



PRESS RELEASE, CHANDIGARH, NOVEMBER 4TH 2008.

Sub: National Forest Games

A Press Conference was held by Sh Tikshan Sud Hon'ble Forest Minister Punjab on Nov 4th 2008 as a Curtain Raiser for the 17th National Forest Games being hosted by the Punjab Forest Department from 3rd to 7th Dec 2008 in the Tricity of Chandigarh, Mohali and Panchkula.

Briefing the well attended function of print and electronic media, Hon'ble Forest Minister informed that more than 2000 participants and organizers from the Forest Departments and Forestry Institutions from all over India would be participating in these prestigious National Forest Games. He emphasized the need of such sports meets not only for ensuring physical fitness which was especially relevant for all cadres of the Forest Departments but also in promoting a spirit of camaraderie and brotherhood in the services. The Minister informed that the Games were likely to be inaugurated by the Hon'ble CM Punjab in the Panjab University campus in the presence of many eminent personalities including Central and State Ministers and other distinguished persons from different walks of life. He thanked the VC of the University for extending whole hearted cooperation to the Department for holding this meet in the lush green and open campus which was ideally suited for this purpose.

Sh B C Bala Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Punjab briefed the media that as many as 121 events would be held in various sports and games disciplines including Athletics, Cricket, Volleyball, Hockey, Football, Basketball, Weight and Power lifting, Badminton, Tennis, Table Tennis, Carom, Golf, Billiards, Snooker, Bridge, Rifle Shooting, Swimming, Kabbadi etc. PCCF appreciated the efforts being put in by the UT Sports Department in deputing the referees, umpires etc for conducting all the Events as per international standards. He further informed that the Opening Ceremony would be a spectacular affair with Cultural and Dance Programs, performances by Military motorcyclists, Tableaus, Fireworks and other displays. The Games would be widely publicized and would attract a large audience of youth and public at large. Besides the Opening and Closing ceremonies, cultural programs, quiz competitions, exhibitions etc would be daily features for attracting the public and generating continuous media attention.

Sh H S Gujral, Games Director and Addl Principal Chief Conservator of Forests briefed the media regarding the detailed preparations being made for conducting these prestigious Games in a befitting manner. He informed that all arrangements relating to accommodation, transport, catering, venues, publications, fixtures, schedules etc for this mega event had been practically finalized by the various Departmental committees set up for this purpose. In order to ensure proper coordination between the host State of Punjab and the 41 participating States / Forestry institutions, meetings with the Nodal officers of the contingents were being held regularly and the last such meeting was held on 3rd November in which all important issues were discussed and decided.

The Games Director also informed that in order to organize the Games in a professional manner a leading Event Management firm "M/s Riya Communications Inc" from Delhi (which was empanelled by the United Nations) had been engaged to conduct the Opening and Closing ceremonies, liaison with all contingents and provide other support to the Department for the smooth conduct of the Games.

In response to a query, the Games Director informed that there would be extensive Print and TV coverage for the meet in leading newspapers and the

electronic media. In order to reduce the burden on the State exchequer, a Public – People – Participation (PPP) mode was being adopted by the Organizing Committee for raising part of the Games Budget. The firm “Ascent Media Solutions (P) Ltd”, Chandigarh had been appointed for conducting the media campaign as also for securing suitable sponsorships for the Games. The Organizing Committee would provide wide publicity to the sponsors through Advertisements in the media and in the Games Souvenir / other Games related publications, hoardings and attractive stalls in the various venues, and excellent coverage in the Press and TV.

At the conclusion of the Press Conference Hon'ble Forest Minister released the attractive and colorful Mascot for the 17th National Forest Games as a “curtain raiser” for the meet. He informed that the Mascot had been named “Ena” which was Sanskrit word for “Black Buck” the State animal of Punjab. He further informed that the Baaz (Falcon) in the Games Logo was the national bird of Punjab state which was associated with Guru Gobind Singh ji who had it perched on his hand. The Baaz was symbolic of sports and was used by Guru ji for hunting, defending the innocent and fighting evil forces.

Hon'ble Forest Minister and the organizers of the Games requested the media to extensively cover the meet so as to promote the cause of Sports in Punjab which had a rich cultural history in this regard.