

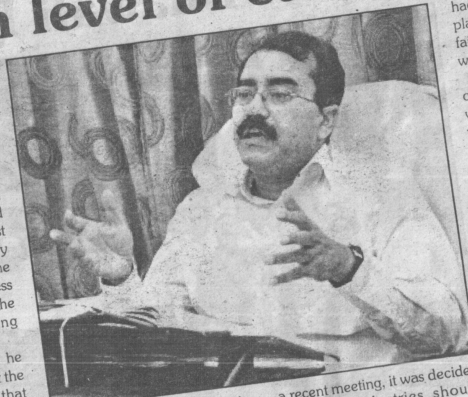
PCB denies high level of case pendency

**By OUR STAFF REPORTER
DEHRADUN, 17 July:** In response to news published recently, officials of the state Pollution Control Board claimed that the data presented was not true.

Speaking to media persons, Secretary of the Board, Jai Raj, asserted that the information carried by the newspaper wasn't in compliance with the official data. "The newspaper published that there were more than 3000 pending cases in our department, however, there are about 300 such cases. Till March, 2012, there were only 339 pending cases, of which there were a few in which we awaited a response from the industrialists. Moreover, those included 21 NOC cases. In total, we don't have more than 304 pending cases as of current," clarified Jai Raj.

He said that work in the department was expedited after the CM urged the same. "At a meeting held last month, the CM had demanded that the procedure of granting permission to industries in the state be made quick. Taking his instruction seriously, we have completed more than 400 cases in the last month," asserted the Secretary while mentioning that to some industries, those possessing less threat to the environment, the board was also granting permission for five years.

Further in the meeting, he expressed his concern about the river pollution, especially that being reported in the Ganga, though he said that the river was not as polluted in Uttarakhand as it was in other states. He disclosed that the major sources of pollutants to the river were the paper industry and sewage.



"There are 25 paper industries in the state, most of which are located in Kashipur. These industries produce black liquor, which is one of the principal causes of the water pollution. In

a recent meeting, it was decided that that industries should establish their own chemical recovery plants to alleviate the harm caused by chemicals," he said, adding that these industries

had been asked to establish the plants by the end of this year failing which appropriate action would be taken against them.

He further said that it was observed by his team that there was a sudden increase in the pollution level in Ganga beyond Har ki Pauri, Haridwar, pointing that the major pollutant found was one of the chemicals found in human excreta. He held insufficient sewage treatment plants responsible for the same because of which untreated human waste was being discharged into the river. Later, he disclosed that the department was planning to increase the number of surprise visits to the industries so that the problems could be resolved at the ground level. Other officials of the pollution control board were also present on the occasion.