

Hard to bring back Pakistanis' \$190 bn stashed abroad: Zaidi

KARACHI: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Chairman, Shabbar Zaidi, has said that Pakistanis had stashed \$190 billion illegal money abroad but the amount was hard to bring home. He made it amply clear that the import-led Dubai Model of economic development would not work, and if Pakistanis kept parking their money overseas, the crisis at home would no doubt go from bad to worse.

Shabbar Zaidi sent out a loud warning to smugglers and declared that starting from the 1st of September, the FBR was declaring war at the retail level where non-taxed imported goods were flooding the market to the great detriment of national exchequer. The manufacturing sector, he said, was bearing the brunt of taxation while the trade and unorganised services sector was getting off scot-free. The Management Association of Pakistan (MAP) celebrated its 55th anniversary at its 21st Convention, with S M Shabbar Zaidi sounding more than just a warning note on the delicate state of Pakistan's economy as it comes to grips with a long overdue overhaul of the taxation system that will add value to the present dismal tax to GDP ratio. He said that no tangible investment had been made in the last 70 years, and "we were all complicit in running two Pakistans, one for the Haves and the other for the Have-nots. Mr Zaidi said, "We have been too inconsistent in our policy-making, and in the last 40 years we have divorced the Books of Accounts from the Taxation system. We do not have reliable data and the documentation of the economy remains wishful thinking."