



BASAI News Updates

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{ OUR TAKE }

Doing right by Bhopal victims

The Centre's ask for enhanced compensation is welcome. It will help achieve some justice

On the night of December 2-3, 1984, the lives of the residents of JP Nagar on the outskirts of Bhopal changed forever after 40 tons of toxic methyl isocyanate gas was released into the air from a factory owned by Union Carbide India Ltd (UCIL), now a wholly owned subsidiary of The Dow Chemical Company. The industrial disaster — the world's worst to date — killed 5,000 people instantly and left tens of thousands with prolonged pain, cancer, stillbirths, miscarriages, and lung and heart diseases. Many who survived that fateful night and those suffering from the disaster's intergenerational impacts say they live in a terrible place and a cursed life.

In the last 38 years, the Bhopal gas disaster case has seen several twists and turns. In 1985, India sued UCIL for \$3.3 billion in the United States. But in 1989, the Centre and UCIL struck an out-of-court deal for \$470 million as compensation, described by victims as grossly inadequate. In 2010, curative pleas were filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (later junked) and the Centre, seeking enhancement of damages. It said the 1989 compensation was based on a preliminary assessment of 3,000 deaths, 20,000 people suffering from severe injuries and 50,000 from minor ones. Since then, it said, the death figures rose to 5,295, with 35,000 people suffering from serious injuries and 527,000 from minor ones. On Tuesday, the Centre assured a five-judge bench of the Supreme Court (SC) that it would press the 2010 curative petition, seeking compensation over and above the \$470 million paid by UCIL.

The Centre's stand is welcome, and attorney general R Venkataramani's comments that the "government cannot abandon the victims," and that "it is a tragedy unfolding every day" are reassuring. Bhopal survivor organisations have always said that UCIL suppressed internal documents that showed that exposure to the leaked gas was known to cause permanent damage and pushed the government to agree to a paltry settlement in 1989. Surveys done by Bhopal campaign groups documented that other than irreversible health impacts, the toxic waste from the factory has now reached 40 areas in the city, and continues to spread. As the government pursues the curative petition, it's also vital that the number of deaths, the intergenerational impact of the leak, the extent of the injury and the environmental impact are duly assessed. A comprehensive assessment will make the complete picture of the terrible catastrophe public, serve as a cautionary tale and also bolster the legal plea.

At cane fest, farmers seek hike in sugarcane price

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, OCTOBER 12

The ICAR-Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Regional Centre, Karnal, on Wednesday organised a Cane Fest-2022, in which around 2,500 progressive sugarcane farmers from the states of Haryana, Punjab, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and others participated along with their cane development officials of the concerned sugar mills.

An agriculture exhibition was organised, which was inaugurated by chief guest Sanjay Bhatia, Member of Parliament, Karnal, Renu Bala Gupta, Mayor, Karnal, was the guest of honour. Meanwhile, the farmers demanded that the price of the sugarcane be

New variety CO-15023 displayed at cane fest



A booklet being released at the cane fest in Karnal on Wednesday.

increased. Responding to their demand, the MP assured them that the state government was always working for the welfare of the farming community and this time too it would not disappoint them. "I will raise their issue of increasing the price of sugarcane with

the CM. I assure you that it will be higher than that of Punjab," said the MP. Meanwhile, a new variety of sugarcane CO-15023 was also displayed and scientists informed the farmers about the benefits of the new variety.

Dr SK Pandey, head of the

Regional Centre, explained about the ongoing sugarcane varietal development programme and research activities at the centre. He explained about the contribution of the wonder variety, CO-0238. Responding to the issue raised by the farmers on the spreading of top borer insect menace, Dr Pandey appraised the farmers about the management of the top borer and emphasised on the use of insecticides such as chlorentraniliprole 17.8 per cent, which is easily available in the market. Ramesh Dutt, Commercial Director, FMC, also apprised the farmers about the methods of checking the spread of top borer in sugarcane. Dutt was also awarded the first prize at the exhibition.

Gurugram to impose ₹2,500 fine for stubble burning

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

GURUGRAM, OCTOBER 12

In order to curb the stubble burning incidents in Gurugram, the administration has decided to fine farmers for burning stubble in the district. A fine of Rs 2,500 per acre will be levied on those involved in stubble burning.

Deputy Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav said the district administration was fully prepared to curb the menace. "Teams have been



formed by the district administration at the district, sub-divisional, block and village level to monitor stubble burning in their concerned areas," Yadav said.

The officials also said nec-

essary instructions had been given to the Environment Control Department for this.

"We appealed to all farmers of the district not to burn stubble after harvesting paddy. It not only harms the

ILL-EFFECTS

“Stubble burning not only harms the environment, but also harms animals, birds and plants. Nishant Kumar Yadav, DC

environment, but also harms animals, birds and plants," said the DC.

He said for the convenience of farmers in the district, 50 per cent discount has been announced on

using equipment related to stubble management. He said custom hiring centres, have also been made available to any registered farmer group or panchayat on an 80 per cent grant.

"We appeal to the farmers to chip in for safeguarding the environment by using stubble management equipment such as Super seeder, zero tillage machine, straw reaper, straw mulcher, reaper binder, mbiplo, etc.," Yadav added.



Market committee secy suspended

Action against staff on cards

PARVEEN ARORA
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

KARNAL, OCTOBER 12

Several raids were conducted at the Jundla grain market and different rice mills in the Jundla area on Tuesday, following which some grain markets and millers have come under the lens of the Haryana State Agricultural Marketing Board (HSAMB) and the district administration. The HSAMB Chief Administrator, Sujan Singh, has suspended the secretary of the Jundla market committee, Pawan Chopra.

Besides, Sujan has directed to take appropriate departmental action against those involved in the nexus of issuing fake gate passes for proxy procurement. He has also asked the Chief Marketing Enforcement Officer (CMEO) to get an FIR registered against the firm where a team member of the HSAMB found paddy short.

The Tribune had highlighted the issue of fake gate passes being issued for proxy procurement of paddy. After the reports, the CM flying squad and a special team of the HSAMB conducted raids in Jundla on Tuesday and found paddy short.

Deputy Commissioner Anish Yadav appointed the SDMs to keep a vigil at the Taraori, Karnal, Gharaunda, Assandh, Indri, Nissing, Jundla and other grain markets on the malpractice.

"I have asked the SDMs to keep an eye on grain markets. We will conduct physical verification if required. I have also sought a report from the

JUNDLA MILLS RAID ADDL DUTY TAKEN BACK

Based on the findings in the other three mills, Pawan Chopra, secretary, Jundla grain market. The additional charge of the Kanal market committee has also been withdrawn.

Sujan Singh, CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR, HSAMB

DFSC for flaws in the Jundla grain market," said the DC.

The CM flying squad got an FIR registered against four mills. "On the complaint of the CM flying squad member, we have registered an FIR against four mills — KM Foods, Budh Ram Foods, Anand Foods in Jundla and Hansraj Industries — in Karnal under the IPC," said Ganga Ram Punia, Superintendent of Police.

"The CM flying squad had conducted raids at three mills and found paddy short. A special team has also inspected Saraswati Agro Foods in Jundla and found various discrepancies in the stock and record," said Sujan.

Officials from different market committees had been deployed at the entry gates of various grain markets of the district to keep a vigil on the arrival and issuance of gate passes, and on the outgoing of paddy, he added.

Besides, the District Food Supply Controller (DFSC), Anil Kalra, has shifted purchase inspector Gaurav from Jundla grain market and appointed another inspector.