

DAWN

International climbers to attempt K2, Broad Peak

SKARDU: A nine-member international expedition team, including three women, left for Askoli from Skardu on Monday to attempt climbing K2 and Broad Peak in the Karakoram range, sources in Baltistan association of adventure tour operators told Dawn.

It was the first expedition team leaving for Baltoro for climbing in this season which is a good start, said the association's general secretary Ayaz Ahmad Shigri.

The joint expedition is comprised of climbers from Scotland, China, Norway, Pakistan and Nepal, which is led by Ms Vanessa O'Brien. The expedition team members first will try their luck for K2 and later will attempt Broad Peak.

Also on Monday, a Mexican couple left Skardu for climbing K2.

Mr Shigri said the arrival of foreign expedition and trekking groups would generate sufficient foreign exchange for the national treasury. He said the government should encourage more foreign tourists and mountaineers so the deteriorating financial condition of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan could be improved.

MOUNTAIN CLIMBING CLAIM: Masooma Ali Khokhar has claimed that she is the first Pakistani woman climber to have conquered 5,600-metre high Bargon Cho Peak located in the Karakorum mountain range.

Talking to Dawn, she said it was annoying that another Pakistani woman cyclist, Samar Khan, was claiming to be the first climber of Bargon Cho Peak which is not correct because Samar Khan had scaled the peak eight months after her success. "In this way she is second to me," Ms Khokhar claimed.

She said in September 2016, three local high altitude porters Najaf Ali, Taqi Sarwar and Ali had helped her in scaling the peak and declared her first woman Pakistani climber to have conquered the said peak. — Correspondent