

Western, Eastern mixed flute concert held at Stok Palace Leh Govt plans to boost Buddhist tourism in Ladakh: Mir

Excelsior Correspondent

LEH, July 23: Tourism Minister Ghulam Ahmad Mir today said that buoyed by heavy tourist arrival in Ladakh, the Government has embarked on an ambitious plan to put this Himalayan district on the Buddhist circuit to woo pilgrims. Addressing a gathering after inaugurating Western and Eastern mixed flute concert by Maestro Andrea Griminelli with Emanuele Segre accompanied by Ladakh Musicians at Stok Palace, Leh the other day, the Tourism Minister said with tourism being a major sector contributing in boosting State's economy, the State Government is planning to restore the existing monasteries in the region, hire landscaping experts, set up tourism centers as well as provide basic road infrastructure in the region.

"The Government has submitted the detailed project report of the plans to the Centre that we want to implement in Ladakh to facilitate tourism in this region. The detailed project report which has been submitted is of Rs 150 crore to develop tourism circuit in three regions, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh," the Tourism Minister said.

Mir said out of this fund, Rs

50 crore has been earmarked to develop the Buddhist circuit in Ladakh while the remaining will be spent on encouraging the Sufi tourism circuit in Kashmir and pilgrimage centers in Jammu.

Ambassador of Italy, Daniele Mancini, the king of Stok Palace, with Queen, Mother-Disket Wangmo, Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC, Leh, Rigzin Spalbar, District Development Commissioner, Leh, Simran Deep Singh, Chief Executive Officer, Leh Development Authority, Urganj Loodup besides large number of prominent citizens were present on the occasion.

The Tourism Minister said that keeping in view the increasing flow of tourists to Ladakh every year, the Government plans to have facilities like the tourist centers not only in the main city but also in places which hold tourist interests like the monasteries in Ladakh, areas around the banks of Indus river and many more. "These centers will guide tourists visiting the region and also to cater to their various needs," the Minister said.

The Tourism Minister said that Government has initiated various measures to give fillip to tourism and showcase State's

diverse tourist attractions and rope in tourists both from within the country and outside. He said protection and preservation of environment, forest wealth, water bodies, wildlife and natural beauty of the State has been flagged most important aspects in the tourism development programme. He asked the people to contribute in this national mission.

Expressing satisfaction over the preservation of cultural heritage by the people of Ladakh, Mir asked them to remain positively involved in the protection and conservation of environment in this region which is unique and enthralling for the lovers of nature. The Tourism Minister referred to various projects being launched in Ladakh to promote tourism and generate economic activities for the locals. He said Trans Himalayan Centre involving Rs. 25 crore is under execution in Leh while Rs. 20-crore Food Craft Centre and Rs. 30-crore Golf Course are also near completion. He said these projects would give considerable fillip to the tourism and cultural activities.

MLC, Secy Cultural Academy call on Governor

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 23: Syed Asgar Ali, Member of the Legislative Council, called on N. N. Vohra, Governor, at Raj Bhavan here today.

Among the issues which Asgar Ali discussed with the Governor was the need to establish a board for the proper management of Machail Yatra, in Kishtwar district, and the arrangement of the required facilities for the pilgrims. He also urged the required measures being taken for the promotion of tourism in Kishtwar district and adequate rations being supplied to meet the requirements of the Marwah area.

Mr. Ali also raised reference to the problems which are faced by the ponywallas of the Warwan area who have to travel all the way to Anantnag to be registered for the Amarnathji Yatra. The Governor assured him, as Chairman of the Shrine Board, that for Yatra 2014 a pre-decided number of ponies will be registered, along with their owners, in Warwan area.

Khalid Bashir Ahmad, Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages also called on Mr. Vohra.

The Governor, who is Patron

of the Cultural Academy, discussed with Mr. Khalid the ongoing and future activities of the Academy and emphasized the important role which the Academy is expected to play for the promotion of art, culture and languages in the State. He observed that Jammu and Kashmir has an exceptionally valuable heritage of languages, history, traditions and culture which the Academy must effectively promote.

Mr. Khalid briefed the Governor about the recent initiatives taken by the Academy for the promotion of languages and literature and showcasing J&K's rich cultural heritage and other activities of this organization. He informed the Governor about the to-date status of the digitization of rare manuscripts, calligraphy specimens and miniatures. He stated that so far 600 such manuscripts have been digitized, while the 5th volume of Kashmiri Encyclopedia has been published and work is going on its 6th volume. He also briefed the Governor about the progress on the construction of Tehzeeb Mahal at Srinagar and the renovation of Tagore Hall and Abhinav Theatre.

The Secretary, Cultural Academy, presented to the Governor a set of recent publications brought out by the Academy in different languages and briefed him about the volumes which are in the pipeline.

Kichloo for boosting cross LoC trade

Excelsior Correspondent

SRINAGAR, July 23: Asserting that cross LoC trade between Srinagar-Muzaffarabad is one of the most significant Confidence Building Measures taken by the Governments of India and Pakistan, the Minister of State for Industries & Commerce, Home and Tourism, Sajad Ahmad Kichloo today underscored the need to make it hassle free trade activity for enhancing mutual trust and confidence between both sides of the State.

Speaking at a joint meeting of the officers of Industries & Commerce Department and members of Salamabad-Chakuti Traders Unions here today, Mr. Kichloo said that initiation of cross LoC trade across J&K in October, 2008 has signaled the beginning of a new era, adding that this trade had stopped six decades ago in 1947. He said this is a great step towards normalizing relations between two neighboring countries of India and Pakistan through economic and human interactions.

The Commissioner/Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Shantmanu, Consultant cum Coordinator cross LoC Trade, Zahoar Ahmad Shah, Director Industries & Commerce, Kashmir Tariq Ahmad Mir, Director Custodian Ehasan-Ul-Haq, Presidents of the cross LoC Traders Unions,

Mohammad Tariq Khan and Javed Ahmad Makroo and other officer bearers were present in the meeting.

Mr. Kichloo said that the Government will provide all the possible facilities to boost cross LoC trade, Adding that Trade Facilitation Centers at Salamabad Uri and Chakan-Da-Bagh Poonch have been established at a cost of Rs.8.95 crore and Rs.7.95 crore respectively on fast track basis with a view to facilitating LoC trade in a big way.

The members of the cross LoC Traders Union in their memorandum demanded check on alleged un-necessary harassment caused to them and urged to make the trade a viable economic activity. They said that cross LoC trade is an important CBM. The role of Customs Department in cross LoC Trade was also discussed thereabout.

The traders also demanded single window clearance system at Trade Facilitation Centers

besides one time settlement to export their pending stocks of coconut, garlic and ginger, which have been reportedly banned by the customs authorities.

They also sought their representation in the ensuing Pugwash Conference scheduled on 26th August 2013. They also sought travel permits to meet their counterparts across LoC. They demanded to increase the number of items on the approved list.

Other demands made by the traders in the memorandum include storage, security and insurance of Goods, additional warehouse, and cold storage facilities at TFCs, creation of Director General of Trade to enhance coordination between the customs and custodian department as well as security agencies at both TFCs and creation of banking facilities to change existing barter trade.

The Minister assured the traders that the demands will be taken-up with the concerned authorities for their solution.



MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia inaugurating a road work at Udhampur on Tuesday.

Mankotia inaugurates road work

Excelsior Correspondent

UDHAMPUR, July 23: MLA Balwant Singh Mankotia today kickstarted the PMGSY road work from Lower Guddar to Upper Guddar in Darsoo area here today.

While addressing the large gathering present there, Mankotia told that the 6.700 km road will be completed with estimated cost of Rs 680.69 Lakh and will benefit about 300 families of the remote area of Udhampur constituency.

He further said that another

road project of Rs 410 lakh which will connect Mohalla Gujarian of Upper Guddar, has been prepared and submitted to the State Government for sanctioning under NABARD.

Local Sarpanch, Naib Sarpanch and Panchs expressed their gratitude to Mankotia for sanctioning of the said road work.

Other present on the occasion were Kuldeep Singh, Chairman, Sarpanch Vishwa Nath, Panch Romesh Singh and JE PMGSY, Ashok Kumar Verma.

Fix accountability for lapses in ADB funded schemes: Harsh

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 23: NPP MLA and its chairman Harshdev Singh has alleged total collapse of Economic Reconstruction Agency (ERA) in the State and the resultant failure of dozens of mega projects under taken by the said agency for execution.

In a statement today he said that ERA was entrusted with the task of execution of several mega roads, bridges and sewerage, drainage and channelization projects funded under Asian Development Bank (ADB) scheme but regretted that majority of said schemes had been abandoned or left half done.

Making special mention of Bani-Daggar road, Doda-Bharat road, Udhampur-Ramnagar road, Kalai-Saki Maidan road, he said these roads were the worst victims of official apathy and red tape. He said these roads were taken up for construction in 2006-07 but were either incomplete or had been abandoned thus providing the most galling instance of abuse of public resources. Likewise, several sewerage and drainage projects sanctioned under ADB and taken up by ERA had also met the same fate. He said that work

on the 'Channelization and rehabilitation of primary drains' was abandoned midway with old Jammu city, Patta Bohri area having been completely ignored and work on Janipur Nallah having been left half done. He said that there was lot of resentment in Shakti Nagar, Subash Nagar, Rajpura and the adjoining area of cremation ground which were ignored under the Janipur Nala Scheme of ADB.

Mr. Singh said that all the said schemes had been funded under Loan I Scheme of ADB, the term of which had already expired. He said that non-completion of majority of the projects had deprived the public of the benefits envisaged under the said scheme for which accountability was required to be fixed and guilty brought to book. He further pointed out lapses and apathetic approach of the ERA in construction work on Bikram Chowk flyover scheme sanctioned at a cost of Rs 65 crore under Loan II of ADB, the foundation of which was laid on May 26 this year. He regretted that the construction activity had been initiated at the time of laying of foundation stone but suspended immediately thereafter for reasons best known to ERA.



Members of All J&K Diploma Mechanical Engineers Association with PWD Minister during meeting at Jammu on Tuesday.

Diploma Mechanical Engineers meet PWD Minister

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 23: All J&K Diploma Mechanical Engineers Association met Minister for PWD and R&B and apprised him about the problems related to entire cadre.

While speaking, Narinder Singh, president of the Association apprised Minister about various issues, which included maintaining the cadre strength at levels in the hierarchy, conversion of diploma Junior Engineers to Asst Engineers in view of Cabinet decision, debarment of the Junior Engineers appointed in 2004 from stop log imposed on them for further promotions and other service benefits, creation of new divisions in newly created districts, settlement of issues regarding promotions at different level in the hierarchy in the Mechanical wing, par-

ticipation of SC/ST/RBA/OBC at all levels in the hierarchy as per prevailing rules under legal and constitutional provisions and postings of SEs/Executive Engineers/(Mechanical) in PDC & JKPC.

Minister gave patient hearing to the issues highlighted by the association and ensured to exert all his efforts to solve the issues at the earliest.

Narinder Singh was accompanied by Abnish Sharma, Kurshid-ul-Islam, ML Basan, Ramesh Bangotra, Dhiraj Khajuria, CN Koul, Rajive Sharma, SP Kalsi, Rajkumar Sagotra, Divakar Sharma, Vishal Sharma and Vikas Gupta.

Jugal seeks apology from Soz

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 23: BJP State president Jugal Kishore Sharma has demanded apology from Congress president, Prof. Saif-ud-Din Soz for making unsubstantiated allegations against BSF and without any proof holding it responsible for the Gool incident.

Mr Sharma said that by issuing such statements even before the inquiry has been concluded only shows that the Congress Party and its president want to take political mileage out of this incident by creating communal tension and hitting at security forces which they find as a soft target.

Jugal Kishore Sharma said that such irresponsible statements lead to demoralize the security forces and leaders like Soz should weigh all the pros and cons before jumping to hurried conclusions.

DoP recruiting postmen, supporting staff

Excelsior Correspondent

JAMMU, July 23: Department of Post (DoP) has initiated process to recruit postmen and other supporting staff to meet the business requirements.

This was stated by John Samuel, Chief Postmaster General, J&K.

The department has called for applications from the eligible candidates (male as well as female) to fill up 55 posts lying vacant in different post Offices in the Circle.

According to Samuel, the revenue of the J&K Circle has grown up by 37 per cent during the financial year 2012-13 over the corresponding period. He further expressed confidence that the pace of growth is expected to be continuing during the current fiscal also.

The minimum qualification for the post of Postman and other supporting staff is matriculation, he added.

"The selection will be done purely on merit, based on the

marks obtained in the Aptitude Test to be conducted by the department and there will be no interview for the purpose of selection", Samuel said, adding that the last date of receipt of application forms is August 19.

John Samuel announced that drive for recruitment of Gramik Dak Sevaks (GDS) will be undertaken shortly across the State.

The applications forms are available at main Post Offices namely Jammu Head Post Office, Gandhi Nagar, Srinagar GPO, Udhampur, Rajouri, Kathua, Baramulla, Anantnag, Leh, Pulwama MDG, Kupwara MDG, Budgam, Ganderbal, Bandipora, Kargil, Shopian, Samba MDG, Poonch MDG, Ramban, Reasi, Kishtwar and Doda.

Candidates applying for the post of Postman and MTS can contact Chief Postmaster General at Jammu on Telephone Number 0191-2544906 and at Srinagar on 0194-2452473 for any query relating to the said recruitment initiative.

ADMISSION NOTICE FOR CENTRAL GOVT. SCHOLARSHIP

Centralized Counselling for 10 Colleges (SCHOLARSHIP MELA)

Applications are invited from J&K students who wish to pursue undergraduate courses outside the state of J&K through Special Scholarship Scheme for Jammu & Kashmir students launched by MHRD, Gov. of India for the year 2013-2014. Under this scheme the Tuition fee, Hostel fee, Mess charges & other incidental charges will be born by the Central Government on the behalf of the students. So all undergraduate courses are free for the students belonging to J&K.

- Eligibility:**
1. Student should have passed 12th class with good marks
 2. Student should be domicile of J&K State
 3. The total family income should be less than 6.0 Lacs/annum
 4. Students belonging to SC/ST/OBC/PH & RBA category will be preferred, open merit students are also eligible.

- Requirements:**
1. Attested Xerox copies of 10th, 12th, state subject & 4 passport size colour photographs.
 2. Counseling fee for Rs 250/-
 3. All original documents for on the spot verification

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