

Prime Housing Society launched for PR employees

PESHAWAR: Prime Housing Society in partnership with Partner Leaf Organization launched a special housing society for the employees of Pakistan Railways at Turlandai (Nisata) locality of district Charsadda on Sunday. In first phase of the scheme 5000 registered employees of Pakistan Railways would be allotted plots in the scheme. Special Assistant to KP CM on Mineral Development, Arif Ahmadzai and MPA Zahir Shah Toru participated in the launching ceremony. —APP

The Business

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Mobile phone imports increases 16pc in six months

ISLAMABAD: The import of mobile phones into the country has witnessed an increase of 16.17 percent during the half of fiscal year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year. Pakistan imported mobile phones worth US \$1090.621 million during July-December (2021-22) as compared to the imports of US \$938.819 million during July-December (2020-21), showing growth of 16.17 percent, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). —APP

E&P companies drill 217 oil & gas wells in 40 months

ISLAMABAD: The oil and gas Exploration and Production (E&P) companies, operating in different parts of the country, have drilled around 217 wells including 87 exploratory and 130 appraisal and development during a 40-month period.

As a result of the exploration and development activities, the companies produced additional 32,496,029 barrel (BBL) oil and 1,436,546 million cubic feet (MMCF) gas in 2018-19; around 28,086,649 BBL oil and 1,316,635 MMCF gas in 2019-20; as many as 27,568,461 BBL oil and 1,279,243 MMCF gas in 2020-21 and 9,295,184 BBL oil and 415,366 MMCF gas in first four months of the current fiscal year, according to an official data available with APP.

In 2021-22, the E&P companies would produce around 29 million barrel (MBL) crude oil and 1.47 trillion cubic feet (TCF) gas and 917,731 tons Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) under the targets given by the government to meet the country's energy needs.

In 2020-21, the companies had produced around 27 MBL of crude oil, 1.27 TCF of gas and 764,775 tons LPG during the last year against the targets of 30 MBL oil, 1.43 TCF gas and 753,051 LPG. —APP

IT exports increase by 35.77pc in six months

ISLAMABAD: The Information Technology (IT) exports have surged at the growth rate of 35.77 percent in the first six months of the current financial year.

"ICT export remittances, including telecommunication, computer, and information services for the period July-December Financial Year (FY) 2021-22 have surged to the US \$1.302 billion at a growth rate of 35.77% in comparison to the US \$959 million during July-December FY 2020-21", said the ministry in a statement issued here on Sunday.

In December 2021, the ICT export remittances are the US \$251 million at a growth rate of 28.72% when compared to US\$ 195 million reported for the month of December 2020 also, \$30 million higher than export remittances during the previous month November 2021. The net exports for the period July-December FY2021-22 are US\$ 972 million which is 74.65% of US\$ 1.302 billion in exports. Last year, for the same period the net exports were US\$ 681 million which was 71.01% of US\$ 959 million in exports. —APP

Directive for Murree tourists

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi district administration on Sunday advised the tourists to get weather updates and traffic-related information prior to travelling to Murree from control room on 051-9269016.

According to a district administration spokesman, from Sunday morning, 5 AM to 5 PM, nearly 1468 vehicles entered in Murree while 953 went out of the hill station. He said, 1713 vehicles with tourists were present in Murree.

The spokesman informed that the tourists were being given information about weather updates and travel advisory at all entry point of Murree. He said that the tourists had been advised to take all due precautions.

The tourists had also been requested to follow the instructions being given at the entry points, he said adding, strict action in accordance with the law was also being taken against parking rules violators. Rawalpindi District Administration had set up a special control room to facilitate the people particularly tourists, he added.

The control room was working round the clock under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner, Headquarters.

The citizens could contact the control room on 051-9292963. The personnel of Punjab Police, Traffic Police, Rescue-1122, Forest Department, IESCO, Civil Defence and other departments concerned were performing duties in the control room. He said that comprehensive traffic plan was in place in Murree. Traffic Police helpline 051-9269200 could also be used in emergency, he added.

The local administration and traffic cops were present in the field for assisting the tourists, he said. —APP



MURREE: Tourists enjoy snowfall at The Mall.

— Naya Pakistan

Efforts underway to complete low-cost project in Alipur Frash

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Housing and Works are making all out efforts to complete low-cost project in Alipur Farash, a project of the Naya Pakistan Housing Development Authority (NAPHDA).

The excavation work for 26 blocks has been carried out and the raft was prepared in two blocks while a steel cage for columns was developed for 16 blocks to be established under the project, an official in the Ministry of Housing and Works told APP. He said that under the project a total of 2,400 flats were being constructed, out of which 400 flats were reserved for rehabilitating dwellers of Katchi Abadis (slum areas) of the federal capital.

The official said that currently around 1,000 workers were deployed on the project site and the number would be increased from 3,000 to 5,000 in coming days, which would not only help in completion of project in time, but will also enhance employment opportunities.

He said that a site laboratory was set up at the project site to test the quality of construction material, which would help not only test the material used in construction

but also save time.

The ministry was taking various steps to facilitate low income people of the country by restarting stalled schemes, constructing new apartments worth Rs109 billion, he added. The official said the ministry revived some stalled projects including Kurri Road Islamabad, Wafaqi Colony Lahore, G-10/2 Islamabad, I-16/3 Islamabad and I-12/1 Islamabad.

These long stalled projects have been put on track and completed by the Pakistan Housing Authority (PHA), however, the work on I/16-3 and I/12-1 projects were in progress, he added. Regarding the initiatives taken in Balochistan, he said Kuchlak Road Quetta project was consisted of 1,350 housing units, which was inaugurated in 2019 on the land provided by Government of Balochistan.

The official said the membership drive was executed and over 7,700 applications were received and automated balloting was also held successfully. The PC-1 has been approved from Development Working Party (DWP) and endorsed by the PHA-F's Board of Directors. Bidding and tendering process has been completed, he

said adding that the letter of commencement to the contractors has been issued and work has also been started, he added.

Regarding initiatives taken in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, PHA Residencia Sorazai Project, Peshawar, he said land measuring 8500 kanal was provided by Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and in first phase, PHA-F would construct 10,000 housing units.

Call to withdraw buyers' identity card compulsion on sales

President, Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Khawaja Muhammad Hussain, appealed government to relax the condition of national identity cards on sales to unregistered buyers pleading that it would cause stress among the business community.

The tough condition incorporated in the Finance Supplementary Bill would hold bound the retailers, manufacturers and others to register Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) of unregistered buyers. The same condition had been introduced in past but was withdrawn after it caused anxiety among the business community, Khawaja said. —Agencies

KP-EZDM signs 11 MoUs with Dubai based investors: Khattak

PESHAWAR: The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has returned from Dubai Expo 2020 with remarkable achievement of signing 44 memorandums of understandings (MoU) with international investors in different sectors.

Out of the total 44 MoUs, 11 have been signed by only Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KP-EZDMC).

The international investment conference was held at Dusit Thani, Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

According to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) KP-EZDMC, Javed Iqbal Khattak, the MoUs were signed with international investors for investment in economic zones and special economic zones of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially in Rashakai Special Economic Zone, Daraban Special Economic Zone and Mansehra Economic Zone for livestock feed, marble & granite, surgical equipment, foam manufacturing, PVC unit and bottling plant.

Under these MoUs, foreign investors have pledged investment to the tune of US\$ 8 billion. Moreover a tripartite MoU

has also been signed among PEDO, Infra Co Asia and KPEZDMC for solarization of all Economic Zones.

The CEO KP-EZDMC while elaborating the details of companies and statistics of investment, said that Berkley Group of Companies, a real estate development company is willing to extend operations in Pakistan, interested in acquiring 10 acre land in Rashakai Special Economic Zone with an investment of 1.7 million USD while Habib Hisam Pvt Limited, a company doing business in livestock sector is keen to acquire land in Mansehra to establish large scale poultry business in Pakistan with an investment of 16 million USD. Similarly, Al Ibrahim Group, Dealing in 7 sectors, i.e. hotels, restaurant, trading, general supplies, willing to establish industry in Pakistan by acquiring land in Rashakai Special Economic Zone with an investment of 1.7 million USD while Mai Al Dhafra wants to set up a bottle manufacturing plant at suitable place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with an investment of 10 million USD.

Furthermore, Malik Foams, an UAE based entrepreneur is also keen to estab-

lish a foam manufacturing facility, in Rashakai Special Economic Zone with an investment of 6 million USD while VR Group wants to establish marble processing unit i.e. solid surface tops in Mohmand Economic Zone with an investment of 1.17 million USD. Sigma Group, a company dealing in surgical equipment, wants to acquire land in Rashakai Special Economic Zone with an investment of 10 million USD and Zoonergy (Tianjin), a Chinese owned company in collaboration with Seeds and energy and Power department, willing to solarize all economic Zones in KP with an investment of USD 56.7 million.

Samara Group, a group focusing on construction business willing to acquire land in Rashakai Special Economic Zone with an investment of 1.5 million USD while Bio Just France in collaboration with Seeds consulting, willing to establish a food processing unit in Daraban Special Economic Zone with an investment of USD 200 million and Smart Solutions Pvt Ltd is keen to set up 50MW solar plant in Dera Ismail Khan with an investment of 130 million USD. —APP

'Around 4,451 acres of Railways land leased out in 3 years'

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has leased out around 4,451 acres of its land during the last three years to transform the department into profitable entity by generating more revenue.

According to an official, leased-out land was located in seven divisions including Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta, Rawalpindi Multan and Sukkur. The official also divulged details of a plan, aimed at exploiting 25 mega sites of Pakistan Railways commercially under public-private partnership.

An expression of interest to hire the consultant for the purpose was given in the newspapers last year, he said. Likewise, a second phased was also on the cards under which some 111 new commercial sites were identified for commercial use through public private partnership.

To a question, he said Pakistan Railways has also decided to accelerate its ongoing anti-encroachment operation against land grabbers across the country to recoup its land from different individuals, groups and even business organizations using it for residential, commercial and agriculture purposes for decades.

"The encroachment operation will be launched with the assistance of Railway Police and district administrations of the provincial governments," he added. He said that PR has retrieved over 478 acres precious land worth billion of rupees from illegal occupants under its anti-encroachment operation across the country during the present government tenure. —APP

Excise Dept brings 650 consumers in tax-net

MULTAN: The Excise and Taxation department has included 650 new taxpayers through a special survey from which Rs 40 million more revenue would be generated. Deputy Director Admin, Property Wing ETO, Khalid Hussain Qasoori told APP here on Sunday that the excise recovery staff was conducting survey to add new units constructed in the city into the tax net.

He said that there were over 150,000 property tax consumers across the district and added that survey was still underway to identify new buildings. Qasoori further informed that the department had set Rs 966 million property tax target for the ongoing fiscal year while they had achieved 575 million till December which is 60 percent of the total target. He hoped that they would easily achieve the set target before end of the current fiscal year. The Deputy Director said that five percent rebate offer was continued over payment of property tax through E-pay. He said that final notices would be served to properly tax defaulters over payment of pending dues and added that strict action including confiscation of properties, would be taken against defaulters. —APP

Traders' team holds meeting with IGFC

PESHAWAR: The traders delegation Sunday held a meeting with Inspector General, Frontier Corps (IGFC), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Major General Adil Yamin and welcomed the government's decision to increase the number of export items to Afghanistan.

The delegation including Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) acting president Imran Khan Mohmand, Chairman, SCCT's Standing Committee on Pak-Afghan Bilateral and Transit Trade Promotion, Shahid Hussain, former president Faiz Muhammad Faizi, PAJCCI Vic president and the chamber former Senior Vice President Ziaul Haq Sarhad, chief Khyber Chamber of Commerce and Industry Syed Jawad Hussain Kazmi, former President Khyber Chamber Shakerullah and others. They urged the authorities to expedite the negotiation process with the Afghan government regarding promotion of trade. The DG IGFC and Commandant Khyber Rifle were also present during the meeting. The meeting discussed the administrative matters, bringing pace in movement of export-goods laden vehicles, hurdles that were impeding

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raised his voice at an international initiative to create awareness about the looming humanitarian crises in Afghanistan in the shape of starvation.

On his twitter handle, the prime minister shared a trending hashtag '#SaveAfghanLives' by adding his voice in support of the Afghan people, especially the Afghan children, currently facing economic woes leading to hunger and famine like situation.

The prime minister also urged the people to join the international initiative in this regard.

"I will add my voice also and want people to join an international initiative to raise awareness about the humanitarian crisis unfolding in Afghanistan, putting at risk of starvation millions of

Afghans, especially children. #SaveAfghanLives, the prime minister posted.

On Saturday, the prime minister in a tweet had called upon the international community to provide immediate humanitarian relief to the millions of Afghans who were facing an imminent danger of starvation.

In a previous tweet, the prime minister also reminded that providing immediate relief to impoverished Afghanistan was also obligatory under the unanimously adopted UN Principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

"One pillar of R2P is to help protect people from mass scale humanitarian crisis left in the wake of a prolonged conflict. Right now millions of Afghan ppl (people) are in danger of starvation. It is duty of int (international) community to provide

humanitarian assistance," he added.

The prime minister also tagged a news story published in the Guardian daily, UK, carrying excerpts from an article written by former British premier Gordon Brown to UK foreign secretary, Liz Truss, calling on her to help convene a donor conference to raise \$4.5bn (£3.3bn) for Afghanistan.

Brown, in his article, had warned that more than 23 million people were at risk of starvation if aid did not materialize.

The former UK prime minister said: "We are witnessing a shameful but also self-defeating failure to prevent famine", adding that the UK should urgently take a lead in resuming the delivery of aid dramatically halted after Taliban announced their government. —Agencies



HYDERABAD: Secretary Information of Pakistan Peoples Party Shazia Mari addresses a press conference along with Moulana Bux Chandio and Aajiz Dhamra at Chandio House. —Online