

The struggle for clean air in south Durban...



by: **South Durban Community
Environmental Alliance
SDCEA**

**EVERYONE HAS A
RIGHT TO AN
ENVIRONMENT THAT IS
NOT HARMFUL TO THEIR
HEALTH OR WELL-
BEING.**

**SA'S BILL OF RIGHTS,
SECTION 24A**

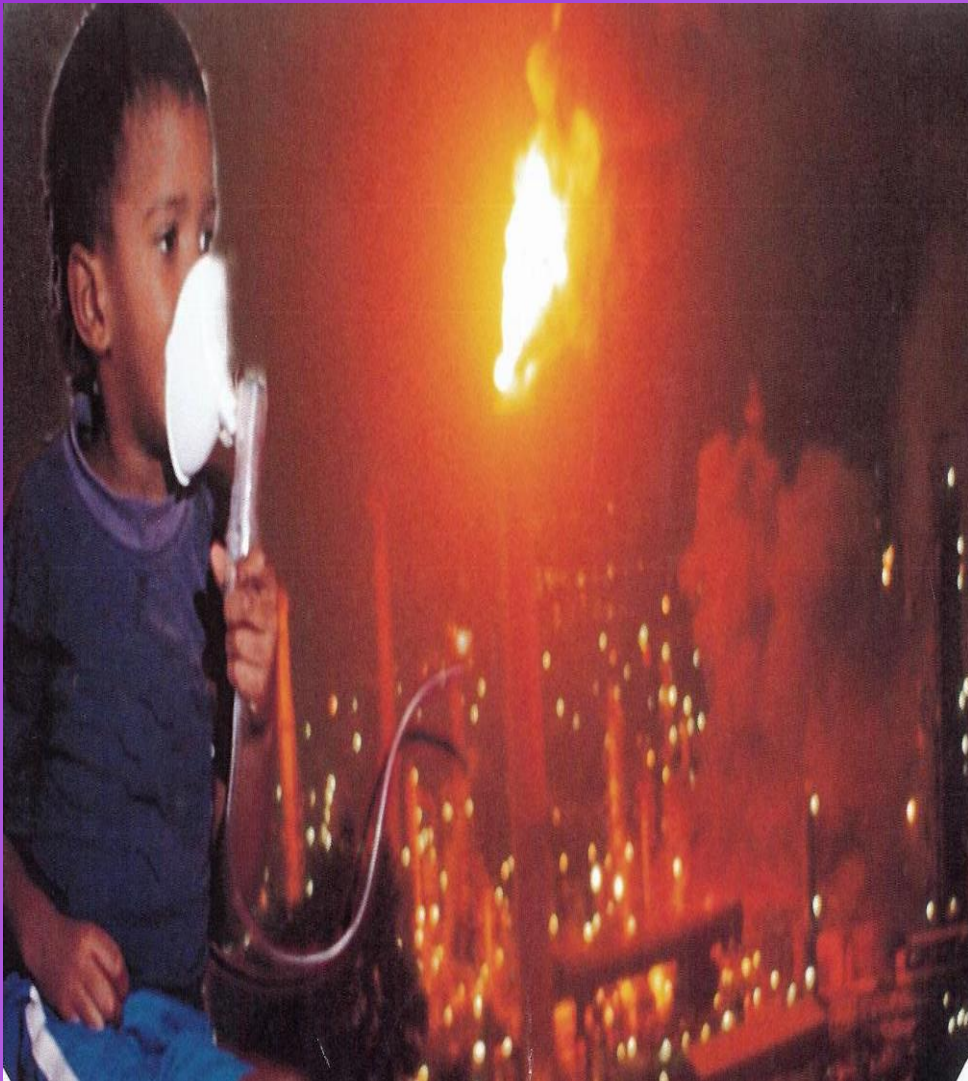
Engen Refinery Fluidized Cat Cracker Unit



Engen Refinery on the 11/10/2006 – Fluidized Cat Cracker Unit



More suffering in South Durban...



HEART OF THE MATTER



Children of Wentworth playing in a park
next to Engen Refinery

AGONY OF THE CHILDREN OF SOUTH DURBAN



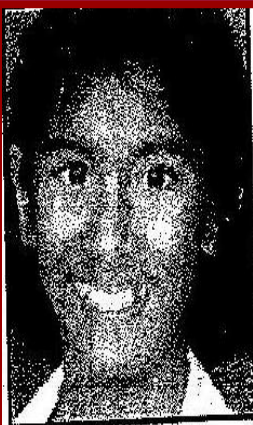
NATHANAEL BEDESSY: 3,
died last year from leukaemia.



LYNSEY DE BEER: 18, died of
leukaemia in 1995



SADÉ SCHWARTZ: 13, being
treated for brain cancer



RAVESHNI GOVENDER: 11,
died of cancer in 1997,



JODACHE NAIDOO: 4, has
stomach cancer.



TASLEEM OMAR: 3, sick with
leukaemia.

AGONY OF THE CHILDREN OF SOUTH DURBAN

Children gassed by factory leak

TONY CARNIE

AT LEAST 27 people, including several schoolchildren, were taken to hospital or treated by ambulance staff yesterday afternoon after another chlorine gas leak at Umbogintwini, south of Durban.

The chlorine leak, which was reported 30km away in Glenwood, emanated from the same factory responsible for the gassing of more than 100 schoolchildren in Isipingo four months ago.

It also coincided with an invitation to residents of south Durban to gather at public meetings in Merebank, Austerville and the Bluff next week to protest about the health and air pollution problems highlighted in *The Mercury* this week.

The latest gas leak from Sasol Polymers (formerly Polifin) happened just after noon and affected several people close to the factory as well as residents and children in Lotus Park, Isipingo, about 2,5km away.

Mr Kim Fraser, general manager of the company's chemical division, said the cause of the leak was not clear, although it seemed to have come from a loading area where chlorine cylinders are filled for water-purification purposes.

At Strelitzia Secondary School, at least four pupils - Shantal Isaac, Romano Govender, Sifanile Mabida and Fiona Abdul - were affected, said headmaster Nanda Nair.

Orissa Primary School head Anand Attwarie said several children had complained of chest pains or sore throats, and one child, 12-year-old Shwanda Gumbeshe, had zone into convulsions.

incident and said his company would pay for all medical costs.

Just four months ago, on May 5, nearly 120 children or teachers from Strelitzia Secondary School were affected or given medical treatment after a similar leak from the Sasol Polymers plant. The factory was closed after the May incident and only reopened a few weeks ago.

Ms Linda Ambler, of the environmental justice group "groundWork", said the latest incident showed that reopening the factory had been premature and indicated that the necessary safety, health and environmental safeguards were not yet in place.

"The incident comes against a backdrop of growing discontent in south Durban about industrial pollution, and 'groundWork' is deeply concerned and disappointed at the apparent disregard shown by industries and the government for community health.

"Both the government and polluting industries need to spend more time, finances and resources on protecting the health of South Africans."

□ The South Durban Community Environmental Alliance has invited residents to a series of "Speak Out!" protest meetings next week to demand a comprehensive health study in the area.

They will be held at 7pm at Austerville Civic Centre, Austerville Drive (Tuesday), Merebank Community Centre, Dharwar Road (Thursday) and Brighton Beach School, 460 Marine Drive, Bluff (Friday).

For information phone: Michelle Simon, project SDCEA co-ordinator, at (031) 461 1991;



The Mondi Paper Mill in South Durban



Incidents in South Durban

On the 18th of October 2002 a fire broke out at Bresman, a Bitumen chemical factory in Jacobs resulting in an explosion where one worker died & one was injured



SAPREF Plant on the 28/10/2006



Community workshops and reports



**“When we breathe
the air of freedom we do not
wish to choke on hidden fumes”
Judge Albie Sachs**

