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ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Hotels Association (PHA) offered the federal government its partnership for stopping closure of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) motels located in Northern Areas due to COVID-19 and helping out the government for not laying off PTDC employees as it was the only major source of jobs in those areas.



Mr. Zubair Baweja, Chairman Pakistan Hotels Association and Vice President Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) said that PTDC has announced closing of its motels located in Northern Areas of Pakistan due to continuous financial crunch was unfortunate.

“On behalf of members of Pakistan Hotels Association, we offered cooperation to work with government bodies to bring in improvement in hospitality sector,” he said, adding that the PHA will also extend cooperation to privatise these properties and investors be facilitated to develop and convert above mentioned properties to make them viable business ventures as it creates employment opportunities for the local community and earn foreign exchange for the country.

In Pakistan, investors are always keen to establish lodging facilities in Northern Areas due to its special attraction for the tourists and a lot of land available there.

“Now the government should lease out these motels and land to private sector, who could easily convert these properties to good quality hotels with international standards and brand to boost tourism.” Baweja added.

adding that the PTDC motels were ideally situated for tourists to rest and then wake up the next morning and continue their journey farther into the North. The public-private partnership in tourism industry would develop these closed hotels and motels into attractive hospitality infrastructure of international standard in Northern Areas for the tourists, and of course this will provide good employment opportunities to the people of Northern Areas. As the investors are always capable to upgrade and convert standard hotels into a very good property.

He said 24 or 25 properties have been closed down in the north and other than six motels and restaurants were closed down by the PTDC in last March.

“Last year also, the PTDC had shut down its motels at Taxila in Punjab, Chattar Plain in KP, Astak in Gilgit-Baltistan and at Khuzdar in Balochistan, as well as Chakdara restaurant in KP and Daman-i-Koh restaurant in Islamabad,” he said.

“On behalf of PHA members, we extend our cooperation to work with government bodies to bring in improvement in hospitality sector. We will also extend cooperation to privatise these properties and investors be facilitated to develop and convert above properties to make them viable business ventures as it creates employment opportunities for the local community and earn foreign exchange for the exchequer,” Zubair Baweja said.