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## Indian-origin scientist has solution for oil spill

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STAFF WRITER 14:7 HRS IST

Seema Hakhu Kachru

Houston, June 14 (PTI) As BP struggles to contain the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, an Indian-origin scientist from Texas University has created a special cotton fabric that can clean up crude oil up to 40 times its weight and help in cleaning efforts.

Seshadri Ramkumar, associate professor of the Texas Tech Institute of Environmental and Human Health, has created a non-woven environment-friendly cotton carbon absorbent wipes, Fibertect.

"Cotton fibre contains 0.5 per cent wax, which enables it to soak up 40 times its weight," Ramkumar said.

"The chemistry of cotton makes it the ideal material for oil absorption with its waxiness, strength when wet, absorption capacity and ability to biodegrade," explained Professor Ramkumar, who described his discovery as "a blessing in an ironic situation."

"The synthetic booms soak up only a third of what cotton absorbs and are not biodegradable.



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