

Government has proposed to develop a Global Manufacturing and Knowledge Park

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Chandigarh,

The Punjab Cabinet led by Captain Amarinder Singh on Monday gave in-principle approval to amend the Punjab Village Common Land (Regulation) Rules, 1964, to create land banks in rural areas to boost industrial development in the state.

It was, however, decided to further fine tune the amendments to ensure that the Panchayats get their dues, with all decisions to be taken on case to case basis, keeping their interests in view, according to an official spokesperson.

The Cabinet cleared the proposal of the Rural Development and Panchayats Department for insertion of Rule 12-B in the 'Punjab Village Common Lands (Regulation) Rules, 1964' to provide special provision for transfer of Shamlat Lands for development of Industrial infrastructure projects, to be implemented by Industry Department and Punjab Small Industries & Export Corporation.

The underlying objective of this amendment is to facilitate Gram Panchayats to promote development of villages by unlocking the value of Shamlat land. The new rule would pave the way for transfer of Shamlat Land for Industrial projects to the Industry Department and Punjab Small Industries & Export Corporation (PSIEC).

With this amendment, a Gram Panchayat could, with the prior approval of the State Government, transfer the Shamlat land vested in it by way of sale on deferred payment terms to Industries Department or PSIEC for their Industrial infrastructure projects. The rates for such transfer may be determined by the committee constituted in clause (2) of sub-rule (3-A) of Rule 6. The transferee will pay a minimum 25% upfront amount, with balance to be paid as per terms and conditions to be notified separately.

The cabinet also approved the modalities to grant sanction to transfer Gram Panchayat lands for the development of various Industrial Infrastructure Development Projects.

It may be recalled that the Industries Department had proposed to amend Rule 12-A to develop robust

infrastructure, including core and supporting infrastructure, which would provide long- term benefits to the industry for planned industrial growth.

The State Government has proposed to develop a Global Manufacturing and Knowledge Park at Rajpura in Patiala district, to be considered as an Integrated Manufacturing Cluster (IMC) under the AKIC project covering 1000 acres of Panchayat lands. In this context, the State Government has identified about 1000 acres Panchayat lands in five villages i.e. Sehra (467 acres), Sehri (159 acres), Aakri (168 acres), Pabra (159 acres) and Takhtu Majra (47 acres), for which in-principle approval has already been given by the Industrial and Business Development Board in its meeting on December 27, 2017, held under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister. To achieve the object, the Executive Agency (PSIEC) requires the outright purchase of 1000 acres of Shamlat land at a cost of around Rs. 357 Crores from these Panchayats.

Besides this project, other proposals are also being received for development of industrial parks by PSIEC on Panchayat lands. Moreover, the annual lease holders of Gram Panchayats may need to be resettled by purchase of cultivable land by Gram Panchayats.

Notably, the Government of India had formed an Apex Monitoring Authority for National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust, headed by the Union Finance Minister, and had asked the State to make available the land for the development of Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor (AKIC) at the earliest. The proposed economic corridor between the cities of Amritsar and Kolkata was envisaged to further give impetus to industrial activities in the Northern and Eastern parts of the country.

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