

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4351
ANSWERED ON:22.04.2010
CLEANING UP OF UNION CARBIDE PLANT
Bhoi Shri Sanjay

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has formulated any comprehensive plan for cleaning up and decontaminate the affected items and areas of the 7 Union Carbide plant in Bhopal;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any survey has been undertaken to monitor the effect of the Bhopal disaster especially on the children; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT KUMAR JENA)

(a)&(b): The High Court of Madhya Pradesh is hearing a Public Interest Litigation filed in W.P. No. 2802 of 2004 on environmental remediation of the former Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) plant site. The Government of M.P., in consultation with the Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board submitted a three -phase Roadmap to the High Court of M.P. giving details of the activities to be undertaken for the removal /disposal of the toxic wastes, which was approved by the High Court. The High Court constituted a Task Force in 2005 under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals for monitoring the progress of removal of the toxic wastes lying in and around the UCIL plant site. Out of an estimated total quantity of 390 MT of toxic wastes lying at UC1L plant site, 40 MT was disposed off in Treatment, Storage & Disposal Facility (TSDF) at Pithampur, Indore in M.P. in June, 2008. M.P. High Court vide order dated 16th December,2008 had ordered for incinerating the remaining 350 MT of toxic wastes at Ankleshwar in Gujarat which was appealed against in the Supreme Court by the Government of Gujarat on grounds of technical problems and adverse public opinion. Supreme Court vide its order dated 28th January, 2010 has endorsed the decision of the Task Force for incinerating the waste at Pithampur, M.P. after trial run and stabilization work of the incinerator at Pithampur is completed. The various clearances are being given by the State Government to the incinerator at Pithampur to make it operational for trial run and stabilization. In order to carry out the detoxification/dismantling of the plant and remediation of the contaminated soil and groundwater in and around the UCIL plant site at Bhopal, three research institutes under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) namely Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT), National Environmental Engineering Research institute (NEERI), National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI) are carrying out the detailed studies.

(c)& (d): Immediately after the Gas Leak Disaster in December, 1984, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) initiated research Projects to document the short term and long term health effects of gas exposure to the population of Bhopal. ICMR had carried out long term epidemiological studies and clinical research studies during 1984-1994 for which two technical reports on Population Based Long Term Epidemiological Studies and Population Based Long Term Clinical Studies were published by ICMR. The Council had studied health effects of MIC/ toxic gas in children at the time of exposure with the objective to study the Health Effects of toxic gas inhalation in children (1-5 years old) and pulmonary effects of toxic gas in children 6 to 15 years old. Health Effects of MIC gas were studied in 1412 children from severely affected areas who were actually exposed to gas, compared with 1268 children from control/unexposed areas. By 1988, 42 per cent of the affected children were healthy and 44 per cent were still suffering from morbidity; the corresponding figures for the controlled group were 69 per cent and 22 per cent. Overall, the affected group did not show evidence of progressive morbidity. After completion of a decade [1985-1994] the epidemiological studies were handed over by ICMR to M.P. Government for continuation of monitoring of the possible health effects on long term basis and the Centre for Rehabilitation Studies (CRS) under Bhopal Gas Rehabilitation Department at Bhopal is continuing with monitoring of health effects of exposed population.