

Our Correspondent

## **NAB not to pursue income, sales tax cases against businessmen**

KARACHI: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) would stop pursuing income tax or sales tax related cases against businessmen and would refer them to tax authorities for investigations, chairman of anti corruption watchdog said on Friday.

“NAB would not process the cases of income tax and sales tax of business community and has ordered to return back all previous cases of business community to FBR (Federal Board of Revenue) as per law,” Justice retired Javed Iqbal, chairman NAB, was quoted as saying in a statement issued by Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI).

“He (chairman NAB) has ordered withdraw all notices served by NAB Multan on owners of flour mills of Multan, Bahawalpur and D.G Khan division,” the statement said. “(The chairman NAB) himself would review the notices of flour mills.”

The statement said a delegation of FPCCI met chairman NAB in Islamabad. "The business community is playing an important role in economic development. The prosperity of traders will lead to the prosperity of the country and NAB is playing its role while keeping this in mind," the chairman NAB added.

He reiterated that the Bureau would do utmost to improve the country's image which had been damaged badly by the money launderers, and expressed the resolve that such elements would not be spared rather punished at every cost. “However, businessmen would not be bothered.”

Chairman NAB told the traders' delegation that a special desk has been set up at NAB headquarters to protect the interests of the business community. Referring to discussions with chairman NAB, Mirza Ikhtiyar Baig, senior vice president FPCCI said NAB would not involve itself in tax related cases of businessmen.

“However, if any businessman is involved in money-laundering and was conniving with politicians and bureaucrats for wrongdoings, this would be a separate matter and would fall in the jurisdiction of NAB,” Baig said.

Daroo Khan, president FPCCI said “NAB was a people and business-friendly institution and gave top priority to solving problems being faced by the business community”. “Business community of Pakistan appreciates the role of NAB and the measures taken for transparency and curbing the corruption of the country,” Khan said.

“Business community is the backbone of the country, contributing in economic development, and the same should be facilitated.” It is worth mentioning that federal cabinet, in its last meeting held earlier this week, also decided to make procedural changes in the working of NAB to provide fearless environment for business activities and investment for the revival of crippling economy. The government viewed that the business activities had stopped and the economy had crippled due to the fear of NAB.