



Saleem Mubarak

4<sup>th</sup> January, 2020

### **Job creation, development are govt priorities: PM**

FAISALABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan said on Friday that his government had set its priorities for job creation and development in the country as industrialisation, export, agriculture, tourism and technical education would be given special importance.

Addressing the groundbreaking ceremony of Allama Iqbal Industrial City being established under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the prime minister said: "We have to adopt industrialisation to eradicate poverty from the country as the agriculture sector alone could not provide jobs to all youngsters. Pakistan was on the path to industrialisation in the 1960s, but in the 70s we adopted wrong policies and started a defamation campaign against industrialists. Without investment we cannot move forward as we have developed a road map for industrialisation and increasing exports. It's the need of the hour to increase productivity of agriculture."

PM Khan said tourism was also a potential sector that could yield hefty revenue for the country. He said the fourth pillar of the road map was education, particularly technical education, and "we have to add value to the youth through technical education. We have struggled a lot to set up the industrial estate as scores of Chinese people are ready to invest in Pakistan."

#### *Imran performs groundbreaking ceremony of industrial city in Faisalabad, inaugurates shelter home*

The prime minister said the world was frightened by the progress made by China and Pakistan had a golden chance to bring Chinese investors here. He said special economic zones were the areas which the Chinese wanted and these would ultimately bring billions of rupees investment to Pakistan as "we are providing them an environment conducive to industrial activity".

He said the Chinese people would set up technical education institutes and shift technology to Pakistan. "We have studied the model how China had struggled to lift its people from poverty."

PM Khan the government had set priorities like the 'state of Madina' and would make Pakistan a welfare state.

The prime minister also inaugurated a shelter home set up by the Madina Foundation at the General Bus Stand and also enjoyed food being provided to the homeless people there.

APP adds: Terming the establishment of first special economic zone (SEZ) in Punjab a giant leap towards the accomplishment of his government's vision to alleviate poverty through industrialisation, the prime minister said it would beget job opportunities for the youth who would also be imparted skills training to cope with the future needs.

He also asked the Punjab government to expedite work on other SEZs planned in the province and assured all out support by the federal government. He lauded the performance of the new administrative machinery in Punjab and said the bureaucracy had been left with no excuse to perform after the federal government had amended the NAB law to ebb away the procedural pressure from them.

He also appreciated newly appointed Inspector General of Punjab Shoaib Dastgir for making a good start by arresting notorious robber gangs from different cities who, he viewed, sometimes also enjoyed the patronage of some politicians. He expressed the hope that the province would be purged of such criminals within the next two to three months.

PM Khan also spoke high of Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar for being available to the people and leading a simple life that was also expected from a political leader of the country bearing the burden of foreign debts.

The prime minister criticised the country's political leaders for unnecessarily speaking English to the audience at public gathering or even in parliament where majority could not understand English properly. He was of the view that English should be used in higher education, but not as a tool of class distinction or to humiliate the poor people who could not speak or understand the language.

Earlier, CM Buzdar said the Punjab government had allocated Rs5 billion for the industrial city to be established over 3,217 acres of land. Spanned over a stretch of around 22km, the city would also house a police station, labour colony, a technical education and vocational training institute and a hospital which are nearing completion.

Another industrial city was also being developed on Motorway M-3 and was expected to be inaugurated in March this year.

Mr Buzdar said the Punjab government had planned 10 SEZs in the province, with six of them already approved by the federal government and rest in the pipeline. He said the Punjab government had also given Rs1.5bn to the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority to train around 150,000 people and the number would be increased to one million. Besides, he added, the provincial government had also allocated Rs6bn to provide loan to the youth.

The industrial city project is one of the nine special economic zones planned under the CPEC Industrial Cooperation Framework. Out of nine, three have been declared as prioritized special economic zones by the governments of Pakistan and China, including Allama Iqbal Industrial City of Faisalabad, Rashakai SEZ in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Dhabejee SEZ in Sindh.

The project is expected to create 300,000 jobs for the people of Punjab over the next five years and will attract approximately Rs400bn investment in automobiles, value-added textiles, engineering, pharmaceuticals, food processing, chemicals, construction materials and packaging sectors.

Planning and Development Minister Asad Umar, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood, Punjab Governor Chaudhry Mohammad Sarwar and provincial ministers also attended the ceremony.