

Govt to provide 50% subsidy for Mechanized Shikara Taxi

Div Com reviews measures for promoting water transport

In order to decongest city from traffic, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Baseer Ahmad Khan convened a meeting to review the measures for promoting public water transport in Jhelum River.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, MD JKTDC, Deputy Director Tourism, Executive Engineer of Irrigation & Flood Control (I&FC), Traffic Advisor for Traffic Planning & Designing, Deputy Director Planning, Representative from Kashmir Motors Company and other concerned officials were present in the meeting.

Div Com said that Chief Minister has a futuristic vision to develop water transport in the city for which Jehlum water channel were earmarked initially. The action plan is prepared as per the water transport standards prevalent in Italy and other European countries.

He further said that last Month Government had started Free of cost trial run of Public Water Transport in river Jhelum which had overwhelming response from the public. Now government has decided to continue this service on river Jhelum from Peerzo island GPO to Khanqah-e-Moula shrine in first phase.

Meeting was informed that Tourism department & JKTDC will operate their boats besides Kashmir Motors Company will also run their boats for the Public Water transport service on Jhelum River. The cost for one way journey has been set Rs 25 per head. The adequate safety measures are taken including providing of life jackets, divers and para-medical facilities to counter any mishap. This public water transport service on river Jhelum runs under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Srinagar.

Div Com directed engineers of R&B to construct Ghats along the embankments of River Jhelum besides installation of Pontoon (floating landing stage) immediately at stopping points for the smooth run of Public water transport.

Baseer Khan asked tourism department and Traffic Advisor for Traffic Planning & Designing to prepare a scheme of Mechanized Shikara Taxi on the river Jhelum in which Government will provide 50% subsidy to the Shikara owners and unemployed youth. Training will be given free of cost.

Department of Tourism will be the nodal agency which will frame terms and conditions and media publicity of the scheme and will also send a complete DPR to the Divisional Commissioner's office for approval. From Friday Kashmir Motors Company will run single Mechanized Shikara taxi on trial basis on river Jhelum for a week.

Div Com further said that there is a dire need to revive the water transport to give fillip to the tourism industry besides extending means of transport to general masses and generating employment opportunities for the youth.

