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Effluent treatment plant mooted in Sukinda

Staff Reporter

BHUBANESWAR: The State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) is toying with the idea of setting up a common effluent treatment plant in Sukinda Valley in Jajpur district, which is labelled as one of the most pollution hotspots in the world.

“The IIT, Kharagpur which was asked to do a study and suggest solutions to tackle hexavalent chromium pollution has given its first draft report. We are examining their recommendations,” SPCB Member Secretary Sidhant Das said on the sidelines of celebration of World Earth Day here on Friday.

According to the SPCB, opencast chromite mining generates huge volumes of seepage water.

Even though chromium in chromite is in the trivalent state, some hexavalent Cr (VI) is always formed due to certain complex reactions. If Cr (VI) containing mine drainage water is released untreated, can severely contaminate the nearby water bodies.

“Individual miners in Sukinda Valley have their own effluent treatment plants to treat waste waters. If hexavalent chromium is altered to trivalent, then pollution could be checked. Individual treatment plants, however, failed to completely check the pollution,” said Mr. Das.

The IIT, Kharagpur is likely to finalise the report once SPCB and other stakeholders give their feedbacks.

Orissa accounts for about 98 per cent of the total proven chromite (chromium ore) reserves of the country, of which about 97 per cent is found in the Sukinda Valley, over an area covering approximately 200 sq. km.

At present there are 14 chromite mines operating in Sukinda.

In 2008, USA-based NGO Blacksmith Institute had identified Sukinda valley as one of 10 most polluted hotspots of the globe.

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