

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1707
ANSWERED ON:07.03.2013
CHEMICAL WASTE IN UNION CARBIDE PLANT
Saroj Shri Tufani;Viswanathan Shri P.

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

- (a) whether 350 metric tonne chemical waste is still lying in the compound of Union Carbide plant though 28 years have gone by since the Bhopal Gas tragedy struck;
- (b) if so, the steps taken by the Government either for removing or disposing the said waste from there;
- (c) whether the cost of removing the toxic waste is likely to be charged from the Union Carbide;
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government has entered into an agreement with a foreign firm for disposal of the said waste but later on the said firm withdrew its hands;
- (f) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (g) the steps taken by the Government for removal/disposal of the said waste?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT KUMAR JENA)

(a) & (b) Yes, Sir. Approximately 350 MT of toxic waste is lying in a secured go-down within the premises of Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) at Bhopal. Earlier attempts for its incineration in Ankleshwar, Gujarat and Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO) at Nagpur, Maharashtra could not fructify as the respective State Pollution Control Boards did not issue requisite "No Objection Certificate". Even the decision of the Supreme Court of January, 2010 to incinerate the toxic waste at Pithampur, Madhya Pradesh could not be carried out due to public protests. After exhausting all possible options, including the option of incineration of waste at DRDO, Nagpur as recommended by the Oversight Committee in 2011, Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) decided in February, 2012 to carry out incineration of the waste at the facility at Pithampur as decided earlier. But the decision was again opposed by the Government of Madhya Pradesh by filing an application in the Supreme Court.

(c) & (d) Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals had earlier filed an application in High Court of Madhya Pradesh at Jabalpur in WP No. 2802/2004 requesting for directions to respondent companies to deposit an advance of rs 100 crore towards cost of remediation, which is pending for decision in the court. In June, 2010, Government of India decided to bear the estimated cost of remediation rs 310 crore approximately, in the first instance, pending claiming restitution from the persons/ companies found liable for the environmental damage on the principle of 'polluter pays'. A Curative Petition (Civil) has been filed by Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals in the Supreme Court on 3rd December, 2010, wherein enhancement of compensation amount which was settled for US \$ 470 million has been sought from respondents which includes the component of actual expenditure incurred/to be incurred for environmental remediation.

(e) & (f) A proposal of a German Government agency, namely, M/s. GIZ IS, for incineration of the waste by transporting it to Germany with an estimated cost of about rs 24.56 crore was approved by the Cabinet in July, 2012. While the negotiations for finalization of the contract were at an advanced stage, GIZ IS on 17th September, 2012 withdrew its proposal citing adverse media reports in Germany.

(g) The Group of Ministers (GoM) directed on 22nd October, 2012 for preparing the TSDF at Pithampur, MP for stabilization of the unit by incineration of other similar waste so that a sample of Bhopal waste could be transported and test incinerated in the facility. The GoM also decided that the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) would undertake the evaluation of the performance of 22 other incinerators across the country for their abilities to dispose off the toxic waste of Bhopal. Ministry of Environment & Forests is regularly filing action taken reports in the Supreme Court in an ongoing SLP in the matter.