

MARXIST LENINIST PARTY OF INDIA (RED FLAG)

Central Committee

Cochin , 7th May 2019

Toxic gas leak at Vishakapatnam: FATAL RESULT OF UNPREPAREDNESS BEFORE LOCKDOWN AND REOPENNING

A disastrous toxic gas leak has occurred at between 2.30 a.m. and 3 a.m. from LG Polymers chemical (a South Korean MNC) plant in RR Venkatapuram village, Visakhapatnam, in Andhra Pradesh today.

It has spread over a radius of about 5 km, directly affecting more than five villages. Eight persons, including a six-year-old girl, died so far and about 300 are hospitalised. Over 5000 are feared to have become sick. Prof. Sudhakar the principal of the Andhra Medical College, who confirmed the death toll, has added that the death toll might increase. Over 20 villages are trapped in the location where the leaked out toxic gas has spread. It reminds the catastrophic Bhopal Gas tragedy of 1984, for which Union Carbide, the US based MNC, was responsible.

This perilous fatality is the result of lack of preparedness while the lockdown was implemented. The central and State governments are responsible for such inadequate preparedness. Similar disasters are likely to occur if reopening after the lock-down is done with out sufficient precautions are taken in all operations such as industrial, construction, power and fuel, transport, railways, metro, aviation systems etc. Best of preparedness is to be there to avoid such mishaps.

We demand that :

- 1) the chemical plant be closed down and taken over to stop any recurrence of leakage beyond doubt; and, immediate rescue and evacuation operations be done on war footing in order to save maximum lives in the whole area where the toxic gas has spread;
- 2) The best of medical assistance be given to the affected people for their speedy recovery;
- 3) Appropriate compensation and reparations be given to the diseased and the disabled;
- 4) Comprehensive Judicial inquiry be conducted as part of thorough investigations regarding the whole matter connected with this disastrous toxic gas leak.

MS Jayakumar

GENERAL SECRETARY