But in 2019, we had three things happen, the Amazon fires happened, Greta happened, and otherwise, overall, news surrounding the climate crisis went up. The flooding, and the forest fires, all of that came all at once. That resulted in a snowballing of protests. One of the protests had around 7000-8000 people turn up. And these are urban people who do 9-5 jobs, who don't ever participate in protests. They want nothing to do with protests, they just want to get up in the morning and go do their jobs, pay their taxes and live their life, you know, without messing around with political powers. And yet, this was the crowd that came, I would say that the global events, particularly the Amazon fires, and Greta propelled things here, locally in Mumbai.

Broad Coalitions: The Good and the Bad

Kenzie Harris

Something else that I thought was interesting about what you said, is something along the lines of that, everybody saw this central issue and it wasn't hard to have people collaborate on it. That people just came together around one central issue and something that I think happens a lot, at

least where I'm based in so-called Canada, is that there's a lot of infighting related to, you know, people want to take an intersectional approach. And so if somebody says something that's homophobic or any, any sort of thing that's problematic, they're shut out and excluded. And there's not a lot of room for learning. And it's kind of like everybody has to agree on everything, or nobody moves at all. So I'm curious if that's even an issue at all, in the movement spaces that you're a part of, or just if you have advice for others who might be in a situation like that, because it really hinders a lot of action, and takes a lot of energy.

Radhika Jhaveri

No, that is true, and there is no denying it's there, but I suppose what happened differently in the Aarey case, specifically, was that there was this group, sort of a central group that tried to keep the messaging very clear. Every time there was disagreement, and because there are so many WhatsApp groups, and so many Facebook communities, forums, where all these discussions are happening, and everybody's arguing and discussing and whatever. So, there were always these moderators for whatsapp groups, or wherever all these communities are coming and engaging. The messaging was very clear, that you and I agree that this forest needs to be saved from getting chopped down, and whatever disagreements we have, let's keep that aside for now. We will figure that out later. But for now, this is what needs to happen. If we want to save the forest, let's just concentrate on that. That sort of, to just constantly keep reminding people why they are there, why have they assembled? Why have they come together? What is the motive, or the motivation, and the motivation here is to protect the forest and just let's just concentrate on that. So that is part of the reason why we had in the Aarey movement, the only environmental movement that I know of in India, we had both left and right, political ideologies working together amongst the supporters. We just know that overall ideologically, you may not agree with the other person, but, avoid that conversation, don't have that conversation. I'm not saying that is something that needs to happen, I'm saying that that is what happened.

And that is what worked in this case, this specific case, localized case, but then again, if this is the basis on which you come together, then it has a pitfall, in my opinion, and a pitfall is that the movement becomes restricted to that issue, and it will not grow. And that is what happened with Aarey. It did not go beyond the Aarey issue. It did not become like a national environmental movement, and it also fizzled out after a point, though it is still going on. There's still people fighting, but the momentum was lost.

I mean, it's too much to expect momentum to last 10 years. It lasted for 10 years, that is a very big achievement in itself. But then yeah, there were ideological divides, there still are ideological divides amongst the people who support them. But for that particular cause, they've been able to sort of bench those disagreements and just concentrate on the issue. So that is something that works. I don't know if it works, or in other areas with other causes or other issues. I'm sure there are better ways of dealing with disagreements. But what I do know is if we are unable to overcome our differences, and make room for people who we may not always agree with, then we may not find the strength that we require to fight this. We have to learn how to work together.

Global Solidarity: Learning from Free Palestine

Kenzie Harris

Yeah, agreed. Yeah, that's so interesting. I can't even imagine in this context, what a movement that has people joining from the right, the far right and then far to the far left would look like. That's so interesting. I think this will raise a lot of reflections for people listening. I think you just shared a lot of lessons and things to consider. So, I think you touched a little bit on this. I don't know if there's any other thing that comes to mind, if there's any particular campaigns or initiatives or even approaches to taking action that are really inspiring or exciting to you?

Radhika Jhaveri

I think there's nothing going on in the world that is more impressive than Free Palestine. That is beyond inspirational. That is one thing that since the past, how many days has it been, 66, 67 days, this is the third month now, it has entered the third month and every single day is a day that gives hope, despite the carnage and despite the massacre that is going on there. The way that the entire world has stood up, and every single day people are out protesting every single day, nobody's forgotten, nobody is willing to let go. Nobody is backing down. I can't think of anything more inspirational than that. I was not expecting it, at least not at this scale. And I did not expect it to last as long as it has lasted. And even after 30 days, 45 days, I kept worrying that people would stop protesting, but they haven't. And the protests are just, even now, they're just increasing in tempo and the sheer size. Yeah.

Kenzie Harris

And it's, I mean, it's starting to work. Power is starting to respond to this, where I'm based in so-called Canada, we finally agreed to a ceasefire, the UN resolution to vote for that. So it's doing something, yeah.

Radhika Jhaveri

Yeah, even India voted for the resolution, thankfully. So India has been a supporter of Palestinians since the very beginning, because India got independence in 1947. And the Palestinian issue started in 1948. And since that time, the government here and the people of India have stood with the Palestinian people, something I'm extremely proud of. Unfortunately, the current government is not following in the footsteps of their predecessors. But thankfully, it voted in favor of the resolution. And yeah, that is only because of the international pressure.

Kenzie Harris

Yeah. And I mean, this relates a lot to what I was hoping to discuss with you next, which is just, you know, what does global solidarity look like? And how we actually make it happen in practice? I don't know if you have other examples to turn to. But we can certainly continue talking about Palestine as well.

Radhika Jhaveri

I mean, you're right, now I don't... I cannot think of a better example of global solidarity, right. I mean, I didn't even know it was possible to do this, the way the Palestinian movement is going on, the global movement is going on, I never in my dreams would have thought that this is possible.

And the way this is happening, and has been led by young people, it just increases the hope even for the climate movement, because this is exactly the kind of solidarity we are going to need when it comes to tackling the climate crisis. So if we are able to do this for Palestine, and if we are able to cross all barriers, the racial barriers, geographical barriers, class barriers, all of these barriers, if we are able to overcome and come together for this cause, then we are 100%, we're going to come together for the climate crisis as well. It's not just about fighting for Palestine. The movement is actually challenging the entire colonial structure, the Imperial structure, you know, the institutions, the banks, the companies, the corporations, it's putting everything on the stand, challenging all of it...

Which is something, and makes this very important and how it turns out which way it goes, will determine a lot of the future politics, global politics that will happen. Yeah.

Long-term Visioning

Kenzie Harris

I completely agree. It's been, it's been so incredible to watch. And I do think that we're in a paradigm shift where I think there will be new possibilities after this. I certainly hope, but I'd be surprised if there wasn't, and maybe that's a good thing to, you know, pick your brain a little bit about is... what do you think would be possible after this? What do you think the climate movement hopefully could do differently this time, in what could be a new political environment? What do you dream that could look like?

Radhika Jhaveri

I mean, that dream is what I want that I think all of us share across the globe, the one where you know, you have, I want to say clean energy, but I will not use the word clean energy because there is no such thing but a world where we managed to reduce our energy requirements, we managed to use less and a world where you know, we shift out of a consumerism, consumerist, sort of like mindset and learn to live better with nature. That is something that is the dream. I know that we may not be able to get exactly what we have in our heads. That may not happen, but somewhere if we can come close to it.

Kenzie Harris

Yeah, I agree. We certainly don't do this sort of dreaming work enough where we think about what it actually is that, tangibly, what it could look like and how we actually get there. It's a lot of

pushing back against projects. And sometimes we forget to think about what it is that we're fighting for.

Radhika Jhaveri

It's so important to be able to dream, as I sometimes give these talks on climate politics. The first question that I asked people is, what would you do with your time if you weren't required to work a 9-5 job for 40 years, or 50 years of your lives? What does this world and what does this life look like? And more often than not, there are no answers. Because people don't know that they can imagine this, that they're even allowed to imagine something. The current status quo and the current way of doing things is accepted at such a deep rooted level that we've forgotten that we can actually question it, you can actually question the systems we've set up. And we can actually question the way we want to actually live our lives and not working a 9-5 job till you die, one of the things you can question is something that people are not even realizing. So it is the status quo, it's just accepted as if it's some sort of a law of nature, this is something that I feel imagining a better world, a different world is so important. Unless and until we imagine it, we will probably not fight for it.

Kenzie Harris

Totally. What a fun exercise to think about.

Radhika Jhaveri

It's incredible, because the next question that I asked is...

I write down the word wealth. And I ask, what does this mean to you? And 99 out of 100 times, the answer is money, or some sort of, you know, monetary idea of wealth. And the answer is never clean air, or clean water, or hobbies, or reading books, or spending time with a loved one walking in a park. These ideas have become disconnected with the word wealth. You don't think of these things as wealth, we only think of money. And part of the problem begins here, we just lost the value of what a good life looks like.

A simple, but a good healthy life looks like this, is an exercise that I feel we should be doing more often. And especially with younger people, at least in India, we see this where youngsters are more enamored with a sort of consumerist or highly industrial sort of lifestyle. They see the western countries and they think that this is what progress looks like, and this is what everybody's lives must look like. And yet that is not true.

Tackling Consumerist Idealism

Kenzie Harris

That's really interesting, too. You were saying that the younger generation seems to be, to have more of that mindset. And that, if I got you correctly there, it seems different here in the Global North, or at least where I'm based in so-called Canada. So I guess I'd love to know a little bit more about why you think that is and how, how that can be shifted. And maybe you know, what, what could be done in our technological age where so many of us young people are connected on social media and things like that? Like, what could... what could somebody here, a person in the Global North, do to help shift that narrative? Or what do people in where you're based do to shift that narrative?

Radhika Jhaveri

These are questions we are asking ourselves.

So we see this with urban... there's a rural urban divide here. And it's a very stark divide. And this is a reaction that is born out of inequality. So you know kids, they see urban kids with their iPads with their expensive cars, with foreign vacations, foreign destinations. A lot of this is being spread via Instagram, that kind of lifestyle, and they see all this and they see that they don't have access to any, and then it's a very human, very natural reaction to want it and then see that everybody is, you know, joining the race. Everybody wants a big house, a big bungalow. They see all the celebrities, jet setting around the world in private things, someone like Priyanka Chopra, right. And she has a massive impact on young girls who are in the country, and they see her traveling in a private jet all over the world, and they see that and they think that they also want that life. They also want to jet set, you know, in private planes, and why should they not. And Priyanka Chopra is probably a very big example. But then there are others also, otherwise, also the normal urban kids, the kind of lifestyles, the language they speak, there is a lot of inequality there. And until, unless that inequality goes away, this problem will not.

It's not that the rural kids or the kids who want this who are running after it need to change, it's more about people who are consuming a lot, they need to stop consuming as much as they are now. They need to stop doing that kind of that culture of you know, that status building where you equate progress and development with the amount that you're consuming, this equation needs to be broken, and it needs to be redefined where, that needs to come from rich people that needs to come from people who are leading this lifestyle. Unless and until that happens, the other mindset will not change. We have some people here who do this. So there's this actress, Dia Mirza, she's very famous in India, and she keeps on talking about, she did this thing where we had the Priyanka Chopra wedding, that big thing that she did, and completely opposite to that was Dia Mirza, who had a very simple wedding, she didn't spend any money at all, on her wedding dress, nothing, nothing... very, very, very simple. And she did that because she understands this, that the rich people need to turn down their lifestyles, and she talks a lot about it. So that kind of has a... it's a good influence. And whoever does follow her has that influence on them. So we have those kinds of role models that are increasing everyday you see new people coming, we have a very good train network in India and a lot of people, mostly the ones coming from cities have now started talking about, you know, refusing to fly using air travel or not using air travel and using the train networks to travel instead, especially when the distance

is short. So that is something that is happening. It's the influencer, I think they're called in Gen Z lingo... these are the people who are influencing, actually influencing their growth everyday, it's growing. So hopefully we'll see a shift sometime in the next 5, 10 years in the overall narrative around how we are defining development and how we are defining progress.

Kenzie Harris

Yeah, that's really interesting and really insightful, actually, because I think that for, at least in the circles that I'm involved in, the consensus is that young people are progressive. And I think generally speaking, yes, we are a more progressive generation, than the ones before us, that's true. But I do think that you're alluding to something important, which is that the narrative that development looks a certain way, it still exists, it is still very consumption-based, and that consuming more does equate to being of higher value or higher status. So I think that's a universal theme, no matter where you're living. And I think it is a difficult narrative to shift. But, it's interesting that there are people who have obtained a lot of wealth that are working to shift that. And I do I think it's a difficult challenge to consider, but I do wonder, like, how we put pressure on people who have accumulated wealth or just pressure on power to act differently or to force them to have to?

Radhika Jhaveri

Yeah that is the question, we're gonna have to find our answers to right our generation, that is the big problem that we're having to, we're gonna have to solve. I look up to and learn from the people leading these movements. There's so many of them, and they're doing such amazing work, someone like Ayisha right from Pakistan, but yeah, these young girls, you see them leading the COP, the dialogue at COP, and it's incredible. And I look up to these guys, these young girls and boys, and hopefully they will be able to come up with answers that we have not been able to get at.

Closing Reflections

Kenzie Harris

Big strategic question. So we'll leave the listeners with that, maybe it'll lead to some important reflections. Before we wrap up, I have a couple more questions. I'd be curious, I mean, it's tough work and it sounds like you're working on a lot of different things and you know, these fights, like you said, are not easily won, and sometimes not often won. So what sustains you in this work? You personally...

Radhika Jhaveri

I wouldn't say there's anything that sustains me, I think it's more of a, it comes up and it goes down, the hope and the anxiety. One day, it's good, or very hopeful you see something happening somewhere and like, wow, this is bringing me so much hope personally. And then the

next day, something else will happen. And like, okay, this is hopeless, we are all doomed, and we are gonna die. And it's like that. So it comes. And it goes, it has its movement moments, and moments where I feel like giving up, I feel like, no matter what any one of us may do, none of us is going to be able to make any difference. So that is also a thought that keeps coming up. A large part of my struggle is to keep that thought away, to just buried deep, deep deep down inside and not pay attention to it. But there's one thing that I've come to realize, recently and it's in large part due to the Palestinian struggle, is that if you lose hope, then you've lost, you've already lost. And hope is something that is a very revolutionary thing. And even then continuing to hope. that has a different kind of power. Having that kind of a hope is just, it just changes everything. It changes the whole equation, just changes everything. And no matter how bad I feel, remembering this, remembering, keep on repeating this and keep on remembering this is something that works for me, and try to do every single time I feel down in the dumps. Yeah.

Kenzie Harris

I mean, we're only human, there's a lot of emotions in these fights. So I think that's actually probably helpful for people to hear that these are normal feelings to have. So you have a lot of lessons. And I would be curious if there's, if there's one thing that you wish you knew when you started out?

Radhika Jhaveri

I don't know, there's so much right? Now, the more time you spend, the more lessons you accumulate, but I suppose there is no alternative to self learning, these are lessons you can only learn once you jump in. And once you start participating, there are so many people who will tell you, you know, don't do this, or don't expect this, but I'm not sure how many of us would accept that kind of advice, no matter who it comes from. Unless and until we experience these things on our own for ourselves and draw, draw our own lessons, you know, gain our own experience. There is no alternative to that, unfortunately. But having said that...

I do think that one thing that we cannot have here is impatience, we should not be expecting immediate results. This is a fight that is going to last, at least our entire lifetimes. I don't know what will happen after that. And every day that I am involved in these fights, I try to accept that fact. And understand that, you know, the world doesn't just change overnight. It will require a lot of time. And we should not lose patience as we should not lose hope.

But other than that, all other lessons have to be learned by ourselves. Just start doing things. Just participate. Listen.

Kenzie Harris

Yeah, I like that. I like that message. So last question I've got for you is, because I know that a lot of listeners will be joining from the Global North or from regions that are, we're all affected by the climate crisis, but maybe less so and less so certainly by the other, the other forces and

certainly that are very, very privileged. And so I'd be curious if you have messages for people that are joining from some of those regions from the Global North, or specifically from sort of western regions?

Radhika Jhaveri

So what we see, what I'm noticing, the narrative right, that comes out of the Global North is often limited to fossil fuels.

If you come here to a country like India, which is sort of a production house for a global production house like China, you see that environmental degradation is a major aspect driving the climate crisis. And I'm not talking about fossil fuels, just the textile industry alone has destroyed India's rivers like nothing you will ever see anywhere, from Walmart or Target any of these major corporations, you are sort of participating in destruction of entire river ecosystems here in a country like India or Bangladesh. So, and it's not just environmental degradation, even the labor that goes into making these clothes, so, cheap fashion, especially in a country like Bangladesh, you see extremely exploitative, extremely, extraordinarily exploitative. And these aspects of the climate crisis is something that gets talked about, absolutely does, but the focus is far too much on fossil fuels. And it should be it has to be it must be, but at the same time, we need to start talking about in the same breath about the other side of the climate crisis.

That part is there and I would actually encourage people, youngsters who are fighting in the global north to come and visit these countries and see the sights, see what goes on like, every time you will use plastic right, a large portion of the plastic is made in countries like India. So, we have these vast Petrochem corridors all over the country in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu in Maharashtra and the areas are so critically polluted that not just human life, but absolutely no life is possible in these areas. It's unlivable, the condition is such... it is so polluted, so critically polluted, that there is no life here. Everything is dead, it is that bad. So every time you use that plastic spoon or plastic cutlery, this is something you know this is the aspect, the other aspect, of that consumerist lifestyle, what happens behind the scenes. I was in Gujarat two years ago and it was in Tamil Nadu and Gujarat, both places, where there were petrochemical corridors and refineries. It was very difficult to see the kind of pollution that is there, how badly it is polluted, I saw small kids playing in poisoned water. The water bodies are all poison red in color, dark red in color. And so small kids jumping in the water. They're not realizing how bad the water is. I saw sites with housing societies built on toxic dumps, where all the laborers work, laborers that work in these factories, they live. It was horrendous. So I feel that this aspect of the climate crisis that is feeding the climate crisis is something that we need to talk about.

Kenzie Harris

Yeah, thanks for that you definitely did have messages that were really important that need to be heard. And I definitely definitely agree that it's nowhere near discussed enough in the mainstream climate movement or certainly in the messages that are coming from the west. So it's really appreciated to hear from you on that and on everything else that you shared today.