

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1891

ANSWERED ON:05.08.2010

REMOVAL OF DANGEROUS CHEMICALS

Ramasubbu Shri S.;Singh Shri Rajiv Ranjan (Lalan);Vardhan Shri Harsh

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

- (a) whether large quantity of dangerous chemicals are still lying in Union Carbide Factory in Bhopal;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has asked the present owners of the factory to safely remove these chemicals; and
- (d) if so, the action initiated to remove these chemicals ?

Answer

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

(a) to (d): The High Court of MP at Jabalpur through a PIL filed has been issuing directions and monitoring the disposal of toxic wastes lying in and around the premises of the erstwhile UCIL plant. The High Court had set up a Task Force under the chairmanship of Secretary(C&PC) in 2005 for overseeing the remediation activities. Out of the 390 MT of stored toxic wastes lying at UCIL plant, 40 MT of lime sludge has been disposed off in the Treatment, Storage, Disposal Facility (TSDF) at Pithampur in June,2008. The direction of the High Court that the remaining 350 MT of toxic wastes be incinerated in the BEIL incinerator at Ankleshwar, Gujarat was contested by the Govt. of Gujarat in the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court, after a series of hearings, disposed off the SLP vide order dated 28th January,2010 and endorsed the decision of the Task Force that the new incinerator at Pithampur, MP will be made operational at the earliest after which the wastes can be incinerated in that incinerator. All the necessary clearances have since been given by all agencies of the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh for operationalisation of the incinerator at Pithampur on 7th May, 2010.

The Government has accepted the recommendations of the Group of Ministers (GoM) constituted on 26th May, 2010 to examine all the issues related to Bhopal Gas Disaster and has established an Oversight Committee in the Ministry of Environment and Forests to provide oversight and support to the Government of Madhya Pradesh for taking necessary remediation action and complete it by 31.12.2010. The Government of India has also decided to bear the cost of remediation in the first instance and claim restitution from the persons/companies liable for the damage on the principle of 'polluter pays'. An application has already been filed in the High Court of M.P. to expeditiously decide the question of liability of Dow Chemicals Company and/or other successor to UCC/UCIL.