

SOHAIL SARFRAZ

Documentation drive, FBR field staff raises certain issues

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan has approved an ambitious tax reforms plan that includes launching of nationwide tax assessment and documentation drive along with survey of immovable properties across the country.

Sources said that the FBR's field staff has extended all-out support in this regard but also raised some issues such as need for taking into account past experiences and the reasons behind failure of all past documentation drives.

The proposed planned nationwide tax assessment and documentation drive will be done in a period of two years. It has been decided that the said plan would be implemented under the given timeframe without any delay. The FBR's field formations have suggested that there should be no unnecessary delays but there should be no indecent haste as well for undertaking these reforms.

The government also planned digital nationwide survey of immovable properties and digital survey of Islamabad Industrial Area with the help of geo tagging. This proposal may be completed in 2 years period, sources added,

On Wednesday, Inland Revenue Service Officers Association (IRSOA) has taken serious notice of proposed restructuring plan of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) saying that tax machinery collecting 86 percent of the total revenue collection been left out completely at the planning stage.

According to a press note of the IRSOA issued here on Wednesday, Inland Revenue Service Officers Association (IRSOA), Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) held an emergency meeting at FBR HQ Islamabad. The association reaffirmed, unwavering support to strategic reforms envisioned by the Government in order to strengthen national revenue system, being the backbone for economically strong and prosperous Pakistan.

The association took serious note of the ill-conceived proposed restructuring plan of FBR, which prima-facie, seems to be hastily sketched by vested interests and without taking input from the constitutionally mandated cadres of the relevant revenue services. The IRSOA expressed deep resentment that the outfit collecting 86% of the total national tax revenue, has been left out completely at the planning stage.

The association, expressed its disappointment over the flawed plan which has adversely effected the moral, confidence and passion of the hard working and honest officers and employees of FBR, with potential harmful effects on the national revenue efforts, week tax culture and eco system in which FBR operates, we have achieved growth of 16% in revenue and are poised to accomplish the assigned targets. The association expressed hope that the alternative, indigenous and home-grown plan being submitted to authorities will be adopted which may further be improved through consensus by bringing in the input of all stakeholders with in the system.

The Association re-affirmed the nation about their commitment to uphold the sacred responsibility of the revenue collection and to safe guard the national revenue streams, which nourishes the whole governance architecture. The association requested the national leadership to look into the matter seriously and scientifically, keeping in view the region and global tax system and cultural context in order to institutionalize solid, meaningful and sustainable reforms in the larger national interest rather than sketchy and cosmetic measures driven by vest interests of the few.

Later the officers met the Chairman, FBR and hammered home the point that the tax reforms though required yet need to be better and comprehensively planned. They also informed that the current plan has created a great sense of insecurity. FBR Chairman, assured that no reform action will be taken arbitrarily without taking the input from all tiers of the organization.