

Court allows disposal of remaining Union Carbide toxic waste at Pithampur

Published On: 29-03-2025

Context

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Thursday gave its nod to the State government following an assurance from the latter that it could incinerate the remaining 40-year-old toxic waste of Bhopal's defunct Union Carbide factory within 72 days at a private facility in Pithampur

Bhopal gas disaster

- The Bhopal Gas Disaster, one of the world's worst industrial accidents, occurred on the night of **December 2-3**, **1984**, in **Bhopal**, **Madhya Pradesh**.
- A highly toxic gas, methyl isocyanate (MIC), leaked from a pesticide plant owned by Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL).
- The leak exposed over 500,000 residents to the gas, leading to immediate fatalities and long-term health complications.

Reasons for the Disaster

- **Poor Maintenance**: Safety systems, like gas scrubbers and cooling systems, were either non functional or inadequate.
- Negligence: Lack of proper training for workers and failure to follow safety protocols.
- Cost-Cutting Measures: Union Carbide had reduced staff and safety standards to lower operational costs.
- **Design Flaws**: Faulty plant design increased the risk of gas leaks.
- Storage Issues: Excessive quantities of MIC were stored at the plant, contrary to safety guidelines.

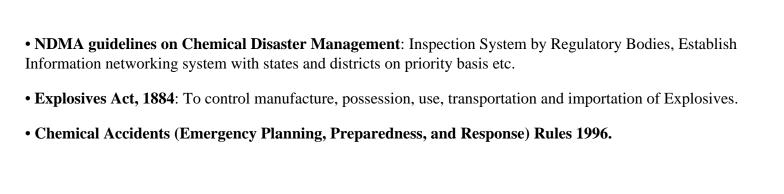
Methyl Isocyanate (CH3NCO)

- Volatile, colorless liquid that is extremely flammable, and potentially explosive when mixed with air.
- Reacts with water, giving off heat and producing methylamine and carbon dioxide.
- Liquid and vapor are toxic when inhaled, ingested, or exposed to the eyes or skin.

Initiatives taken to tackle Chemical accidents

Kamaraj IAS Academy

Plot A P.127, AF block, 6 th street, 11th Main Rd, Shanthi Colony, Anna Nagar, Chennai, Tamil Nadu 600040 Phone: **044 4353 9988 / 98403 94477** / Whatsapp : **09710729833**



Kamaraj IAS Academy