



Toxic Waste Disposal of Bhopal Gas Tragedy

Why in News?

Recently, the **Madhya Pradesh government** decided to **incinerate 337 Metric Tons (MT) of toxic waste** from the Union Carbide facility, nearly 40 years after [the Bhopal gas tragedy, 1984](#).

Key Points

- The **central government** has earmarked **Rs 126 crore for the disposal of the waste**.
 - The **disposal process is expected to be executed in 180 days**, at the incinerator of the **Treatment Storage Disposal Facility (TSDF) in Pithampur, Indore**.
- The disposal process involves transporting the waste from the contaminated site to the disposal site, blending it with reagents, and then incinerating it.
 - The Madhya Pradesh Department of [Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation \(BGTRR\)](#) will oversee the disposal.
- **Challenges and Concerns:**
 - The plan to **incinerate the waste at the Pithampur TSDF has faced opposition from residents**, leading to the suspension of further plans in 2015.
 - A 2021 [National Green Tribunal \(NGT\)](#) report directed the remediation of the [Solar Evaporation Ponds \(SEPs\)](#) located north of the factory, indicating ongoing environmental contamination.
 - The Solar Evaporation Ponds (SEPs) were **used primarily to store low-level radioactive wastes contaminated with high concentrations of nitrate**.
 - Traces of heavy metals and other contaminants have been found in the borewell water around the site, exceeding acceptable limits.
 - Social groups working for the rehabilitation of the gas tragedy victims have refuted claims about the safety of the incineration process, citing **high levels of Dioxins and Furans** detected during trial runs.

The Bhopal Gas Tragedy 1984

- The **Bhopal gas tragedy** was one of the **worst industrial accidents in history that occurred on the night of 2-3 December 1984** at the **Union Carbide India Limited (UCIL) pesticide plant in Bhopal, MP**.
- It exposed people and animals to the highly toxic gas [methyl isocyanate \(MIC\)](#), causing immediate and long-term health effects and deaths.