

DELHI

Bhopal tragedy survivors end fast on Ministry's assurance



STAFF REPORTER

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Ministry agrees to determine compensation on the basis of data from medical research, hospital records

A group of survivors of the Bhopal gas tragedy said on Saturday that the assurance given to them by the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers on Friday was the first step in the right direction.

The survivors ended their four-day water-less fast at Jantar Mantar here on Friday after Joint Secretary A.J.V Prasad visited them at the protest site.

“On both our demands, the Minister has agreed to the determination of compensation on the basis of data from medical research and hospital records instead of the faulty medical



The president of the Bhopal Gas Peedit Mahila Purush Sangharsh Morcha, Nawab Khan, said the group was protesting against the denial of an additional Rs.1 lakh in compensation to 93 per cent of the survivors by labelling their injuries as minor.

“We see this as the first major official initiative to correct the historical wrongs in Bhopal,” said Rachna Dhingra of the Bhopal Group for Information and Action.

PTI adds: The Central Government has agreed to increase the compensation for Bhopal gas tragedy victims, Amnesty International said on Thursday and welcomed the move.

The government has also promised to revise the numbers of deaths and injuries, according to an Amnesty International statement.

The government decision came following hunger strike by five women, who began their action this past Monday here.

On Thursday the women, who were on hunger strike and were supported by another 200 survivors and activists, were called to a meeting with Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilizers Ananth Kumar. The minister agreed, in writing, to revise figures the government was using in the compensation claim, and promised to do so before the thirtieth anniversary of the Bhopal disaster on December 2, the statement said.

“We welcome this important move by the government. Now Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi must ensure his government's pledge is honoured,” said Audrey Gaughran, Amnesty International's Director for Global Issues. “That would be a historic step towards justice for Bhopal,” he added in the statement.

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