

Revive Basohli Forest Eco Tourism Project On Priority: Col Mahan

By **Bold News Online Desk**

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BASOHLI, 15-02-2023 : Col Mahan Singh (Retd), DDC Chairman Kathua today met Dr Mohit Gera, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest J&K and Dr D Manjunath, Deputy Commissioner, Kendra Vidyalaya Sangathan Jammu to discuss issues related to district Kathua.

The DDC Chairman requested PCCF to establish Forest Nurseries in all five Sub District of Kathua to promote Green Kathua Mission and benefit farming community with good quality plants conducive to local environment. He apprised Dr Gera about the exponential potential of eco tourism in the region and proposed Eco Huts, View points and development of Forest tracking routes.

Col Mahan requested PCCF to revive boating project in Basohli along the Ranjeet Sagar Dam for promoting eco tourism and Forest protection. He also discussed construction of Eco Huts in the jungles of Sukrala-Machhedi, Dharmahanpur and Bani regions.

The DDC Chairman mentioned that under the implementation of the project on "Forest Development and Protection" in Basohli Forest Division out of the funds provided by the JK-SFC, tenders were floated for the procurement of four FRP Motor boats establishment of the associated infrastructures like Jettie's etc at Basohli FD during the FY 2017-18. During the fag end of FY 2017-18, a jetti was also established at the banks of Ranjeet Sagar Dam Reservoir near the Atal Setu for docking of boats and as a platform for boarding of visitors. One Jetti each was also proposed for the Purthu & Panagar areas, which were not established as on date, he added.

Col Mahan further mentioned that establishment of the boating infrastructure was part of the larger Ecotourism project in the Pangar area where in two double stories hutts (building) have already been constructed. Unfortunately despite floating a tender, the aforesaid work has not granted till date due to callous attitude of the authorities sitting at the helm of affairs.

"Even after the completion of the all codal formalities and finalisation of tenders, the allotment was not made to the lowest bidder and the project was halted for the reason well known to the department and for the last three years there was no development in this regard and the all the 04 boats along with its associated infrastructure was abandoned and presently the entire setup is rotting," he added.

Col Mahan Singh said that the project is very vital for the overall development of the Basohli area and to utilise the vast eco-tourism potential of the Basohli hill district. The Forest Department must rejuvenate this project so that the infrastructure created after spending crores of the government money be put to its optimal use, otherwise it is loss of the government exchequer and even

amounts to national loss.

The Principal Chief Conservator of Forest gave a patient hearing and assured the DDC Chairman to consider the proposal positively.

Later, Col Mahan Singh met Deputy Commissioner Kendra Vidhyalay Sanghatan based in Gandhi Nagar, Jammu to know the latest status of proposed KVs in Ramkot and Bani which has already been sanctioned in principle. The proposals of KVs at Mahreen, Billawar, Damra and Bhoond also came up for discussion.

The Commissioner also apprised the Chairman that the case for formal sanction of KV Ramkot and Bani are already with the Union Ministry of Education New Delhi and others cases are being processed with the authority's concerned. He also requested the DDC Chairman to build approach roads to proposed sites at Ramkot and Bani.



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