

Sethi steel company

MONROVIA - The Management of Sethi Femo Fabrik steel manufacturing plant says it is deeply saddened by the recent industrial accident at its facility that resulted in the death of an employee and injury to six others.

The explosion which occurred in the early morning hours of August 8, 2021, resulted from an unexpected blast in the induction furnace used to melt steel. This unforeseen event took place "despite all the safety protocols" observed to prevent such occurrence, the management stated.

According to the management, they responded swiftly to the incident and immediately the situation was brought under control. However, the blast had already injured seven staff members -- four Liberians and three expatriates.

Victims of the blast were all immediately rushed to the JFK Medical Center for medical treatment. "Unfortunately, one of the expatriates, Achchhe Lal Chauhan, who had worked for the company for about three years, died from his injuries," the management disclosed in a statement issued over the weekend.

"Upon the advice of medical practitioners at the JFK Medical Center, Monrovia, three of the six wounded, including two Liberians, Nathaniel Farsue, Theo Taiklan and one expatriate, Hosila Prasad Rajbhar, were flown to Ghana through chartered Air Ambulance to seek specialized burn treatment at the Korle-bu Hospital.

"Korle-bu is known to have one of the top burn centers in the region. One other victim, Harishchandra Sahni, has recovered from his wounds and has since been discharged from JFK Medical Center Monrovia. Two other victims, Amos Sennie and SumOWU Z. Kekele, are still admitted at the JFK Medical Center and are receiving treatment. They are expected to make full recovery soon. The Management is keeping the families of the victims abreast of their progress and is standing with them in this difficult time."

The steel company further stated that over the years, its industrial plant safety staff have worked with government regulators to deploy all the requisite safety measures in order to avoid these kinds of events, though no risk mitigation measure is 100% guaranteed, as clearly seen in this unfortunate incident.

"The Management reiterates that detailed investigation is still going on but preliminary reports and eyewitness accounts indicate that the blast resulted when the crane used to grab and load scrap metals from the ground picked up and loaded scrap metals in the induction furnace and there was a sudden blast and boiling molten metal came out of the furnace and spread on the furnace area which injured nearby working workers.

The Management of Sethi Ferro Fabrik Inc. reiterated that the ongoing investigation will be detailed because it is not only intended to find the root cause of this accident, but at the same time to identify other potential risks and enhance risk mitigation protocols at the factory.

The Sethi Ferro Fabrik steel plant is the only steel manufacturing plant currently working in the country. The factory was dedicated by President George Manneh Weah in 2019. The plant is in the Monrovia Industrial Park in the old LPRC facility, in Gardnerville, and employs over 500 persons including Liberians and expatriates.

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