

The population of the town of Bor in eastern Serbia, home to the Chinese Zijin Mining Bor Copper company, the majority owner of the Mining and Smelting RTB Bor Basin, is exposed to an extremely high level of sulfur dioxide pollution, the local bor030 website reported. The Agency for Protection of Environment (SEPA) said their measuring stations recorded alarming air pollution at three points in the town. At one, the pollution was 1,080 microgrammes per cubic meter while the tolerable level should be 350 microgrammes. In the city park in the town's centre, the level was 1,145 microgrammes or 3.5 times higher than allowed.

The Mayor of Bor Aleksandar Milikic said the town's authorities had a meeting with the Chinese Zijin Mining Group Ltd company, urging them to reduce the level of SO₂ as soon as possible.

"We notified the respective institutions in the Republic. The town of Bor and I personally must constructively talk to the Zijin management, adding that such pollution in Bor was "unacceptable," Milikic said but did not give details from the meeting with the Chinese. In the last 30 days, the highest level of 2,983,51 microgrammes of SO₂ was recorded on June 27.

In addition to SO₂ air pollution, the PM-10 and PM-25 particles, carrying heavy metals, also pollute the air.

Bor residents reacted to the pollution on social networks, demanding institutional reaction and started a petition which they would submit to the ecological inspections asking them how many times they officially visited Zijin Mining Bor Copper company, how many official notes were made and when the pollution would stop.

If they don't get an answer, they will organise street protests.

In a separate case, in the northern town of Zrenjanin, another Chinese company started building a car tyre factory, without, as the residents said, a study on its potentially damaging effects on the environment.

Ratko Djurdjevac, an activist, said that he wasn't surprised that the Chinese Shandong Linglong Tire Co., Ltd. (Linglong Tire) began the construction without an ecological study since our state institutions tend to respect the investors' interests and not those of people." He added that "the studies on damaging effects on people's health usually did not exist because if they did, they could serve as a proof against the polluters and they would have to leave the market."

Source: rs.n1info.com