

Centre seeks report from Punjab on proposed industrial park near Mattewara Forest, Sutlej

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Following complaints made to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) against the location of a proposed modern industrial park that is to be set up near the Mattewara Forest and the Sutlej, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, GoI, and Central Pollution Control Board have sought reports from the state authorities concerned in this regard.

After receiving a complaint filed by complainant Balwinder Singh Purain, Suneet Bhardwaj, Assistant Inspector General of Forests (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change), has written to the Additional Chief Secretary (Forest), Punjab, in this regard and the state government has been requested to take immediate necessary action as per law and submit a detailed report to the ministry immediately.

The complainant had written to the PMO and requested to take necessary action on his complaint regarding "threat to Mattewara Forest Reserve" due to the upcoming industrial park.

In another grievance filed by a city resident, Kuldeep Singh Khaira, to the PMO, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has asked the Member Secretary of the PPCB to look into the matter for appropriate action and provide action-taken report to the complainant under intimation to the office concerned within 15 days. Khaira had raised the issue of "potential threat to the environment/ecology of the eco-sensitive Mattewara area and floodplains of the Sutlej due to the upcoming industrial/textile park on 955 acres".

Notably, members of a public action committee (PAC) to save the Sutlej and Mattewara Forest have been opposing the site for the proposed modern industrial park to be set up by the state government. The members wanted that no industry should be set up near the forest and river.

The PAC is also going to organise a photography competition and a tree plantation drive near Mattewara on the coming Sunday to encourage citizens to visit the forest and see the beauty of nature near the city, said Ranjodh Singh, a member of the PAC, during a meeting held here today.

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