

**Press Information Bureau  
Government of India**

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**PM reviews Vishakhapatnam Gas Leak Incident**

**All out efforts are being made to tackle the situation on ground**

**New Delhi, May 07, 2020**

Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, chaired a high-level meeting today morning to take stock of the steps being taken in response to the Vishakhapatnam gas leak incident. He discussed at length the measures being taken for the safety of the affected people as well as for securing the site affected by the disaster. The meeting was attended by Shri Rajnath Singh, Defense Minister, Shri Amit Shah, Home Minister, Ministers of State for Home Affairs, Shri Nityanand Rai and Shri G. Kishan Reddy, besides other senior officers.

On receiving the first information about the incident today morning, the Prime Minister and the Home Minister talked with CM, Andhra Pradesh and assured all required aid and assistance from the Centre to tackle the situation. They are monitoring the situation closely and continuously.

Immediately after this meeting, Cabinet Secretary took a detailed review meeting along with the Secretaries of the Ministries of Home Affairs, Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Chemicals and Petrochemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Information and Broadcasting; Members of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Director General (DG), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF); Director General of Health Services (DGHS) and Director AIIMS, and other medical experts; to chart out specific steps to support the management of the situation on the ground. Principal Secretary to Prime Minister was also present in the meeting.

It was decided that a team from CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) unit of NDRF from Pune, along with an expert team of National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), Nagpur would be rushed to Vishakhapatnam immediately to support the State Government in the management of the crisis on the ground, and also to take measures for resolving the short term as also long term medical impact of the leak.

The incident of Styrene gas leakage occurred in a chemical plant in the early hours today at 3 am in RR Venkatapuram village, Gopalapatnam Mandal in Visakhapatnam District. It affected the surrounding villages namely Narava, B.C Colony, Bapuji Nagar, Kampalapalem and Krishna Nagar. Styrene gas, which is toxic in nature, may cause irritation to the skin, eyes and causes respiratory problems and other medical conditions.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team with CBRN personnel at Vishakhapatnam was deployed immediately to support the State Government and local administration. The NDRF team carried out immediate evacuation of communities living in the immediate vicinity of the site. The specialized CBRN unit of NDRF from Pune and NEERI expert team from Nagpur, have left for Vishakhapatnam. Besides, DGHS will provide specialized medical advice to the medical practitioners on the ground.

The properties of the leaked compound, its impact, common symptoms among those exposed, first-aid measures, precautions, Do's and Don'ts can be accessed [here](#). ↓↓

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**VG/SNC/VM**

## **Properties of the Compound**

Styrene is a colourless, flammable liquid which is used to prepare polystyrene plastics, rubber and fibre glass. It is used in pipes, insulation, automobile parts etc.

## **Impact and Symptoms**

The exposure of styrene is through ingestion, inhalation or contact (skin). Common symptoms of styrene exposure include irritation to eyes, nose and skin; gastrointestinal and respiratory effects. Its long term exposure may cause central nervous system and kidney related problems, depression, headache etc. The department of health and human services USA has listed styrene as reasonably anticipated to be human carcinogen.

## **First-aid measures**

If swallowed, DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING. Give large quantities of water. Never give anything by mouth to an unconscious person. If inhaled, remove to fresh air. If not breathing, give artificial respiration. If breathing is difficult, give oxygen. In case of contact, immediately flush eyes or skin with plenty of water for at least 15 minutes while removing contaminated clothing and shoes. Wash clothing before reuse. In all cases, get medical attention.

## **Detection of Gas in Air**

For ascertaining the level of styrene in a contaminated air, samples of air may be taken from different places of suspected exposure and be subjected to detailed analysis using a special styrene detection device. Gas chromatography may also be used for its qualitative and quantitative estimation

## **Hazards related to Environment**

When released into the soil or water, styrene is expected to readily biodegrade and evaporate quickly. While released into the air, styrene is expected to be readily degraded by reaction with photo-chemically produced hydroxyl radicals and is expected to have a half-life of less than 1 day.

## **Do's and Don'ts and Precautions**

1. Do not panic, evacuate calmly and quickly perpendicular to wind direction through the designated escape route
2. Keep a wet handkerchief or piece of cloth/ sari on face during evacuation
3. Keep the sick, elderly, weak, handicapped and other people who are unable to evacuate inside house and close all the doors and windows tightly.
4. Do not consume the uncovered food/ water etc open to the air, drink only from bottle.
5. Change into fresh clothing after reaching safe place/ shelter, and wash hands properly.
6. Inform Fire & Emergency Services, Police and medical services from safe location by calling 101, 100 and 108 respectively.
7. Listen to PA (Public Address) System of the plant/ factory, local radio/ TV channels for advice from district administration/fire/health/police and other concerned authorities.
8. Provide correct and accurate information to government official.
9. Inform others on occurrence of event at public gathering places (like school, shopping centre, theatre etc.).
10. Don't pay attention to the rumours and don't spread them.

11. Do not smoke, lit fire or spark in the identified hazardous area
12. Sensitize the community living near the industrial units and they should be more vigilant about the nature of industrial units and associated risks.
13. Keep the contact numbers of nearest hazardous industry, fire station, police station, control room, health services and district control room, for emergency use.
14. Avoid housing near the industries producing or processing the hazardous chemicals, if possible.
15. Participate in all the capacity building programmes organized by the government/ voluntary organizations / industrial units.
16. Take part in preparing disaster management plan for the community and identify safe shelter along with safe and easy access routes.
17. Prepare a family disaster management plan and explain it to all the family members.
18. Make the family/ neighbours aware of the basic characteristics of various poisonous/ hazardous chemicals and the first aid required to treat them.
19. Adequate number of personal protective equipments needs to be made available, to deal with emergency situation.
20. Prepare an emergency kit of items and essentials in the house, including medicines, documents and valuables.

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