

**MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE  
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER  
2010, IN THE CONFERENCE HALL, PARYAVARAN  
BHAWAN, CGO COMPLEX, LODHI ROAD**

The First Meeting of the Oversight Committee was held on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2010 under the Chairmanship of Shri Jairam Ramesh, MOS (I/C) Environment and Forests and Shri Babulal Gaur, Minister, Department of Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh. The list of participants is annexed.

2. At the outset, Shri Jairam Ramesh welcomed Shri Babulal Gaur, Minister, Department of Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation, Shri Jayant Malliya, Malliya, Minister of Environment, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh and other members of the Oversight Committee (OC). Initiating the discussions, Shri Jairam Ramesh requested Secretary, Department of Science and Technology (DST) to share the recommendations of the report submitted by the Peer Review Committee (PRC).

3. Secretary, DST informed that report submitted by PRC on 23/09/2010 is a draft report. He informed that studies conducted by NEERI /NGRI reported the contamination of soil and ground water in an around the UCIL premises, is solely due to dumping of various wastes during 1969-1984, and the MIC gas leak tragedy has no relevance to it. The draft report of PRC highlighted the following:

- The estimated quantity of contaminated soil (1.1 milling tones) is on higher side and needs to be re-appraised.
- Soil samples have not been collected from the entire site because of the presence of thick vegetation cover and concrete built-up structures.
- Soil sampling locations should be selected using grid technique and include the area from which samples have already been collected and analyzed.
- Soil samples should be collected from various depths at pre-selected locations.
- NEERI study report contamination only in five wells and all these five wells have since been sealed. However, earlier studies reported widespread water contamination in wells outside and around UCIL premises. Additional study is required to be done to fully appreciate the ground water contamination in bore wells.
- Need to reconcile all the ground water quality data with that of CPCB and MPPCB reported up to this time.
- Passing of hot gases for detoxification is not advisable.
- Ensure no emission or effluents get added to the site during decommissioning and detoxification.
- Avoid the use of organics solvents for the detoxification of the dismantled structures.

4. Shri Jairam Ramesh, MOS (IC) informed that all the recommendations of PRC will be implemented.

on date, the Oversight Committee do not have an agreed plan of action. The Committees noted that the plan of action will be available within next 2-3 months time.

5. On the issue of disposal of 350 MT of toxic waste lying in the UCIL premises, Shri Babulal Gaur, Minister, Department of Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation informed that Government of Madhya Pradesh has forwarded a representation to the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals and Ministry of Environment & Forests expressing concerns of the Government of Madhya Pradesh over disposal of 350 MT of toxic waste by incineration at Pithampur.

6. Shri Jayant Kumar Malliya, Minister for Environment, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh expressed the concern that the entire Pithampur area falls within the catchment of Yashwant Sagar dam which is a major source of water supply of the Indore region. There is a possibility that the incineration of toxic wastes may contaminate the ground water of entire Malwa region. Taking into consideration the possibility of contamination of the catchment area of the Yaswant Sagar dam, the State Govt. expressed their inability regarding disposal of the waste at Pithampur. He suggested that the issue of disposal of 350 MT of hazardous waste may be revisited.

7. Chairman, CPCB informed in the meeting about the option of co-processing in cement kilns. The cement kilns are operating at a temperature of more than 1200°C and all the toxic wastes can be disposed of in the

107  
informed that the Co-incineration option was also suggested to the Task Force in one of its meetings. He further reiterated that there are about 1035 cement factories in the country and National Council of Building Material has carried out a trial run as well as Environmental Impact assessment study of co-processing in the cement kilns. The study confirms that this waste can be co-processed in the cement kilns. The chairman also suggested the option of disposal by Pyrolysis. Such units can be established either in the UCIL premises or in the Forest area.

8. Principal Secretary, GoMP informed that cement kilns are not equipped with control systems like an incinerator. The cement manufacturers have refused co-processing of the wastes of Bhopal Gas in cement kilns. Though Pithampur TSDF facility has the State-of-art facilities, the decision has been taken by the State Government not to dispose of the stored hazardous waste at Pithampur TSDF facility taking into account the fact that it may contaminate the Yashwant Sagar dam.

9. Secretary, Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals (DCPC) informed that the Task Force Committee decided to dispose the stored toxic wastes by incineration at the Pithampur TSDF facility based on the recommendation of the Technical Committee. The High Court of Jabalpur was informed of the decision. The Union Cabinet also recommended disposal of approximately 35

10. Secretary, DCPC informed that chemical weapons which are more toxic than the UCIL toxic wastes are being incinerated by DRDO. He emphasized the need to take a decision regarding disposal of stored toxic wastes.

11. After detailed discussions, the Committee agreed to refer the issue of disposal of 350 MT of toxic wastes to the Group of Ministers (GoM) meeting.

12. The Oversight Committee suggested that the PRC will share its recommendations with the participating organizations - NEERI, NGRI and IICT, incorporate the suggestions received and submit the final report to the Oversight Committee.

13. The meeting concluded with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair and Co-Chair.

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE  
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE HELD ON 27<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER  
2010, IN THE CONFERENCE HALL, PARYAVARAN  
BHAWAN, CGO COMPLEX, LODHI ROAD, NEW DELHI

1. Shri Jairam Ramesh MOS (I/C) Environment and Forests, New Delhi.
2. Shri Babulal Gaur, Minister, Department of Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation, Govt. of M.P.
3. Shri Jayant Kumar Malliya, Minister, Minister for Environment, Govt. of M.P.
4. Shri Bijoy Chatterjee, Secretary, D/o Chemicals and Petrochemicals.
5. Shri Thirumalachari Ramasami, Secretary, D/o Science and Technology
6. Smt. Mira Mehrishi, Additional Secretary, MoEF.
7. Smt. Gauri Kumar, Additional Secretary & Finance Advisor, MoEF.
8. Prof. S.P. Gautam, Chairman, Central Pollution Control Board
9. Shri S.C. Gupta, Joint Secretary, D/o Chemicals and Petrochemicals
10. Shri Alok Srivastav, Principal Secretary, Environment Govt. of M.P.
11. Shri S.R. Mohanty, Secretary, Department of Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation, Govt. of M.P.
12. Dr. N.P. Shukla, Chairman, Madhya Pradesh Pollution Control Board
13. Shri A. Krishna Reddy, Scientist (Retd.), Indian Institute of Chemical Technology.