

Open Hussainiwala border, MS Gill writes to PC

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TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 22
Spurred by The Tribune report highlighting demand of residents of Ferozepore and surrounding areas for re-opening Hussainiwala border post, Union Sports Minister Manohar Singh Gill wants the Home Minister P. Chidambaram to order its reopening.

In a letter sent to the Home Minister this morning, Gill said Hussainiwala was the second biggest crossing into Pakistan for trade that was closed about four decades ago.

Till 1971, both Hussainiwala and Wagah were open for trade by the land route. While Wagah has developed into a major trading centre between India and Pakistan, Hussainiwala has been waiting for the Union Government intervention for reviving its pre-1971 position.

Gill wrote that from Ferozepore, a highway came to southern Punjab to Bathinda before entering Haryana at Hisar and reaching New Delhi. On the Pakistan side, the link went through Kasur straight to Lahore. Till the 1971 Indo-Pak conflict, this border post was open and helped economic well-being through trade on both sides of the border. It was closed

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due to hostilities and had not been opened for almost 40 years now, wrote Gill.

Supporting the demand of people of Ferozepore and surrounding areas, Gill quoted a report in today's The Tribune, explaining the need to open the border post for the well-being of both countries and expansion of

trade to the benefit of the local people.

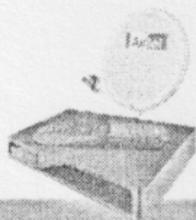
"It can only benefit the continuous efforts of the Prime Minister and the government to improve relations. I will plead with you, therefore, to order the border opening. I can assure you that it will earn the government, and yourself personally, a great deal of thanks from the people of the Punjab," wrote Manohar Singh Gill.

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