

PYHA Secretary welcomes govt's liberal visa policies....

friendly steps will boost the tourism industry in the country and generate huge revenue to support the country's economy. Tourism leads to increased

Youth Hostel Lahore

economic activity and generates employment opportunities, cultural exchanges and brings people hailing from different lands together.

Pakistan is a land of diverse climates and its rich cultural, heritage sites, green lands, pastures, snow-capped mountains, lakes, valleys, rivers and sea have the potential to attract tourists from

Youth Hostel Peshawar

every corner of the world.

In Sindh we have archaeological sites of Mohenjodaro reflecting ancient civilization as old as 2500 BC in Punjab, Harrapa that traces its marks back to 2600 BC.

Similarly, Pakistan's deserts Cholistan and Thar give yet another diverse attraction to the country and holds treasure of beauty. PYHA has its hostels near all these beautiful places and encourage tourists to come and visit these places.

Youth Hostel Jamshoro

Besides natural treasures, Pakistan is also rich in religious places and sites worth

Youth Hostel Naran

seeing.

Sikhs, Buddhists and Hindus have their holy places in Pakistan and hundreds and thousands of tourists belonging to these faiths arrive in Pakistan every year.

PYHA's different hostels serve the purpose of different kinds of tourism like its Gilgit's hostel is located at a place where mountaineers and adventurers prefer to live and climb mountains while its Katas Raj hostel in Chakwal

Youth Hostel Karachi

district of Punjab is popular with the faith-based tourists.

Besides signs and symbols of ancient Hindu civilization, Pakistan is also rich in Buddhist relics. From Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to Balochistan and parts of Punjab Buddhist relics attract the followers of this faith. PYHA has a hostel in Taxila where Buddhist tourists can come and stay, he said.

Youth Hostel Taxila

About PYHA's contributions to promotion of tourism, he said Pakistan Pouth Hostel Association is already engaged in a number of such initiatives to encourage tourism in the country. Our 14 hostels

Youth Hostel Katas

across the country, in big cities as well as at tourism resorts are welcoming the national and international tourists with facilities like boarding, lodging, food all at affordable rates.

Youth Hostel Gilgit

PYHA is a member of the International Youth Federation and meets the criteria of hostelling worldwide, he said.

About the condition of the PYHA, he said all PYHA hostels in Islamabad, Bhurban, Khanaspur, Lahore, Katas, Taxila, Quetta-1,

Youth Hostel Larkana

Larkana, Naran, Gilgit, Karachi, Quetta-2 and Peshawar are renovated, equipped with heating system, meet hygiene standards and have cooling facility in the summer and heating devices in the winter with Wi-Fi facility.



February, 2019

Newsletter

Voice of Youth

Pakistan Youth Hostels Association

PYHA Secretary welcomes govt's liberal visa policies

Tourist-friendly measures will boost country's dormant tourism industry:
Ambassador (r) Qazi Humayun

The government's decision of approving on-arrival visas for 50 countries and e-visas for 175 countries is termed a good and positive step for promotion of tourism industry in the country as immense potential lies in this largely

Youth Hostel Islamabad

neglected sector.

Secretary, Pakistan youth hostels association (PYHA) Ambassador (R)

PYHA 14 hostels across the country are welcoming the national and international tourists with facilities at affordable rates.

Qazi Humayun has hailed government's tourism-friendly step saying in many countries of the world, tourism has been

Youth Hostel Khanaspur

the primary source of revenue and even a number of cities are established only for the purpose of tourism promotion.

He said globally there is an increasing trend of tourism and each year it is going up by 7pc. In 2018 alone, 1.5 billion

tourists visited various parts of the world. In the list of the most preferred countries for the tourists, France is on the top with 100 million tourists, Spain comes second with 85 million and the United States is third such country which 80 million tourists selected to spend their holidays.

Under the new visa policy, tour operators will be able now to bring tourist groups to

Youth Hostel Quetta

the country he said, which would usher in a new era of progress and prosperity in the country.

The tourists would now be able to visit all parts of the country including Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan and would require no NOC to go to those areas, which is a clear departure from the past policies and is taken in good faith to promote tourism, said the Youth Hostel

Youth Hostel Bhurban

Secretary.

According to Qazi Humayun tourism-

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Pakistan among '10 coolest places to visit in 2019'

Pakistan is rated among "The 10 coolest places to go in 2019." According to the world's top American business maga-



zine Forbes, Pakistan is fast becoming a tourism hub with its changing geo-strategic situation, improvement of internal as well as regional peace and liberalization of tourists' visa policy.

Sara Barbieri, a specialist on tourism said, "Explore the valleys of Hunza, Shigar and Khaplu via the renowned Karakoram Highway," the magazine further quotes.

The magazine report is based on inputs by various travel companies, media organizations, solo travelers and bloggers.



Quoting Sara Barbieri further, the magazine states, this little-visited region in the far northeast of the country offers the kind of startlingly striking scenery that compels you to gaze from the window of your 4WD without blinking, for fear of missing a moment of the majesty of

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PYHA marks International Mountain Day

'We will be starving if mountains are not protected from exploitation'



The United Nations International Mountain Day is marked every year on December 11 to highlight the importance of mountains for many good reasons. The theme for 2018 happens to be "Mountains Matter" because even though they are mentioned in the 2030 Agenda, mountains are still often forgotten.

Pakistan Youth Hostel Association (PYHA) too celebrates the day every year with a view to raising awareness among the citizens of Pakistan, particularly the youngsters about the preservation, protection and promotion of mountains. This year (2018) too, Pakistan Youth Hostels Association (PYHA) on the occasion of the World Mountain Day organized a special lecture at the Islamabad youth hostel on December 11.

Renowned environmentalist, founder and director of Pakistan Mountain Festival Munir Ahmed was the guest speaker. Bushra Nisar conducted the proceedings of the ceremony. The event was wistfully organized by acclaimed story writer Mazhar ul Islam who had invited scores of youngsters from various schools, colleges and universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

At the very outset of the cere-

mony, National Secretary of the PYHA, former Ambassador Qazi Humayun while briefing the audience about the theme of the day, said, Pakistan could boast of having the second

said Qazi.

He emphasized that mountains matter a lot for us, the Pakistanis, as they are a main source of water which is of vital importance for our existence.



National Secretary of PYHA Ambassador (R) Qazi Humayun, well-known environmentalist and Director of Pakistan Mountain Festival Munir Ahmed, members of civil society and intellectuals in a group photo taken on the occasion of the World Mountain Day organized at PYHA Islamabad.

highest mountainous range (of K-2) and three mountainous chains Himalaya, Hindu Kush and Karakoram.

According to Qazi Humayun, mountains covered around 22 percent of the earth's land surface and provide 60-80 percent of the world's freshwater without which sustainable development was merely a dream.

Mountains host 25 percent of terrestrial bio-diversity and 28 percent of earth's forests,

The total volume of water is shrinking beneath the earth, cautioned Qazi Humayun adding because of the fact we are left with scarce water, mountains' importance has been further enhanced.

He appreciated Chief Justice of Pakistan Mian Saqib Nisar for waking up the nation to build new dams and he also has full support from the present government.

The guest speaker Munir Ahmed who is a well-known

champion of mountain conservation on the occasion said, "We will be starving if the mountains are not protected from over exploitation, and steps are not taken to make them and those living over them more resilient to the climate change.

"We need to take care of the people before thinking of the mountains. If the custodians are not safe how they would protect the local resources of the mountains," said Munir Ahmed.

He said urbanization of the mountain destinations not only has threatened biodiversity but also the indigenous cultures of our land. Every part of the mountain has a peculiar culture and a range of handicrafts and agri-products, said Munir Ahmed adding we need to develop cultural marketing plans by engaging young and educated people in micro-enterprises.

The fast depleting glaciers have caused immense shortfall of water for domestic use as well as for the purpose of agriculture, said Munir. If we do not take care of the mountain ecology, water shortage would lead to further productivity loss, cautioned Munir adding immigration from mountains would further stress the urban economy.

He said, the indigenous people living in mountains, youth, local economy and agriculture are marred by the lack of resources.

Considering the crucial role mountains play in providing



key ecosystem goods and services to the planet and their vulnerability in the face of climate change, we need to step up and raise attention to mountains, concluded Munir Ahmed.

International Youth Summit concludes with a pledge to respect each other's faith, point of view

Role of youth termed crucial in establishing peaceful links among followers of different faiths

The International Youth Summit Lahore (IYSL) held from Nov 26 to Dec 2, 2018 in Lahore discuss the role youth could play in achieving peace, education and sustainable development.

Societies'.

Organized by the Centre for Sustainability, Research and Practice (CSR) a youth-led think tank in Lahore, the summit turned out to be a huge success as an expected number of

100,000 visitors turned up during various days of the summit. Besides local participants around 150 participants from all over the world took part in the summit and gave their input on a long range of subjects including peace, tolerance, interfaith harmony and co-existence. Men, women and ethnic minorities were given equal repre-

sentation at the summit. The foreign delegates also got a chance to explore the country. The summit turned out to be a unique event showcasing racial, cultural and lingual diversity and discouraged all

According to rough estimates, 120 plus delegates came from across the globe to discuss and share their ideas related to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Lahore. Pakistan was the first ever



A group photo of the Participants of International Youth Summit at the Youth Hostel Lahore. During the summit the young delegates stayed at the hostel and enjoyed its hospitality and perfect arrangements.

The IYSL organized at the University of Lahore aimed at bringing together policy-makers, young people and relevant stakeholders on one platform to consider and discuss the role of the youth in decision making and policy implementation with special focus on their development. The theme of the event was 'Peace, Culture and Inclusive

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forms of barriers with the support of academia, civil society, diplomats, government officials and the media. On Nov 29, special sessions and workshops were held with young delegates as speakers. On the following day, delegates toured Lahore as a cultural hub in a field trip. On Dec 1, they visited Parliament House in Islamabad. A closing ceremony will be held on Dec 2.

country that adopted UN global goals at its National agenda through the parliament. It was also the first country in the world who declared UN SDGs for development agenda. Sustainable Development Goals are a set of 17 global goals with 169 targets. The SDGs are officially known as "Transforming our world" in 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

Pakistan among '10 coolest places....

the landscape.

Barbieri also emphasized hospitality of the locals, glacial blue of Attabad Lake, the centuries of history, juxtaposition of granite to greenery, the chance to walk through an age-old apricot orchard along water channels cut by hand, and the blazing snow-covered glory of Rakaposhi.

Pakistan recently announced plans to offer visa on arrival to nationals of 55 countries.

The British Backpacker Society also described Pakistan as "one of the friendliest countries on earth, with

mountain scenery that is beyond anyone's wildest imagination". The society announced the ranking of world's top 20 adventure travel destinations for 2018, which also included Russia, India, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan and China.

It ranked Pakistan as the top adventure travel destination for 2018 after visiting the country extensively in 2016.

"It is beautiful, exciting and culturally interesting, and travellers are rewarded at the journey's end-point with perhaps the most beautiful natural sight on earth, the Hunza Valley," British Backpacker Society said on its social

media page.

A US-born travel blogger Alex Reynolds who repeatedly visited Pakistan said, "People invited me to stay in their homes and slept on the floor so I could sleep in their bed. Hosts arranged everything from day trips to rides from city to city, and took days off from work to show me around."

According to Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation, around 1.7 million foreigners visited Pakistan in 2017 showing a remarkable increase in the ratio of tourists' influx while domestic travellers jumped by 30 per cent.