

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS
DEPARTMENT OF FERTILIZERS

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1306 TO BE ANSWERED ON 11.03.2025

Safety concerns in public sector fertilizer plants

1306: SHRI K. R. SURESH REDDY:

Will the Minister of **CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has conducted any safety audits of public sector fertilizer plants in the last three years;
- (b) if so, the key findings of these audits;
- (c) the number of accidents reported in fertilizer plants during this period; and
- (d) the measures taken to improve workplace safety in these plants?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)

(a) to (d): The mandatory safety audits of Public Sector Fertilizer Plants are conducted periodically by the respective Public Sector Undertakings through external agencies. With regard to workplace safety in fertilizer manufacturing plants, the Department of Fertilizers has issued advisory to all urea manufacturing units for strict adherence to all safety related statutory provisions and guidelines for storing handling hazardous chemicals and to ensure all safety measures. The details of safety audits during the last three years, key findings of these audits, the number of accidents reported in major public fertilizer plants during this period and the measures taken to improve workplace safety in these plants are as under:

1. **National Fertilizers Limited (NFL):** NFL has five fertilizer manufacturing plants. It conducts safety audit of all its manufacturing plants every year through Directorate General Factory Advice Service and Labour Institutes (DGFASLI) certified Auditor/Agency in accordance with Manufacture, Storage and Import of Hazardous Chemicals (MSIHC) Rules, 1989. Last year, it conducted safety audit of all its manufacturing plants through M/s QMS India Limited. Key findings of the safety audit include good Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) systems, adherence to safety related statutory provisions and guidelines, adequate safety measures and procedures for various operations, comprehensive safety manual, emergency response plan, disaster management plan for Onsite & Offsite along with work permit system, installation of smoke detector in fire water pump house at Nangal unit and Arc flash study of electrical system at

Panipat and Vijaipur units etc. No major accident was reported during the last three years. However, there were 6 reportable accidents, as per provisions of Factory Act. Measures taken to improve workplace safety in plants include regular training and workshops with respect to Safety, Health & Environment (SHE), use of appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while issuing Safety Work Permits (SWPs) to execute the job in plants, strict compliance of statutory guidelines, instructions & Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), emergency on-site & off-site mock drills etc.

2. **Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Limited (RCF):** RCF has two fertilizer manufacturing plants. Apart from regular internal audit through its Safety Audit Committees, it conducts safety audit of its manufacturing plants through external reputed agencies annually. There were no critical observations in the safety audit report. However, it recommended enhanced efforts towards protecting the existing infrastructure and facilities from corrosion, increased efforts in the areas of housekeeping, spillage control, workplace safety, safe storage and handling of chemicals etc. There were altogether 13 accidents reported in the last three years. Measures taken to improve workplace safety in plants include mandatory use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), regular training of employees, strict protocol-based permit system at workplace, annual evaluation of plants with regard to HSE index, safety campaigns, safety signages, analytical review for addressing potential hazards due to change in system or operation, strict adherence to legal and regulatory standards etc.
3. **Madras Fertilizers Limited (MFL):** MFL has only one fertilizer manufacturing plant. It conducted safety audit of its plant twice during the last three years. Key findings of the safety audit include study of structural stability of its buildings and other facilities and the same has been completed. There were two accidents reported during the last three years. Measures taken to improve workplace safety in plants include intensive on-site & off-site training to employees to create awareness on safety, handling of emergency and usage of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Constant Accident Reduction Efforts (CARE) etc.
4. **Fertilizers and Chemicals Travancore Limited (FACT):** FACT conducts internal safety audits through its Safety Audit Committee and engages a reputed external agency for audits biennially. The key findings of safety audit include valuable insights into effectiveness of safety management system. FACT maintains a safety management system with special focus on effective use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and safety improvements. There were two reportable accidents during the last three years. Measures taken to improve workplace safety in plants include regular safety training and awareness programs, proactive hazard identification and risk assessments, well-defined work procedures and policies, mandatory use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), systematic incident reporting and analysis, active Safety Committees with employees participation, health and wellness initiatives, strict adherence to legal and regulatory standards, and comprehensive emergency preparedness and response plans etc.

5. **Brahmaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Limited (BVFCL):** BVFCL has, presently, only one operating fertilizer manufacturing plant. It conducts safety audit of its plant every two years through an external agency. Last external safety audit (IS-14489) of its manufacturing plant was conducted through M/s CGS Green, Chennai during September 2022 and the Job Completion Report was given on 05.01.2023 with validity upto 04.01.2025. Key findings of safety audit include fire & electrical safety, hazard identification, risk assessment, hazards corrective action, training, emergency response as per IS 14489:1998, IEC Guidelines. There were one major accident and 2 minor accidents reported during the last three years. Measures taken to improve workplace safety in plants include periodical earth pits testing by electrical department, prominent display of safety policy, emergency layout, emergency contact numbers, adequate numbers of CCTV in critical operation areas, implementation of Lockout-Tagout (LOTO) procedures for better electrical safety etc.
