

PRESS RELEASE

**MESSAGE BY
DR. ARIF ALVI, PRESIDENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN
ON WORLD TOURISM DAY - 27 SEPTEMBER 2020
"TOURISM AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT"**

Islamabad: September 26, 2020

It is a matter of great pleasure that Pakistan is joining hands with the rest of the world to celebrate the World Tourism Day. The day is celebrated every year under the patronage of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), to foster awareness in the international community regarding the impact of tourism on society, culture and economic growth of a country.

This year, the theme is "Tourism and Rural Development". For a country like Pakistan where majority of the population is still living in rural areas, tourism can have a significant contribution in socio-economic development. The sector is not just a leading source of employment, particularly for different segments of rural society especially for youth and women but also provides opportunities for regional integration and socio-economic inclusion for the most remote areas.

The rural communities of Pakistan offer a unique natural and cultural heritage. They also extend hospitality to the visitors including foreigners and Pakistani nationals. Promotion of tourist activities in rural areas could help in increasing the volume of national economy and putting the country on the road to prosperity and development.

Pakistan provides an opportunity to the tourists to have firsthand experience of the natural sights, ancient civilizations and diversity of landscape. Pakistan is blessed with tremendous potential and the entire country has a variety of terrains, mountains, fauna and flora, combined with a rich blend of socio-cultural diversity.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day 2020, I extend my felicitations to UNWTO, National Tourism Coordination Board, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation and all other stakeholders from the public and private sectors for making dedicated and extraordinary efforts for promotion of tourism at the global, regional and national levels.

It is a matter of great satisfaction for me that the federal and provincial governments are taking collective measures for development of tourist sites and promotion of tourism and all these efforts will contribute in transforming the tourism industry to become a major sector of national economy in the near future.

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