

Railways to introduce four shuttle trains

LAHORE: Pakistan Railways is introducing four new shuttle trains this year at different sections to facilitate citizens. PR spokesperson said on Sunday, these trains would be operated at Lahore-Raiwind, Lahore-Gujranwala, Haiderabad-Karachi and Lahore-Jallo, of which Lahore-Jallo shuttle had already been inaugurated. The fare for the trains will be fixed on concessional rates so that maximum number of passengers can enjoy the facility. —APP

'PAMRA to put agri marketing on modern line'

MULTAN: Punjab Agricultural Marketing Regulatory Authority (PAMRA) will put agricultural marketing on modern lines that will facilitate the masses. This was stated by Secretary Agriculture Wasif Khurshid in a press release issued here the other day.

After imposition of PAMRA act, the marketing committees would operate under new system. The marketing of fruits, vegetables, cotton, fisheries and others would be conducted separately, he told. He remarked that the separate markets would not only facilitate farmers but also consumers. He said PAMRA act has reduced the role of middle-men. Punjab is food basket for the whole country as its role is vital for provision of food, he said.

The Secretary maintained that Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar was taking special interest on reforms in agriculture marketing system. Over 30 agriculture markets, model bazaar have been introduced where consumers could purchase commodities from farmers directly and now, the farmers are not dependent on middlemen, he added.

The Secretary Agriculture also informed that Rs 21.27 billion under PM's Agriculture Emergency Programmes were being spent on marketing of agricultural commodities. He hoped that the prices of kitchen items would reduce remarkably under this new system. —APP

GDA vows to introduce ITZs in 'Thandiani Galliyat'

ISLAMABAD: Galliyat Development Authority (GDA) vowed for introducing the model of Integrated Tourism Zones (ITZs) in 'Thandiani Galliyat' with innovation to integrate all services at one place for attracting the more tourism in region.

Integrated Tourism Zones (ITZs) was new concept of modern tourism, which followed by provincial government of Khber Pakyunkwa (KPK) for launching modern idea of one window operation and one stop shop to evolve and integrate the all services and facilities under one place to modernize the tourism infrastructure in

GDA coverage areas, Galliyat Development Authority (GDA) Raza Ali Habib told APP here on Sunday. Director General, GDA said Provincial government of KPK has approved five major Integrated Tourism Zones (ITZs) including each one in Thandiani Galliyat, district Mansehra, District Chitral and also two more ITZs for Swat region to modernize the tourism infrastructure in the region.

Raza said after the completion of mega project of Thandiani ITZs, the tourism activities in Galliyat region would be promoted and huge employment opportunities also creates for local people to grow the local economy. He said Thandiani Tourist Zone (TZ) would seek huge attraction for the international investor, where they can invest tourism infrastructure, hospitality and other areas.

He said through the new master plan, GDA have also strategy to promote the concept of education and health tourism to give new concept for investment promotion and new employment opportunities for the local people according to the vision of the PTI government.

To a question regarding the upcoming mega projects under GA he said, "We want to establish four star hotels in Nathiagali to attract more tourists and create new job opportunities in in the region.

Replying to a question he said after the revival, automation and modernization of this project, GDA would earn more revenue for enhance the infrastructure to facilitate tourists. He said according to the new master plan GDA would have automate the whole infrastructure for providing the new modern facilities for the local and international visitors.

Replying to another question, he said GDA also wanted to enhance the road connectivity between different tourism potential region of Galliyat, in this regards Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved the US \$ 150 billion for different project of connectivity in Galliyat region including Bakote Km, Nathiagali Bakote road, Kalabag Havalian and Shaglagali to Monal Islamabad road for enhancing the connectivity to promote tourism in the region. —APP

The Business

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KARACHI: A large number of Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) activists present in a protest rally in favour of former President General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf at the Liqat Abad Fly-Over.

Malaysian car unit to turnaround local auto sector: Razaq

■ We need to bring more competition in local automobile sector

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to Prime Minister on Commerce, Industry and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood hoped that shift of automobile manufacturing unit of 'Proton' cars from Malaysia to Pakistan would give turnaround the local auto sector.

Now the new upcoming market players would not only enhance the competitiveness in local automobile market but also give the better alternatives to local customers in terms of quality and rates for opting better option for sale and purchase of vehicle, he told APP here. The adviser said Malaysian big automobile player 'Proton' of ALHAJ Automotive had agreed to start manufacturing in Pakistan in next three years.

Razak Dawood said in the current global competitive environment in the auto mobile sector, "We need to bring more competition in local automobile sector and also need to invite more global players for investment in this sector to connect with the global value chain." Replying to question, he said recently Malaysian car manufacturer Proton delivered X70 to Pakistan government as per promise made by the Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad during his visit to Pakistan earlier this year.

He informed that production activities of Proton cars in Pakistan were scheduled to begin in 2021 as plans were being formulated

for assembly of several models in the country. He said this would assist the company in achieving its long term goals to sell 400,000 vehicles by 2027.

"The Proton cars observe a lot of potential in Pakistan and as Malaysia is the only Muslim country to have its own automotive brand, both the countries are natural partners who have so much to share with each other", he said. The Adviser said under a joint venture of the both sides, Proton manufacturer would usher in a new era of auto manufacturing in the country. "I see it as a beginning for more partnership between Pakistan and Malaysia in future", he said.

The adviser said the incumbent government always laid great emphasis on creating an investment ecosystem for both foreign and local investors. He said Pakistan offered attractive investment opportunities and substantial returns in various sector of economy. He said the government was playing a significant role in facilitating entrepreneur and ease of doing business and there was an enabling environment of investment in various sectors including Information Technology, financial services, engineering, goods and textiles.

The adviser said in consonance with the international best practices in car manufacturing, the federal cabinet had recently ap-

proved an electric vehicle (EV) policy for Pakistan which was also a step towards achieving sustainable development.

Currently, trade between Pakistan and Malaysia was being regulated under Malaysia-Pakistan closer Economic Partnership Agreement encompassing goods, services and investment, he said.

The both countries are working on further extending the trade ties through Malaysia Pakistan closer Economic Partnership Agreement Phase II. He said the government of Pakistan encouraged the Malaysian investors to come and invest in the country.

Mobile phone import up by 63pc in 5 months

The import of mobile phones into the country increased by 63.62 percent during the first five months of current financial year (2019-20) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

Pakistan imported mobile phones worth US \$ 498.466 million during July-November (2019-20) as compared to the imports of US \$ 304.651 million during July-November (2018-19), showing growth of 63.62 percent, according to the latest data issued by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). On year-on-year basis, the import of mobile phones witnessed growth of 150.29 percent in November 2019, as compared to the imports of the same

Chinese expertise can make Pak food basket of world: LCCI

■ China unbelievable uplift in industrial, agri sectors has mesmerized world

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Chinese technological advancement and expertise could help Pakistan to serve as a food basket to this part of the world.

It has vast fertile land, all weathers and one of the best canal systems but unable to reap fruit from these blessings just because of lack of modern technologies.

Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh told media here Sunday that China had transformed itself into an economic giant and its unbelievable development in industrial & agriculture sectors had mesmerized the world. He said that China was already playing a vital role to make Pakistan prosperous. Transfer of tech-

nology would ensure speedy growth for Pakistan's industrial and agriculture sectors.

He said that the government to government collaboration well-supported by frequent interaction between private sectors representatives of Pakistan and China were presently at their best. The bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and China was above US \$ 16 billion while China was the highest contributor to the net foreign direct investment in Pakistan.

Regular exchanges of business delegations were spreading positive indicators to the world.

There were countless opportunities for the Chinese investors to invest in the vibrant sectors of economy which include engineering, surgical instruments, pharmaceuticals, value

added textiles, leather products, poultry/meat and agriculture machinery etc, he said and asserted that it was important that there should be win-win situation for all the stakeholders.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said: "It is the right time to invest in Pakistan," adding that despite having skills, labour in Pakistan was cheap as compared to China, therefore, Chinese investors should avail this opportunity with joint ventures with their Pakistani counterparts.

He mentioned that he had put all these suggestions before a six-member high powered trade delegation from China during their visit to LCCI, and on this occasion, President China Pakistan Economic & Trade Council Chen Jianlu hoped that relations between the businessmen of the two countries would further strengthen in days to come. He was also optimistic that visit of the delegation would help Chinese businessmen to find new partners in Pakistan.

NGPL issues CNG load shedding schedule for Hazara division

ABBOTTABAD: All Compress Natural Gas (CNG) filling station would remain close on different times with effect from Dec 22, 2019 to Feb 1, 2020 due to low pressure of natural gas. According to the schedule issued by the Sui Northern Gas Pipe Lines Limited (SNGPL) Hazara region Saturday all CNG filling stations would remain close from 6 am to 9 am in the morning and 6pm to 8 pm in the evening during that period. —APP

'Pak-China JVs to help enhance mutual ties, regional connectivity'

LAHORE: Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) President Zarak Khan said on Sunday that joint venture between Pakistan and China would prove helpful in increasing mutual conviction, cooperation and regional connectivity between the both countries.

Talking to the media here, he mentioned that there were vast prospects in developing some important areas that were currently functioning at small scale with expertise and technology and such areas included fruit processing, spices, marine foods, clothing, wood working, re-modified vehicles, automotive spare parts, power tools, medical equipment and condiments.

The Chinese were ready for joint ventures in clothing, dyeing and embroidery sector of Pakistan, besides investing in food processing sector having potential for them, he said and asserted that potential market of Pakistani clothing and food with Chinese assistance would not only enhance competitiveness and add value to existing standards of production.

Zarak Khan opined that despite Punjab ranked in the world top 10 in terms of food production but due to lack of technology and post-harvest losses, it was unable to expand its exports base of food items, asserting that transformation of food processing technology from China to Pakistan would bring a remarkable shift in expanding export base by reducing cost and introducing state-of-the-art features.

The Pak-China Joint Chamber, he said, would arrange visits of Chinese delegations in different food processing units including related to herbal health products, food and horticulture processing. He affirmed that Chinese people had keen interest in food and herbal products of Pakistan. "We should send sample of these products for the purpose to market them in China. There was enormous scope for joint ventures in amalgamated Chinese eastern medicine system with Pakistani expertise," he suggested. —APP

Belgian Business Contact Day held at RCCI

RAWALPINDI: Belgian Business Contact Day and Catalogue Exhibition was observed at the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) aiming to explore new avenues of trade and expand existing relations between the business community of the two countries.

Books, magazines and trade directories were part of the catalogue exhibition providing an opportunity for visitors to get information about key sectors including tourism, education, services, agro food processing, chemicals, surgical instruments, paper and paperboard, dairy and renewable energy.

Belgian ambassador, Philippe Bronchain, who was the chief guest on the occasion, visited exhibition and took keen interest in crafts exhibition being displayed at the Women Business Incubation Center (WBIC) at RCCI. The envoy visited different stalls and had an interactive session with women entrepreneurs. The ambassador was accompanied by the Belgian embassy's trade commissioner Abid M. Husain and trade and commercial officer Shaukat Nawaz Niazi.

He lauded RCCI efforts in empowering women entrepreneurs and providing all key facilities under one roof. The ambassador said that many Pakistani products had the potential to find good markets in Belgium. Also, academic cooperation is expanding with a growing number of Pakistani students studying or doing research at Belgian universities as well as an increasing number of partnerships between universities in Belgium and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan. He assured full cooperation and assistance for upcoming RCCI Pak-Belgium BOC in Brussels in 2020.

President RCCI Saboor Malik gave a detail briefing on the occasion and expressed hope that Belgium will cooperate with Pakistan in enhancing textile, cereals, cotton, leather and sports goods exports to his country.

To benefit from the existing opportunities, exchange of delegation is important, he added. He invited the Belgian envoy to bring company representatives in the upcoming international Rawal Expo 2020. —DNA

Pakistan Post Mobile App users raises to 50,000

ISLAMABAD: The number of registered users of the Pakistan Post Mobile applications (app) has raised to 50,000 in last one year, showing public trust in the services of Pakistan Post. A senior official of Pakistan Post told mediators that Pakistan Post's mobile app was customer friendly, self-sustaining and technology oriented, adding that more people should get themselves registered to avail the services of Pakistan Post in hassle free way.

"The mobile app has several features that makes use of the wide array of services Pakistan Post including track and trace, complaint handling, e-commerce, parcel collection, delivery, complaints, post office locations, tariff, postcodes and information about postal services," he said.

He said Pakistan Post had also registered 700 partners to date and 260 packets have been delivered through same day delivery service, pick up service and e-commerce service.

He said many international web portal operators have shown their interest to enter into the Pakistani market with the Pakistan Post as their delivery partner. Pakistan Post has the capacity to deliver online vendors for their cash on delivery products with proof of delivery and prompt reconciliation of their payments on affordable charges. —DNA

Council of Common Interests to take up 16 point agenda today

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan today will chair a meeting of Council of Common Interests (CCI) today (Monday).

Sources familiar with the matter told the media on Sunday that chief ministers of four provinces will attend the meeting while CCI Annual Report 2016 and 2017 will be presented for approval.

The meeting is also likely to approve a draft bill for amendments to the Petroleum (Exploration & Production) Policy 2012, which governed the complete process, linked with this sector and was approved by the Council of Common Interests. The CCI comprises of the prime minister, four chief ministers and federal ministers for finance, industries & production, inter-provincial coordination and economic affairs.

Federal Minister for Inter Provincial Coordination Fahmida Mirza and four provincial chief secretaries have also been invited to the meeting.

Federal ministers for law, energy, federal education & professional training, planning and development, privatisation, science & technology, water resources, National Health Services, the attorney general of Pakistan, deputy chairman of Planning Commission, chairman of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and Higher Education Commission, and at least a dozen federal secretaries would attend the meeting. Importantly, provision of the net hydel profit (NHP) share of the provinces will be discussed in the meeting.

Other issues, including import of LNG (Liquefied natural gas (LNG)), royalty to the

Petroleum Ministry on LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) production will be analysed. The issue of controlling the rapidly growing population of the country is also on the council's agenda. The recommendations of the attorney general regarding the water distribution agreement among the provinces are also included in the agenda. The summary of privatisation of Haveli Shah Bahadur and Balloki Power Plant has also been forwarded to the CCI.

The matter of illegal transfer of funds to the provinces by the provincial government of Punjab will be discussed, and a debate on the complaint of Sindh over "unconstitutional and unauthorised deduction by FBR from the Provincial Consolidated Fund (PCF)" will also be held by the CCI. —Online



ISLAMABAD: Group photo of Pakistan and South African Navy officials onboard Pakistan Navy Ship ASLAT during Overseas Deployment.