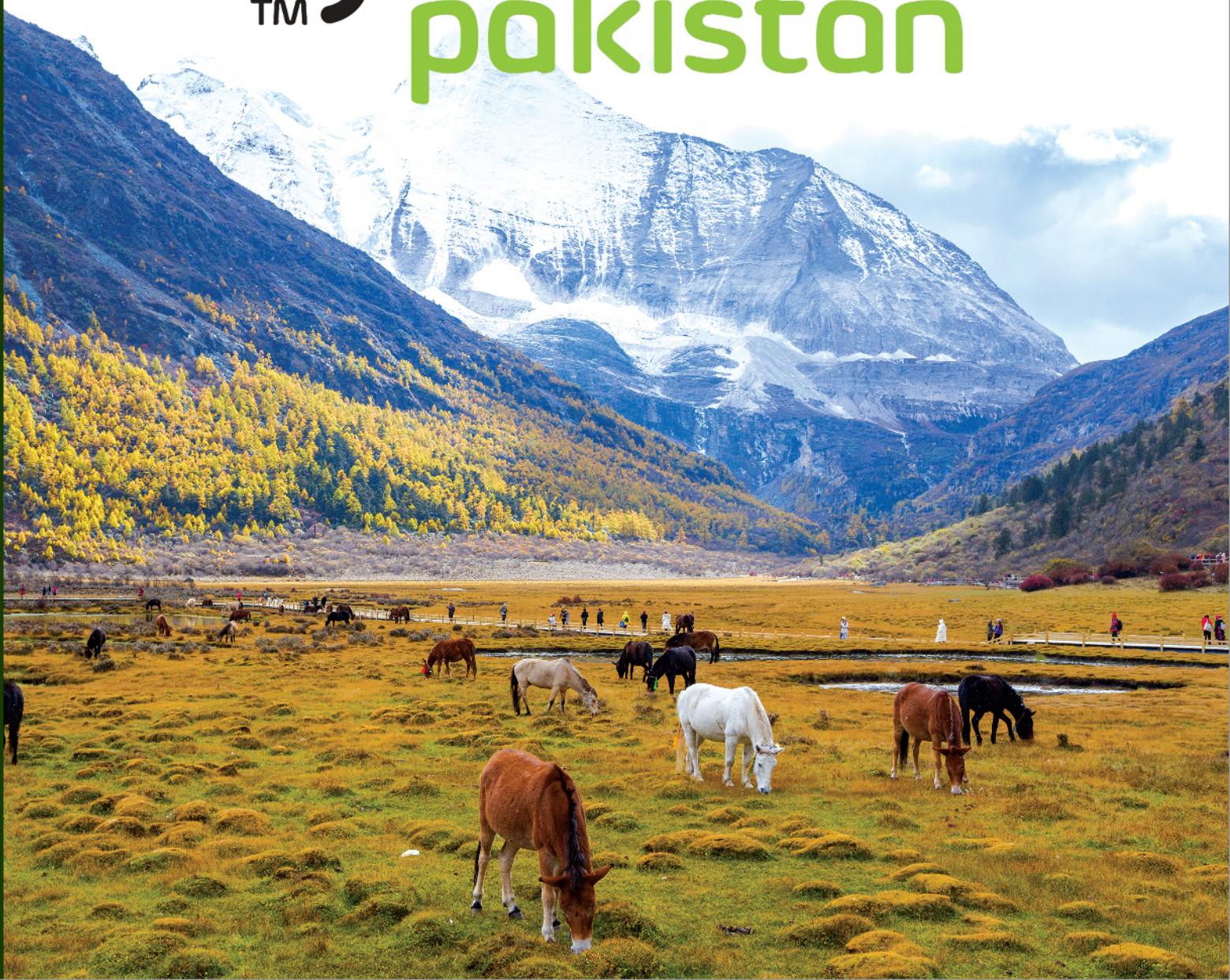


# PAKISTAN TOURISM NEWS

## 2022-23



Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation

Head Office: Ground Floor, Kohsar Block Pak Secretariat, Islamabad, Pakistan.



[www.tourism.gov.pk](http://www.tourism.gov.pk)



*The Year That Was...*

# GLIMPSES SNIPPETS MILESTONES MEMORIES!



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**Minister of State for Tourism and SAPM for Youth Affairs  
MR. WASI SHAH'S MESSAGE**

Pakistan has always been, and will always be my essential identity and hence it is indeed an honour for me to be in the prestigious chair at the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation.

To begin with: Salam Pakistan!

What a wonderful way to extend my warmest greetings to you with this newly selected brand name for Tourism Pakistan through the PTDC newsletter of past one year. As I go through the long and impressive list of events, initiatives and developments that were organized and participated in by PTDC to boost tourism to newer and higher pedestals, it warms my heart through and through. Tourism Pakistan has the power and potential to not only showcase the natural beauty and cultural richness of our beloved country but also to stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and foster a sense of national pride in Pakistanis, in the country and across the globe.

With this vision in mind, the PTDC is duly committed to implement strategic measures that will propel Pakistan to become a premier destination for travellers around the globe. Our efforts are focused on improving infrastructure, enhancing visitor experiences and promoting sustainable tourism practices. We understand the pivotal role that the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) plays in realizing these objectives. The PTDC has been a longstanding pillar of support for the tourism industry and we are working collaboratively to strengthen its capabilities and reach.

As tourism in Pakistan embarks on yet another exciting and full of promises journey to bolster and revitalize Pakistan's tourism sector, you can expect to witness exciting developments that prioritize both the preservation of our natural wonders and the prosperity of local communities. PTDC is dedicated to create an environment where tourism thrives while respecting the unique cultural heritage that defines Pakistan.

I encourage you to stay engaged with PTDC updates, participate in our endeavours and explore the beauty that our diverse landscapes have to offer; making Pakistan a top-tier tourist destination that showcases the hospitality and warmth essentially characteristic of our land and people. I look forward to a future where tourism not only flourishes but also becomes a catalyst for positive change and shared prosperity.



**MANAGING DIRECTOR PTDC  
AFTAB UR REHMAN RANA'S MESSAGE**

It is my absolute pleasure and privilege to share with you yet another edition of Pakistan Tourism News as one more activity calendar full of events, achievements, landmarks and cherished memories concluded successfully.

The year was a truly happening one, undoubtedly; but the highlight of the year came with the huge milestone reached in August this year as Tourism Pakistan, after a considerable period of time and much brainstorming, finally got branded with a signature brand name of its own: Salam Pakistan. Reflecting the true essence of Pakistan, the name embodies peace, harmony, serenity and compassion as the hallmark of the 'land of the pure', blessed with bounties of nature as well as a vibrant diverse culture and history, unparalleled in the world. We hope that this huge milestone would definitely prove to be a game changer and add to the tourism dynamics of our wonderful country.

The year 2022-23 was throughout dotted with a host of occasions, activities, solid initiatives and accomplishments, internationally as well as in dear homeland.

From receiving recognition and acknowledgement as an, rather 'the' upcoming tourism destination in the world, Pakistan managed to make a solid imprint in the international league of tourism as a tourists' haven yet to be explored fully. From the US and UK to Europe and Far East, this year Pakistan attended various tourism shows and fairs, opening up Pakistan window and inviting the world to come and rejoice some of the most beguiling wonders of nature besides revelling a cultural and civilization legacy that is as vibrant as it is diverse and ancient, spanning over epochs gone by.

Apart from that, many a conferences, workshops training sessions, competitions and various other tourism related events were organized by Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation in different cities of Pakistan, all with the essential underlying objective of taking Tourism Pakistan to the next level; and beyond.

All in all, as said before, marking a lot of events/activities and landmarks it truly was a happening year; and what is more important is the journey was (and is) directed forward, promising a lot of positivity, progress and definitely brighter days ahead for tourism industry in Pakistan, with the assent and help of the Almighty; Amen.

## SALAM PAKISTAN

The much-due brand name gets finalized



Tourism Pakistan finally managed to get branded as a distinct entity in the League of Nations across the globe, reflecting the quintessence the country stands for, i.e. a palpable, incessant spirit of peace, harmony, tranquillity and warmth embodied in Salam Pakistan.

The formal launching of the brand, 'Salam Pakistan' was done by the honorable Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif in a grand yet elegant ceremony held on August 4th 2023.



Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif speaking at the occasion welcomed the national and international dignitaries present on the historic occasion and appreciated the launch of "Salam Pakistan" and its role in promoting indigenous tourism. He expressed the hope that the brand dedicated to tourism will greatly improve the soft image of Pakistan across the globe.

It is fervently hoped that this landmark and a first-of-its-kind initiative would give a much needed brand identity to Tourism Pakistan, enhancing the country's image internationally and taking tourism to new heights in the days to come.



## **NEW CHAIR APPOINTMENT**

### **WASI SHAH TAKES OATH AS SAPM ON TOURISM AND YOUTH AFFAIRS**

August 22nd 2023

Renowned poet, columnist, and media person, Mr. Wasi Shah was appointed as the Minister for State on Tourism and Chairman of PTDC Board of Directors on August 22nd 2023

Mr. Wasi Shah, assumed the charge of Chairman PTDC on his visit to the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Head Office, Islamabad. The Managing Director of PTDC, Mr. Aftab Ur Rehman Rana welcomed him and gave a comprehensive briefing on the functions, operations, and role of PTDC as a national tourism organization. During his comments, the honourable minister appreciated the efforts of the PTDC team for the promotion of tourism and developing effective coordination with provincial tourism departments and the private sector within their limited resources. He also expressed that tourism fundamentally revolves around the presentation of our cultural richness and national heritage. He affirmed his commitment to fully employ his capabilities in enhancing the tourism sector of Pakistan.

As Minister for State on Tourism and Chairman of PTDC, he also conveyed his deep condolences and apprehensions regarding the unfortunate demise of Mohammed Hassan, a 27-year-old porter from Pakistan, who recently lost his life due to an unfortunate slip and fall along a precarious trail in the treacherous stretch of K2, commonly referred to as the bottleneck. The state minister conveyed his intention to visit Mohammed Hassan's family and extend support in their time of need. He also proposed to initiate a special training program for high-altitude porters to ensure work safety for them.



## **REJOICING OUR VERSATILE ETHNICITY VESAK DAY CELEBRATION**

7th May 2022

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), in collaboration with the Gandhara Resource Centre Pakistan (GRCP), Guangdong Guangji Foundation, Paper Miracle, Centre for Culture and Development and the Department of Archaeology and TDCP successfully organized a grand Vesak Day event, marking the birthday of Buddha.



The event was attended by Ambassador of Nepal H.E Tapas Adhikari , High Commissioner of Sri Lanka H.E Vice Admiral Mohan Wijewickrama , Managing Director PTDC- Aftab ur Rehman Rana as well as federal and provincial government officials, members of GRCP scholars and media.



## PAKISTAN'S TOURISM POTENTIAL HIGHLIGHTED IN MYANMAR

Yangon 27th July 2022

The Pakistan Embassy in Yangon, Myanmar in collaboration with Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) organized a one-day seminar on the Tourism Potential of Pakistan at Wyndham Grand Yangon Hotel on 27th July 2022.

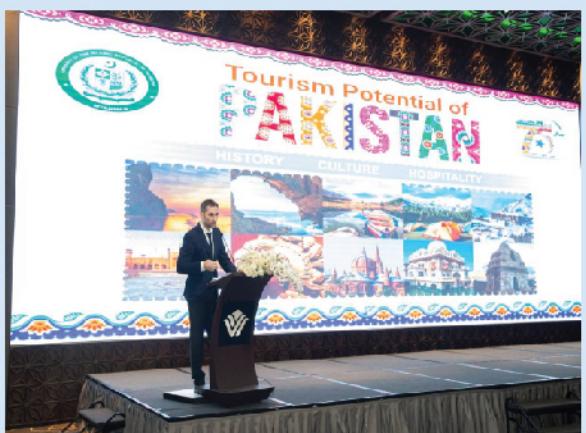
With a view to highlight the immense potential of tourism in Pakistan, the seminar showcased Pakistan's rich cultural and geographical diversity and was largely attended by officials from tour organizations, tour operators and a notable number of Buddhist monks from Myanmar. On this occasion, tourism promotional material including pamphlets and posters produced by PTDC was also distributed among the participants.

taken by the government of Pakistan to promote tourism in the country.

Dr. Nadeem Omer Tarar, elaborated with regards the rich Gandhara heritage and the potential of Buddhist heritage tourism in Pakistan.

Javed Khan, (In charge de Affairs of the Pakistan Embassy at Yangon) spoke about the visa policy of Pakistan explaining in detail about the process of issuance of Tourist and general visas. On this occasion, different short documentaries on the tourism potential of Pakistan were also played on the large screens which were highly admired by the audience.

Mr. Maxim Gromyko, a Russian Diplomat who served in Pakistan, also shared his



Col. Imran Khan (the Defense Attaché of Pakistan in Yangon) welcomed the participants and expressed his gratitude to all the speakers and dignitaries. A number of speakers invited at the seminar highlighted various aspects of tourism potential in Pakistan.

Aftab ur Rehman Rana (MD, PTDC), as the keynote speaker gave a detailed presentation on the potential of tourism in Pakistan and also highlighted various steps



experiences about the beauty of Pakistan. He mentioned that he was placed in Karachi and traveled a number of times by road to Islamabad. He commented how he absolutely relished the landscape diversity of Sindh, Punjab, and the Capital Area along with the food, culture, and hospitality enroute. He acknowledged that there is absolutely no problem with respect to security or safety while traveling by road in Pakistan.



Buddhist Monk, Dr. Ashin Soubita also spoke at the occasion about Gandhara Heritage in Pakistan. He highly appreciated the effort of the Pakistani government to promote Buddhist heritage tourism and expressed a keen hope of visiting Pakistan in the near future.

The participants of the seminar also appreciated the efforts of the Pak Embassy at Yangon and TDCP for arranging this introductory seminar on tourism in Pakistan

labeling it as a stepping stone for developing the B2B linkages through the follow-up activities in the near future.

In the end, Col. Imran Khan thanked all the participants for attending this seminar in a large number. He said Pakistan is a peaceful and safe country and the government of Pakistan will ensure all steps to facilitate the tourists from Myanmar, including dedicated security for all Buddhist religious delegations traveling to Pakistan.



## EXPEDITION INDUS PAKISTAN'S FIRST RIVER-RAFTING EXPEDITION

16th August 2022

Organised in collaboration with PTDC, Pakistan's maiden river – rafting venture, Expedition Indus, was a 45-day river-rafting journey that commenced from Hamzigond in the Kharmang district of Gilgit-Baltistan, ran along the entire course of River Indus in Pakistan and culminated in the Arabian Sea at the Karachi Port.



Mr. Aftab-ur-Rehman Rana, MD PTDC attended the closing ceremony of Expedition Indus led by Wajahat Malik at Serena Hotels and deeply acknowledged the efforts made by the expedition official & Eyebex Films in making this novel venture a success story.



**SHARING PERSPECTIVES**

## **JOINT MEETING OF UNITED NATIONS WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION**

(UNWTO) 22nd August 2022



The 34th Joint Meeting of the UNWTO for East Asia, the Pacific and the UNWTO Commission for South Asia was held in Maldives last year.

Mr. Aftab-ur-Rehman, Managing Director PTDC, participated virtually in the meeting and shared his valuable feedback on latest developments in the tourism sector, including the steps taken for tourism recovery after COVID.



**AHOY, HO CHI MINH CITY!  
PAKISTAN PARTICIPATION IN THE TRAVEL INTERNATIONAL EXPO HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM**

ITE HCM 10th September 2022



Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in collaboration with the Pakistan Embassy Vietnam, Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) and Pakistan Association of Tour Operators (PATO) participated in the 16th International Travel Expo, Ho Chi Minh City from 8 to 10 September 2022.

The Ambassador of Pakistan to Vietnam and Laos, H.E. Mrs. Samina Mehtab, accompanied by the Commercial Secretary, Mr. Ali Qayyum Raja, participated in the opening ceremony of the 16th International Travel Expo Ho Chi Minh City 2022 (ITE HCM 2022), as part of the 75 years' celebrations of Pakistan's Independence and Golden Jubilee of Pakistan-Vietnam Diplomatic Relations. A delegation of Pakistani tour operators, namely Legend Hotels & Resorts, Zoon Safaris, Hunza Explorers and Saltoro Summits Treks & Tours showcased their tour products and prospects in the event. Their interaction comprised various B2B meetings

with major tour operators in Vietnam as well as numerous international buyers present at the event.

The Ambassador, while talking to Vietnamese Media and different delegates at the event, highlighted that Pakistan is a progressive country with a vibrant nation and enormous potential, especially in Tourism sector.

Pakistan possesses a rich and diversified cultural heritage, embodying a multitude of archaeological sites, most notable of which are the Buddhist heritage sites. The region was indeed the seat of Buddhism evident by its spectacular remnants of the Gandhara civilization scattered all over the country.

She also invited the Vietnamese business community and tourists to invest in Pakistan and establish long term B2B relations as well as to visit Pakistan for a wonderful, adventurous, and enlightening experience.



## KEEPING THE MOUNTAINS CLEAN

### WORKSHOP ON INCREASING POLLUTION ISSUE ON THE MOUNTAINS BALTORO & K2 BASE CAMP TREK

13th September 2022

Pakistan is naturally blessed with some of the most scenic and majestic mountainous regions in the world. The last year featured the best season of K2 climbing as more than 3800 registered trekkers and mountaineers went on K2 Base Camp trekking route which was also the highest number so far, not to forget an increasing number in the support staff who handle the expeditions and trekking groups.

But on the other hand, the issue of solid waste management on the trekking route has also loomed up as a big drawback. It is a challenging situation for Pakistan and there was a dire need to carve out a strategy that encompasses adopting eco-friendly management of expeditions on this route which is now part of Central Karakoram National Park (CKNP).

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) organized a consultative workshop with representatives of various tourism organizations and tour operators to discuss the issue of increasing pollution on Baltoro and K2 Base Camp Trek.

Senior representatives of PTDC, Alpine Club of Pakistan, Himalayan Wildlife Foundation, Tour Operators Associations, Adventure Club, Karakorum Club, GB Tourism Department and others participated in the meeting.



In the consultative workshop, participants gave their expert input and suggestions to overcome the issue of pollution along with the promotion of mountaineering and trekking on one of the highest peaks of the world that is becoming more popular and busier by the day.



## WORLD TOURISM DAY CELEBRATIONS ART AND HERITAGE CRAFTS EXHIBITION IN ISLAMABAD

27th September 2022

As part of the World Tourism Day 2022 Celebration, an exhibition of paintings and heritage crafts from Rohtas Fort – a UNESCO World Heritage Site was organized at PNCA, Islamabad. The event was organized by Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in collaboration with Sustainable Tourism Foundation Pakistan (STFP).

### FIRST AJK GRASS SKI CIRCUIT & 2ND NATIONAL GRASS SKI CHAMPIONSHIP

30th September 2022

The first AJK Grass Ski Circuit & 2nd National Grass Ski Championship were held at Toli Pir (AJK) on 30th September – 1st October 2022, jointly organised by AJK Winter Sports Association and PTDC. Training camps of athletes with local kids and for national competitions were also arranged from 9th -29th September, 2022.



## RETHINKING TOURISM

### NATIONAL TOURISM CONFERENCE ON WORLD TOURISM DAY

26th-27th September 2022

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) held a two-day conference on the theme "Rethinking Tourism" (September 26th and 27th) to celebrate the World Tourism Day at Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) and Marriot Hotel, Islamabad.



The conference was a part of three-day activities including photography competition, photography and painting exhibition, display of tourism stalls, heritage crafts exhibition at PNCA, youth painting competition, Islamabad sightseeing tour for students and youth.

PTDC organized these events in collaboration with partner organizations including Serena Hotels, Hashoo Group of Hotels, Destination Hotels, PNCA, Punjab Tourism, STFP and COTHM.

Experts from tourism industry participated in panel discussions on topics including revival of tourism in the aftermath of floods and widespread rains, removing bottlenecks to promote foreign tourism in Pakistan, issues and challenges of mountaineering and trekking tourism in Pakistan, tourism promotion in Islamabad Capital Territory and initiatives of provincial tourism departments for the development and promotion of tourism.



The underlying objective of all these activities was to highlight the importance of tourism for boosting economy and create awareness among the general public, especially our young generation, about the role of tourism in contributing considerably in the national GDP and promoting the soft image of homeland Pakistan.

The tourism conference concluded with a presentation of the recommendations summary formed in various sessions of the conference and prize distribution ceremony of photographic and art competitions.



## **AN ODE TO THE GLORIES OF GOJAL**

### **THE FESTIVAL OF NORTH - GOJAL CHAPTER**

11th October 2022

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) along with Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), jointly held a 4-day Tourism event, "Festival of North – Gojal Chapter" in October, 2022.

The event encompassed various activities with a view to explore the hidden treasures of Gojal valley such as the Autumn Safari, hiking tours, camping, rock climbing and the selfie booth in addition to experiencing the breath taking views on Passu cone trail and Glacier treks.

Besides these, the participants were also enthralled from local products stalls that depicted the tradition and culture of Gojal. Especially the food stalls, live cooking, and storytelling were an absolute hit.

Managing Director of PTDC, Aftab ur Rehman Rana also attended the event and visited different stalls. He appreciated the efforts of local artisans to revive the rich handicrafts of our mountainous areas.





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## PAKISTAN PAVILION UNVEILED IN THE WORLD TRAVEL MARKET LONDON AFTER A DECADE

7th-9th November 2022

After an interval of almost 14 years, Pakistan unveiled its many splendored tourism vista through the Pakistan Pavilion in the World Travel Market 2022 in Excel London, UK.

The Pakistani delegation put together by Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) comprised a high level delegation of 39 members led by Mr. Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism & Sports and Chairman PTDC.

Other members included Mr. Abdul Khaliq, Tourism Minister, Balochistan, Raja Nasir Ali, Tourism Minister, Gilgit Baltistan, Mr. Faheem Akhtar, Minister for Tourism, Law & Parliamentary Affairs, Government of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK), CEOs and MDs of eight private tour operation and hotel management companies and senior officials from PTDC, AJK, GB, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab tourism departments.



The Pakistani team, led by Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation – PTDC along with Provincial Tourism Departments and Private sector stakeholders setup a remarkable pavilion in the show, deemed to be the largest travel/tourism show across the globe.

This valuable participation in World Travel Market London that came after a decade, provided a great opportunity to Pakistan to showcase its rich tourism potential at this global platform and helped in developing B2B and G2B linkages with the leading players of tourism industry.



## PAKISTAN TREKKING GUIDE BOOK A COMMENDABLE STEP TO PROMOTE MOUNTAIN TOURISM

26th November 2022

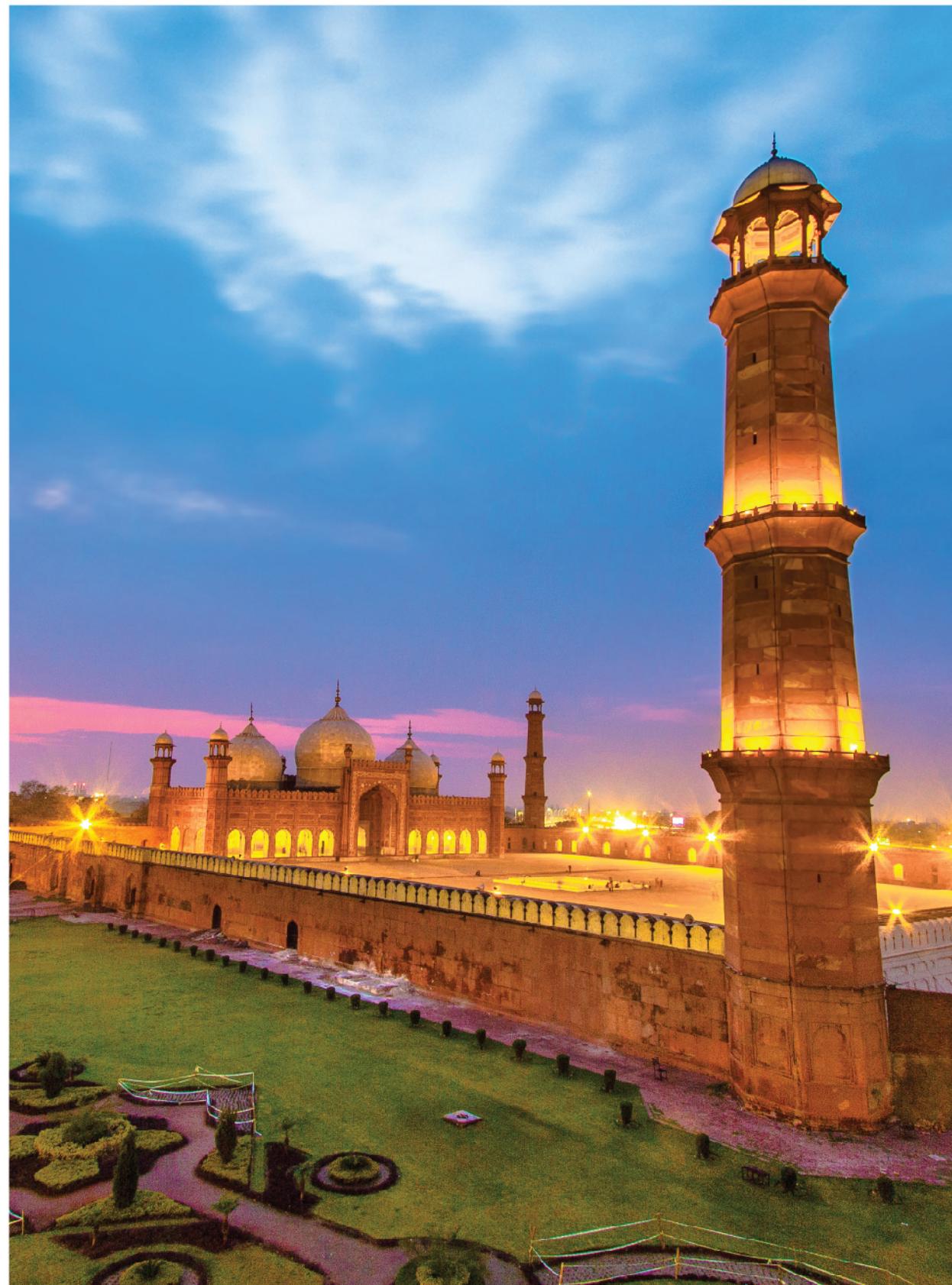
The Alpine Club of Pakistan organized the book launch of "Pakistan Trekking Guide" as part of the activities regarding International Mountain Day 2022 in Islamabad.

Comprising over 460 pages, the Pakistan Trekking Guide is the latest contribution of Mr. Muhammad Abduhoo who has already contributed six books on Pakistan's nature and cultural tourist attractions.

The book encompasses in the northern parts of Pakistan. This book is full of useful information about the mountain areas of Pakistan and gives details about 233 trekking routes, 125 passes, 52 base camps, and 55 lakes along with more than 40 maps; some of them being very rare maps indeed.

Aftab ur Rehman Rana, MD PTDC who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, highly appreciated the efforts of Mr. Abduhoo who has completed this gigantic task by conducting detailed research and compiling his personal experiences of trekking trips and finally producing Pakistan's first trekking guidebook in Urdu language.

He also congratulated Master Wise Eliezer, his father Ashir Ch. Ms. Hania who attempted the Gondogoro Peak last year in autumn; their documentary film was released on this occasion. He also acknowledged Mr. Abu Zafar Sadiq, President, of the Alpine Club of Pakistan, for his efforts in promoting tourism in Pakistan.



[www.salamPakistan.gov.pk](http://www.salamPakistan.gov.pk)

## **STRENGTHENING THE TIES FURTHER PROMOTION OF BILATERAL TOURISM BETWEEN CHINA AND PAKISTAN**

28th November 2022

A meeting was held between Mr. Aftab ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director PTDC and Mr. Zhang Heqing, Cultural Counsellor, Embassy of The People's Republic of China in Islamabad. The agenda was to augment the years old cordial ties between the two countries and to particularly promote bilateral tourism between Pakistan and China.



Mr. Heqing informed that year 2023 will be celebrated as the year of China-Pakistan Year of Tourism Exchange. In this regard a Gandhara Art Exhibition is held at Palace Museum in Beijing to showcase Pakistan's rich potential of diverse culture and long history.



## **MOUNTAIN MUSINGS THE INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAINS DAY CELEBRATIONS**

Islamabad 11th December 2022

To celebrate the International Mountains Day 2022, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in collaboration with Alpine Club of Pakistan and other partner organizations organized a one-day conference at Legends Hotel, Islamabad.

The conference, which duly sported a large audience, covered four thematic sessions, namely:

- Sustainable Mountain Tourism in Pakistan
- Women Move Mountain
- Adventure Tourism in the Mountainous Areas of Pakistan
- Challenges and Prospects of Mountaineering in Pakistan



The highlighted session of the conference was with regards women's vital contribution in promoting sustainable mountain tourism in Pakistan. The guests speakers shared their expert opinions on the important role played by the women as the primary managers of mountain resources, guardians of biodiversity, keepers of traditional knowledge, custodians of local culture and experts in traditional medicine and the wild life and life of humans as well.

PTDC announced the organizing plan of a 2-day event on International Mountain Day with the support of IUCN, Legend Hotels & Resorts, Riphah International University, Sustainable Tourism Foundation Pakistan, Pakistan Association of Tour Operators, and Pakistan Sports Board. The conference concluded with awarding acknowledgments to winners of the competitions, the sponsoring organizations and the mountaineers in recognition of their efforts and services regarding enhancement of Mountain Tourism in Pakistan.

## THE 4TH ECO MINISTERIAL MEETING ON TOURISM CULTURE

Uzbekistan 14th December 2022

The 4th ministerial meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization was held at Samarkand, Uzbekistan. It was preceded by the High-Level Experts meeting on Tourism. The Adviser to the Prime Minister on Tourism & Sports/Chairman PTDC and Managing Director PTDC attended the events virtually.

The efforts of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and Ministry of Tourism & Culture Uzbekistan for enhancing tourism in the region were duly appreciated.



## ANOTHER STAR TO FLAUNT! PAKISTAN DECLARED THE BEST NEW EXHIBITOR AT THE TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE SHOW 2023 AT NEW YORK

New York, USA 27th-29th January 2023

The New Year 2023 started on a fabulous note for Tourism Pakistan as Pakistan was declared the Best New Exhibitor at the Travel and Adventure Show 2023, held in New York, USA. It indeed was a proud moment for Pakistan as Mr. John the CEO of Travel and Adventure Show, presented the award to Mr. Aftab Rana, MD, PTDC.

In his comments on this occasion, Mr. Rana mentioned that Pakistan's participation in Travel and Trade Show at New York has been highly impactful in terms of response from public engagement. He lauded the efforts and commitment of all the team members throughout the show, which was much appreciated by the management of the show as well.

Mr. Awn Chaudhry, Chairman of PTDC and Advisor to PM in Tourism congratulated all the members of Pakistan's delegation including the provincial tourism departments and private sector tour operators for their dedication and commitment.

He also highly appreciated the support of team of PTDC, TDAP and Pakistan Consulate General at New York in the whole process.



## PAKISTAN INTERNATIONAL MARITIME EXHIBITION AND CONFERENCE

Karachi 10th – 12th February



The Pakistan International Maritime Exhibition and Conference (PIMEC 2023) was held at Karachi Expo Center from 10th to 12th February 2023. Alongside this mega event, the Baluchistan Department of Tourism and Culture also organized a seminar on the theme of Investment Opportunities in the Tourism Sector of Baluchistan on 11th February.

Chief Secretary Baluchistan, Abdul Aziz Uqaili was the Chief Guest of the event. Secretary of Culture & Tourism, Mr. Manzoor Hussain delivered a welcome speech and briefed the participants about the tourism opportunities in Baluchistan. Aftab ur Rehman Rana, Managing Director of PTDC was invited as a guest speaker to enlighten about the potential and investment opportunities in Baluchistan. In his presentation, he particularly highlighted the

rich potential of coastal tourism which is a major component of the Blue Economy of many countries these days. He emphasized that if coastal tourism is properly developed along Makran Coast, Pakistan can earn more than 3 billion USD annually besides generating thousands of jobs and creating many other livelihood opportunities for the local community of Makran Coast. He recommended that Pakistan should follow the model of sustainable coastal tourism which is eco-friendlier, culturally sensitive, and economically beneficial for the local people of this area. Presentations were also made by the Secretary of Fisheries & Coastal Development, CEO of BBOIT, and Director of Tourism Baluchistan. Participants from different walks of life attended the seminar.



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## **BERLIN BEGUILED! PAKISTAN'S PARTICIPATION IN ITB BERLIN**

7th-9th March 2023

While on international acclaims, Pakistan got duly acknowledged for its splendid tourism potential in ITB Berlin 2023, Germany.

The ITB (short for Internationale Tourismus Börse) is the world's leading travel-trade show, providing a unique opportunity to learn about different countries and regions of the world in one place.

This year, Pakistan showcased the country's tremendous tourism potential, inviting the world to some of the most beguiling untapped treasures of tourism the country possesses.

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) along with Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP), the Embassy of Pakistan in Germany, provincial tourism departments and private sector stakeholders collaborated in Pakistan's participation in the world renowned event.

The participation, comprising a joint delegation of public and private

stakeholders, was made possible after an interval of 14 years and was mainly courtesy the persistent efforts of Mr. Awn Chaudhry, the Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports and Mr. Aftab Rana, Managing Director, PTDC .The Pakistan Pavilion was formally inaugurated by the Pakistani Ambassador in Germany – Dr Mohammad Faisal.

The Pakistan Delegation in ITB Berlin 2023 comprised 13 private sector companies and 4 provincial tourism departments including KP, Sindh, Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan along with PTDC and TDAP.

Efforts were made to include a maximum number of private tour operators in this travel with a view to showcasing their tour products and develop B2B linkages.

Keeping in view the austerity measures of government of Pakistan, APM on Tourism and MD PTDC attended ITB in virtual mode to minimize the cost of participation.

Mr. Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports and Managing Director PTDC addressing the event virtually via Zoom Link, stated that the government is committed to boost tourism and is making all-out effort to improve the infrastructure for tourists and recover the inbound tourism to the pre-pandemic level. The Chairman appreciated the organizers and assured that the Government of Pakistan is ready to extend its full assistance in the tourism and hospitality industry to encourage and enhance foreign tourists' influx in the country. Mr. Aftab ur Rehman Rana - Managing Director, PTDC, also attended the event virtually and said that Pakistan does not offers just astounding scenic beauty but is also home to some of the oldest civilizations in the world, unique arts and crafts and a rich culture and heritage.

He further stated that Pakistan is now making all efforts to attract more foreign tourists and expressed his hope that the Pakistani delegation participating in ITB 2023 will utilise this time in a most effective manner to promote the image of Pakistan as a tourist friendly destination.

H.E. Ambassador of Pakistan in Germany, Dr Mohammad Faisal expressed his great appreciation for the commendable efforts of PTDC and T-DAP with regards Pakistan's participation in ITB 2023. He said, that Pakistan's participation in this biggest global event will certainly pave the way to build the image of our country at the international level.



## WORKSHOP ON INTEGRATED TOURISM ZONES IN KP PROVENCE

16th March 2023

In recent years the KP government has taken some solid initiatives to develop Destination Management Plans (DMPs) and Destination Investment Plans (DIPs) for three tourist destinations, (Kalam, Kumrat, and Chitral) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

A workshop on these lines was organized by KP Tourism Authority aiming to promote and enhance Pakistan National Tourism. The workshop elaborated that the DMPs and DIPs aim to promote responsible tourism by suggesting diversity and quality in the tourism offerings of these destinations and providing guidance for tourist planning and destination management.

It also enlightened that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Integrated Tourism Development Project - KITE with the support of the World Bank has developed these plans to overall improve the tourist experience of these three destinations.

MD PTDC, Aftab Rana was invited to join the launching events of these plans and to participate in the panel discussion as a guest speaker along with other learned experts. In his address, Mr. Rana acknowledged the efforts of the whole team of KITE Project, KP Tourism Authority, team of consultants and the World Bank for launching this landmark Initiative.



## PAKISTAN REPRESENTED IN THE WORLD TRAVEL AND TOURISM COUNCIL (WTTC) ANNUAL CONFERENCE

21st March 2023

The year marked a host of international happenings where Pakistan not only featured its tremendous tourism prospects but was also duly acknowledged and appreciated as a tourism haven.

One such event was Pakistan attending the World Travel and Tourism Council Annual Conference. Mr Awn Chaudhry The Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports represented Pakistan in this global event. He participated in various sessions of the conference and held meetings with his counterparts with regards promotion of bilateral tourism between Pakistan and the rest of the world.

Among these, the highlighted meeting was the special meeting with Saudi Arabia's Minister of Tourism, Ahmad Al-Khateeb. The agenda of the meeting comprised collaboration between the two countries in the field of tourism.



## EMBARKING ON NOVEL AVENUES:

### THE FIRST NATIONAL TOUR GUIDE TRAINING PROGRAM

11th April 2023



Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) in collaboration with Department of Tourist Services (DTS), Sustainable Tourism Foundation Pakistan (STFP), College of Tourism and Hotel Management (COTHM), Pakistan Association of Tour Operators (PATO) and Legend Hotels organized the first National Tour Guide Training Program in Islamabad from 18 to 31 March 2023.

The aim of this training workshop was to improve the knowledge and skills of tour guides about the tourist destinations, tour group management, communication skills, and professionally handling all the aspect of tours reflecting high standards of tour guiding, customer service and operational best practices.

A total of 24 trainees from different parts of Pakistan participated in the two weeks training program which was conducted by international and national trainers and experts of tourism industry.

PTDC's Managing Director, Mr. Aftab ur Rehman Rana congratulated all the participants on their successful training completion and also thanked the trainers for

their valuable input with regards the training. Mr. Rana highlighted the fact that it was the need of the hour to equip all concerned stakeholders with the basic essentials of tourism, if Pakistan is to capitalize on the tremendous tourism potential it has been naturally bestowed with.

He said that there is a serious shortage of trained tour guides in Pakistan.

To fill this gap, PTDC has launched a National Tour Guides Training Program which will organize a series of tour guides training workshops in all the provincial capitals in collaboration with provincial tourism departments and private sector.

The initiative, he enlightened, will be producing about 1000 trained tour guides annually; this will provide an opportunity to our youth to learn the useful skill of tour guiding and will consequently generate job opportunities in Pakistan.

The two-week long training that was mutually termed as most fruitful and conducive by all participants, concluded with distribution of certificates among the trainees.

## ORAKZAI ADDS TO THE TOURISM ALLURE!

### NEWLY MERGED DISTRICT ORAKZAI; A NEW TOURISTS' ATTRACTION

April 2023

# ORAKZAI

Keeping in perspective the decision of the KP Government to open the newly merged District Orakzai for general tourists in April 2023, a one-day interaction session with the leading national tour operators/travel agents was held at PTDC Head Office, Islamabad. The underlying objective was to apprise about the new tourists' destination and develop/promote tour packages to these areas.



## DUBAI DELIGHTED BY TOURISM PAKISTAN ARABIAN TRAVEL MARKET (ATM)

1st -4th May 2023



Keeping the international tourism horizon enlightened and duly charmed, Pakistan attended The Arabian Travel Market in May '23 in Dubai. It was a unique event that presented Pakistan with a great window to flaunt its dynamic tourism potential globally.

ATM is the leading global event for the inbound and outbound travel industry in the Middle East.

For the last twenty-eight years, this annual event has connected tourism service providers from around the globe with buyers and travel trade visitors at the Dubai World Trade Centre. More than 160 countries and 2,000+ exhibitors from around the world participated in this year edition of ATM at Dubai in May 2023.

This leading world travel show provided glimpses of tourism attractions and distinctions of different countries/regions all across the globe; and Pakistan was

effectively able to make a discernible mark of its own among the League of Nations.

A 25-members' delegation from Pakistan, headed by Mr. Awn Chaudhry, Advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports, participated in ATM, Dubai.

Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) did a brilliant job in putting up a vibrant Pakistan Pavilion that comprehensively reflected the colours, the spirit and the soul of Pakistan.

Partner organizations in this venture included TDAP, Pearl Continental Hotels, Hashoo Group, Legend Hotels and Resorts, ComfiTrav Tourism, Meezab Group, Waljis Travels, Zeb Travels, Eventica, Black Glacier Tours and College of Tourism and Hotel Management.

The Pakistan Pavilion at the ATM was jointly inaugurated by Mr. Awn Chaudhry and Mr. Faisal Niaz, Ambassador of Pakistan in UAE.



Speaking on the occasion, - Awn Chahdhry, advisor to Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports, applauded the efforts of PTDC for the promotion of tourism in Pakistan. He said the participation of private sector in ATM Dubai 2023 to enhance business to business lineages with counterparts in the Middle East and other countries, can increase the flow of foreign tourists and investors to Pakistan. He also appreciated Pakistani Embassy in UAE and the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) for their supportive role with regards participation of Pakistani exhibitors in (ATM) 2023.

The Ambassador of Pakistan to UAE - Faisal Niaz Tirmizi at the inauguration ceremony stated that participation of Pakistan in Arabian Travel Market ATM after a long gap is very significant and will help to promote inbound tourism in Pakistan and also create a soft image of Pakistan globally.

Mr. Aftab Rana, Managing Director of PTDC

stated that Pakistan is blessed with a breath-taking natural beauty, rich culture and heritage and great diversity of landscape offering an un-matched tourism potential. He said that the Government of Pakistan is committed to promote tourism for the socio-economic development and employment generation in the country.

The participation of Pakistan in Arabian Travel Mart will certainly enhance the influx of foreign tourists to explore the rich touristic potential of the country.

Right from the very first day, the Pakistan Pavilion attracted large number of trade visitors, exhibitors, tour operators, social media influencers and media persons to exchange contacts with Pakistani exhibitors and get information about Pakistan's rich tourism potential and tour packages.

All in all, the superb opportunity to let in the world through to Tourism Pakistan was fully and fruitfully utilized.

## MAKING INROADS TO KOREA TOURISM FAIR SEOUL

4th-7th May 2023

The Seoul International Travel Fair is the biggest tourism fair of Korea and considered among the biggest among the most impressive tourism events internationally. This year Pakistan Tourism Development Cooperation (PTDC) took the opportunity to participate in this fair and let the world have a glimpse of the tremendous tourism potential of the country.



The multifaceted tourism prospects of Pakistan were aptly and comprehensively showcased and received a promising response from the large number of visitors at the event.

Along with PTDC, TDAP (Trade Development Authority of Pakistan) and the Pakistan Embassy at Seoul, Sitara Travels and Trip Trails from the private sector joined hands in this venture.



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## PTDC & FASCINATING PAKISTAN COME TOGETHER IN PROMOTION PAKISTAN

MOU Signing 25th May 2023

As one of the most positive happenings of the year, an MOU was signed between PTDC and Fascinating Pakistan (a promising magazine dedicated to showcase the ever-so-dynamic Pakistan). It was mutually agreed to augment the vibrant vibes of Brand Pakistan together in as coordinated and progressive way as possible.



(From left MR. Tahawur Husain Jafri CEO Fascinating Pakistan magazine and to the right MR. Aftab Ur Rehman Rana MD PTDC exchanging MOU copies)

## PTDC'S PARTICIPATION IN THE TOURISM WORKING GROUP MEETING

Tbilisi, Georgia 12th-13th June 2023

Pakistan actively participated in the Tourism Working Group Meeting at Tbilisi, Georgia to discuss the investment priorities for sustainable tourism across the CAREC region.

The Managing Director-PTDC, Mr. Aftab ur Rehman Rana representing Tourism Pakistan in the meeting, gave in his important perspective in this respect and discussed plans for the launch of a joint tourism portal that will support the countries and private sector in stimulating tourism growth.



The key deliverables on priority projects, climate resilience, and a capacity-building program for tourism development in the CAREC region were duly reported to the CAREC Senior Officials by the Working Group.

## GANDHARA SYMPOSIUM 2023

### GANDHARA TOURISM VISITS

1st-3rd July 2023



With a view to promote and revive the true essence of Gandhara Heritage in Pakistan, a Gandhara Symposium 2023 was held from 11 to 13 July 2023. National and International speakers participated in different sessions and formulated recommendations to promote Buddhist Heritage Tourism in Pakistan.

PTDC collaborated with the PM Task force on Gandhara Tourism to organise a number of visits to some of the most ancient world heritage sites for the members of a high-level delegation consisting of diplomats from different countries including Philippine, Bangladesh and Austria.

The visits included Julian, Mohra Moradu, Bhamala Stupa, Takhtibahi and Peshawar Museum.

Julian is an ancient Buddhist monastery dating from the 2nd century CE, located in Taxila, Pakistan. Julian, along with the nearby

monastery at Mohra Muradu, form part of a collection of excavations that were inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1980.

Bhamala Stupa is a ruined Buddhist stupa and National Heritage site near Haripur, Pakistan that dates to the 2nd century CE. It is located on the bank of Haro River, a tributary of Khanpur Dam and is one of the most enchanting tourist destinations. It is part of the larger Bhamala Buddhist complex.

The site is known for its 1,700-year-old statue of Buddha attaining enlightenment. It is considered to be the oldest statue of Buddha in the world. The members of the delegation also went around the dated Buddhist



monastery in Takhtibahi. They were impressed by its historical significance and conservation work. They also visited the Peshawar Museum known to be the guardian of centuries old civilizations' traces and some of the rarest artefacts, especially related to the Gandhara Civilization. The Heritage Sites' visits were highly appreciated and enjoyed by the delegation.



## **HOSTING TOURISM GATHERINGS THE 3RD D-8 MINISTERIAL AND 4TH SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETINGS ON TOURISM HELD AT BHURBAN**

4th-5th August 2023

It was an honor for PTDC as the leading organization to arrange and organize the prestigious events of the 3rd D-8 Ministerial and the 4th Senior Officials Meetings on Tourism, convened by The Government of Pakistan on 4th -5th August 2023 in Bhurban, Murree, Pakistan.

Awn Chaudhry, the Advisor to the Prime Minister on Tourism and Sports of Pakistan and the Chairman of the PTDC, chaired the Ministerial session. The event participation comprised Ministers responsible for tourism, D-8 Ambassadors in Islamabad, Senior Officials from D-8 Member States as well as key representatives from key representative from the public and private sector of Pakistan. The event marked some highly fruitful discussions among the high profiled participants; each of whom came up with unique and dynamic perspectives regarding regional tourism.

In his welcome remarks, Awn Chaudhry briefed the meeting on Pakistan's efforts to promote its tourism and emphasized the crucial role of the tourism sector in the sustainable development and economic growth of the Member States.

Bangladesh recalled the proposition of devising thematic tourism guidelines such as ecotourism, riverine The Egyptian Minister of Tourism and Antiquities underlined that the Middle East region witnessed strong performance during the past months, and succeeded in restoring pre-pandemic numbers in the first quarter of this year, according to reports issued by the UNWTO. He also highlighted his country's efforts to promote tourism industry.

Sandiaga Salahudin Uno, Minister for Tourism and Creative Industry of Indonesia encouraged the D-8 countries to collaborate and promote quality, inclusive, and

sustainable tourism that benefits local communities and protect the environment.

Syed Ezzatollah Zarghami, Minister for Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of the Islamic Republic of Iran, stated that the holy Qur'an, in its different verses, advises us to travel to other lands in order to reach a better understanding of the world around, observe the way of living in the other states and learn lessons from other lives.

Nigeria stated that it remains committed to objectives set out by the Crescent Moon Initiative and the Comprehensive Tourism Strategy, both serving as frameworks for international cooperation in the tourism industry.

Nadir Alparslan, Deputy Minister of Culture and Tourism of Türkiye highlighted Türkiye's strategic roadmap in sustainable tourism, as the very first country in the world launching a sustainable tourism program at national level. Ambassador Isiaka Abdulqadir Imam, the D-8 Secretary-General, presented the progress of the D-8's tourism cooperation and recalled the adverse impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on various aspects, particularly on tourism cooperation. He emphasized the novelty of those initiatives in turning the challenges posed by the pandemic into opportunities.

The D-8 Secretary-General also lauded the idea of D-8 Designated Airports by the D-8 Member States as a means to promote people-to-people and business-to-business interactions and facilitate tourism and travel among all Member States. He suggested tangible programs, such as exchange of information, ideas, and best practices and increasing member-state cross-border

investments to develop the tourism sector. The ultimate goal, he added, is to create world-class tourist destinations in all of the D-8 Member States.

The D-8 Secretary-General requested the Ministers to provide policy guidelines to support the organization's objective in the tourism sector

The joint media statement adopted in the 3rd Ministerial Meeting on Tourism Cooperation reflected all participating countries' resolve to enhance tourism prospects in the region by promoting cultural exchanges, strengthening solidarity and creating peace among all nations.

The dire need to counter Islamophobia through positive tourism initiatives was also agreed upon.

The advancing of regional and international cooperation in tourism by continuing to work closely with organizations such as UNWTO, APEC, IORA as well as continued engagement and sharing of knowledge among members, particularly in the areas of digitalization, technology adoption and sustainable tourism investments was unanimously approved too.

The Ministerial Meeting also deliberated and subsequently adopted the Islamabad Declaration on Tourism Cooperation 2023 as it was concluded.

The Ministers and Heads of Delegation attending the 3rd D-8 Ministerial and 4th Senior Officials Meeting on Tourism expressed their heartfelt appreciation for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made by the Government of Pakistan for this international event focused on Tourism.



## **MARKING YET ANOTHER MILESTONE THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL TOURISM INVESTMENT EXPO**

Rawalpindi, 12th-13th August 2023



The First International Tourism Investment Expo 2023 was held at Pearl Continental Hotel Rawalpindi from 12th to 13th August, 2023. This two days tourism investment Expo was jointly inaugurated by the High Commission of Malaysia, Mr. Azhar Mazlan, the High Commission of Azerbaijan, Mr. Khazar Farhadov, the Ambassador of Thailand, Mr. Chakkrid Krachaiwong, the Ambassador of Iran, Mr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam, the Commercial Consular of Embassy of Turkiya, Enes Malik CETTIN and Managing Director Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, Mr. Aftab Ur Rehman Rana.

Mr. Aftab Ur Rehman Rana in his keynote address spoke about the rich potential of tourism in Pakistan and briefed about the opportunities available in the tourism and hospitality industry in different regions of Pakistan. He also elaborated on the recent initiatives adopted by the Government of Pakistan for the tourism sector, enlightening about new tourist resorts being developed besides upgrading the existing tourist facilities. He pointed out the opportunities available for the private sector to invest in tourism infrastructure development.

He also appreciated the efforts of Mr. Rauf Raja, CEO of Brain Designer, for successfully arranging this event with the support of PTDC and other sponsors. The panel discussions in the event comprehensively deliberated a host of important topics, like the Potential of Pakistan Tourism, the Role of the Corporate Sector in Tourism and Hospitality sector, and infrastructure development in the tourism sector.

The worthy list of panellists included Mr. Azim Qureshi, Ms. Kiran Afzal, Mr. Andre Privateer, Mr. Aqeel Abbasi, Mr. Maqbool Hussain, Mr. Waqas Qayyum, Mr. Omair Khattak, Mr. Yasir Hussain and Mr. Qazi Bilal.

On this occasion, various stalls were also put up by PTDC, all the provincial tourism departments, various investors in the tourism and hospitality sector, and real estate development groups. The event was largely attended and keenly participated by a large numbers of stakeholders.

## **LIST OF UPCOMING MAJOR EVENTS**

### **ARABIAN TRAVEL MARKET**

6-9 MAY 2024

### **CHOLISTAN DESERT RALLY**

FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY

### **INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN DAY**

11 DECEMBER 2023

### **LOK MELA**

03-13 NOVEMBER 2023

### **WORLD TOURISM DAY**

27 SEPTEMBER 2023

### **ITB BERLIN**

5-7 MARCH 2024

### **NEW YORK TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE SHOW 2024**

27-28 JANUARY 2024

### **CHINA OUTBOUND TOURISM & TRAVEL MARKET**

15-17 NOVEMBER 2023

### **WORLD TRAVEL MARKET, LONDON**

06-09 NOVEMBER 2023



## THE LAST WORD

So that was the year 2022-23 in a nutshell!

Continuously jotted with happenings inside the country as well as all across the globe, quite an enthralling journey, it was, with not a single dull moment to reckon with.

The highlight of the journey, however, was undoubtedly the official branding of Tourism Pakistan, as 'Salam Pakistan' that came towards the end of the news/events year. It is hoped that this brand name would prove to be a game changer for not only Tourism Pakistan but also the country's economy, truly taking forward the essence of Pakistan to newer heights of glory and success.

So as we at PTDC conclude a very eventful year, another year promising to be even more dynamic is already walking in the door.

Let's hope the journey continues ahead with more fervour, positivity and progress for tourism, hailing in brighter better days for Pakistan on the whole. Till we meet again with another promising and eventful year rolled up the sleeves,



Take Care & Salam Pakistan

