

Revenue project to cover most organised, compliant sectors

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ISLAMABAD: The pilot project of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and the provincial revenue authorities/boards for launching of a single portal to file sales tax returns may initially cover most organised and compliant 3-4 sectors such as the telecom, banking, and insurance.

Sources told Business Recorder that the pilot project was needed to check the effectiveness of the system.

In the first phase, the single portal and single return project is expected to select most documented and compliant sectors i.e. banking, telecom and insurance.

In this regard, a joint meeting was held between the representatives of the FBR and all the provincial revenue authorities to discuss Common Portal-Single Return and other tax related issues.

Provinces are willing to cooperate with the FBR for running of the pilot project, but expressed their dissatisfaction over the progress shared by the FBR on the issue of single portal/single return, sources added.

It is reliably learnt that all the participants did not attend the meeting at the FBR Headquarters. Some came to FBR and others attended through online systems. The meeting was held on July 23 in FBR which was physically attended there by Zain ul Abedin Sahi, Chairperson Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) and was virtually attended by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority (KPRA), Sindh Revenue Board (SRB) and Baluchistan Revenue Authority (BRA).

At the conclusion of the meeting, a provincial authority source told Business Recorder, on the condition of anonymity that the presentation should have been given by the Pakistan Revenue Automation Limited (PRAL) having technical expertise of the system instead of director intelligence from Lahore.

It was an early stage presentation and representatives of the provincial revenue authorities/board were not satisfied with the exercise of the FBR, the official said.

The source further stated that provinces were far ahead on the preparations of the project and were surprised that the presentation of the director intelligence FBR covered initial stages of the project.

Referring to the last year's meeting, an official recalled that the general manager (Development), PRAL, had elaborated technical aspect and features of automated single return.

The single portal shall ensure that taxpayers are facilitated by allowing uploading data on a single portal.

The portal shall prepare return based on data provided and forward return to relevant jurisdiction.

The amount deposited shall be credited to respective jurisdiction.

The data secrecy shall be ensured by not providing data to a jurisdiction to which it does not relate except where agreed to or authorised by the relevant jurisdiction.

The registration of the taxpayers will be through unique identifier (NTN/CNIC based), thereby, the applicant shall be required to be registered centrally with the FBR indicating all relevant jurisdictions.

According to the FBR announcement on Monday, a joint meeting was held between the representatives of the FBR and all the provincial revenue authorities to discuss matters of mutual interest including, Common Portal-Single Return to facilitate taxpayers, and move swiftly towards an environment conducive for doing business.

The meeting was chaired by Dr Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmed, Member (IR-Operations) and his team.

A presentation on Common Portal-Single Portal was made by Ahmed Kamal, director I&I-IR, Lahore, highlighting the current challenges and the proposed way forward.

The participants appreciated the initiative taken by the FBR, and proposed to send their views within 15 days, and requested the FBR to make such meetings a regular feature, so that matters of mutual interest are discussed.

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