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## SC stays green tribunal's orders in Vizag gas leak case

LG Polymers has sought suspension of disbursement of ₹50 cr.

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*TN 16/6*  
The Supreme Court on Monday stayed a National Green Tribunal (NGT) order of June 1, which directed the appropriation of ₹50 crore deposited by LG Polymers for the restoration of environment and payment of interim compensation to victims of a gas leak from its factory at Visakhapatnam on May 7.

A Bench led by Justice U.U. Lalit stayed the tribunal order for the next 10 days.

On June 1, the tribunal also directed the framing of a "restoration plan", final quantification of the compensation to be paid to victims and action against officials responsible for allowing the company to function with-



Twelve people died after gas leaked from the factory.

out statutory clearances. All of these directions have been stayed for the time being.

The stay order came after senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, for LG Polymers, argued that the company cannot mount a defence against the charges as its records were sealed.

He contended that the

NGT's enquiry committee report into the gas leak was published only on May 28, hardly three days before the June 1 order. This gave the company inadequate time to respond. Mr. Rohatgi had sought suspension of the disbursement of the ₹50 crore.

The Bench asked the High Court to decide the various disputes in connection with this case by the end of next week. The Bench scheduled the case for hearing after two weeks.

Meanwhile, TDP national president N. Chandrababu Naidu wrote letters to the victims. "I had planned to personally meet you and hand over ₹50,000 as financial assistance, but the government is not giving me permission to visit Visakhapatnam," he wrote.

