

## GPFZ investors allowed 23-year tax incentives: NA informed

The federal government has allowed 23-year tax incentives, including import and export duties, sales tax, corporate income tax and federal excise duty, to investors registered in Gwadar Port Free Zone (GPFZ). Ministry for Ports and Shipping informed this to the National Assembly on Wednesday during the question hour.

According to the existing Gwadar city master plan, the entire master plan area is divided into major portions; port and industrial areas along the East Bay side of Gwadar and residential, commercial areas and tourism on the West Bay of Gwadar.

The House was informed that on the East Bay side following three industrial economic zones have been established by the government; (i) Gwadar Port Free Zone (owned by Gwadar Port Authority/Ministry of Ports and Shipping) on 2,281 acres of land adjacent to the port area, the construction work on its pilot phase will be completed by December 2017 while the work on next phase will be started from January 2018; (ii) Gwadar Industrial Estate (owned by Gwadar Industrial Estates Development Authority/government of Balochistan) on 2,445 acres of land; (iii) Gwadar Export Promotion Zone (owned by Export Processing Zone Authority/Ministry of Industries) on 1,000 acres of land.

According to the City Master Plan of Gwadar, major tourism related initiatives can be taken on the west Bay side of Gwadar. To another question, Minister for Water Resources Javed Ali Shah informed the House that construction of Diamer-Bhasha dam could not be started yet due to insufficient finance arrangement.

He said that land acquisition and construction of infrastructure/preliminary project like project colony at Thor Valley, Composite Model Village-II at Harpan Das are in process.

In order to prepare financing strategy for the project, he said that a committee has been formed by the Ministry of Water which will submit recommendations to the Cabinet Committee on Energy for approval. The minister said the project has been bifurcated into two parts: Dam Part and Power Generation Part.

To another question, he said the Council of Common Interests (CCI) has approved National Flood Protection Plan-IV on May 2, 2017. The Phase-I of it with a cost of Rs 177.661 billion would be implemented in the first five years ie 2017-18 to 2021-22.

This plan inter alia includes studying options of construction of small and medium

dams to store rain and floodwater to reduce the flood peaks, he said. The house was informed that a total of 24 dams with a capacity of 8.15 million acre-feet are being constructed across the country including Diamer-Bhasha Dam with a capacity of 6.4 MAF in Gilgit-Baltistan.

According to the data, a total of three dams with a capacity of 0.014 MAF are under construction in Punjab, two dams with a capacity of 0.247 MAF in Sindh, six dams in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with a capacity of 1.013 MAF and 13 dams in Balochistan with a capacity of 0.445 MAF. As per timeline given in PC-I, the dams will be operational in about 10 years after commencement of work related to the construction of these dams.

During the Question Hour, Pakistan Peoples Party member Abdul Sattar Bachani pointed out the quorum and the speaker suspended the house proceedings till completion of the quorum. Later, the House was adjourned due to lack of quorum.

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