

Nippon Shokubai restarts a few facilities at Himeji site

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Nippon Shokubai says that it has received approval from authorities to restart operations at certain production facilities in the company's manufacturing complex at Himeji, Japan. The mayor of Himeji had ordered the suspension of operations at all the production facilities at Nippon Shokubai's Himeji complex following the explosion and fire at the site on 29 September. The accident resulted in the death of one firefighter, as well as several serious injuries. Last month, Nippon Shokubai was allowed to restart operations at the automotive catalysts production facilities in the Himeji complex. The plants that are now operational at the Himeji site include facilities to produce polymer for concrete admixture; acrylic resins for paints and adhesives; acrylic resins for optical materials; resist polymers for color filter; spherical fine particles; automobile catalysts; De-NOx catalysts; dioxins decomposition catalysts; and catalysts for catalytic wet oxidation wastewater treatment.

Operations at the other production facilities at the Himeji site remain suspended. Nippon Shokubai is the leading producer of superabsorbent polymers (SAP), used to make diapers. The Himeji site is home to the company's largest SAP facility, with a production capacity of 320,000 m.t./year, and accounts for about 18% of global capacity for SAP. Earlier this month, Nippon Shokubai announced that its subsidiary NA Industries (Houston) has restarted an idled SAP plant at Chattanooga, TN, to supplement production capacity.

Source *Chemweek*

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