

Ex-MLA flags Nature Interpretation Centre

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Chandigarh: Former MLA from Kharar constituency, Kanwar Sandhu has written to UT administrator Banwari Lal Purohit about the opening of the Nature Interpretation Centre in Kansal forest by the Chandigarh administration. The centre was inaugurated by Purohit on Wednesday.

In the letter, the former MLA objected to opening of the centre without Punjab forest department and other officials being taken into confidence. He said that there is already a stand-off between UT and Punjab on declaration of an eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) for Punjab areas around Sukhna wildlife sanctuary in Kansal. UT officials have been pushing for Punjab to declare 1 km wide ESZ around Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary for areas falling in Punjab.

“One hopes the newly opened centre would not adversely affect the interests of Kansal residents through fresh restrictions,” Sandhu said.

The former MLA sought the intervention of the Punjab governor for implementation of The Punjab Reorganization Act, 1966 in letter and spirit. He said that the states of Punjab and Haryana were neither consulted nor taken into confidence while notifying the area in question as a wildlife sanctuary by UT Chandigarh in 1998. However, Punjab did not protest and invoke the said provisions of the Punjab Reorganization Act all this while, lest it adversely affected the upkeep of Sukhna Lake. But now, to further impose an ESZ of 1 km in Punjab areas around the terrain earmarked for “soil conservation” (now Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary) would be perpetuating yet another wrong. This would seriously impact and hamper planned habitation being undertaken as a part of the Nayagaon Master Plan for Kansal Village in Punjab, Sandhu said. He sought the intervention of the governor-cum-UT administrator to ensure resolution of the matter.