

White Phosphorus

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White Phosphorus Latest News

Recently, the Human Rights Watch accused Israel of “unlawfully” using white phosphorus over residential parts of a southern Lebanese town.

About White Phosphorus

- White (sometimes called yellow) phosphorus is a **white to yellow waxy solid** with a garlic like odour.
- **Properties:** It **ignites spontaneously** in air at temperatures above 30 °C and continues to burn until it is fully oxidized or until deprived of oxygen.

Applications of White phosphorus

- It is often **used by militaries to illuminate battlefields**, to generate a smokescreen and as an incendiary.
- It is used for military purposes in **grenades and artillery shells** to produce illumination, to generate a smokescreen and as an incendiary.
- Its major industrial uses are in the **production of phosphoric acid, phosphates** and other compounds.

- Phosphates are used to manufacture a range of **products including fertilizers** and detergents. Phosphorus has been used as a rodenticide and in fireworks.

Impact of White phosphorus on Humans

- It is harmful to humans by all routes of exposure.
- The smoke from burning phosphorus is **also harmful to the eyes and respiratory tract** due to the presence of phosphoric acids and phosphine.
- It can **cause deep and severe burns**, penetrating even through bone.

Source: TH

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