

**110,000 declare assets under amnesty scheme**

ISLAMABAD: With the curtain dropping on the amnesty scheme, about 110,000 people have filed tax returns declaring their assets and deposited about Rs55 billion in taxes till July 3, Dawn has learnt through knowledgeable sources.

Another 21,000 people are set to submit their returns along with declaration forms. The final figures are going to be slightly higher based on the clearance of the system.

Multiple sources in the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) revealed that the tax amnesty scheme announced by the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf government saw a surge of interest mostly from those people who were non-filers of income tax.

However, the revenue earned from the assets declaration scheme is below expectation.

Properties of Zardari, PML-N senator attached for 90 days under benami law

Under the PML-N government's last tax amnesty scheme, 83,000 people had availed the scheme and over Rs124bn had been collected.

The latest assets declaration scheme was rolled out on May 14, 2019 and was supposed to end on June 30. However, the government extended the deadline to July 3 to facilitate those people who did not avail the scheme.

Three major outcomes of the assets declaration scheme are that maximum number of people from small cities availed the scheme, mostly those who did not exist on the tax roll.

During the last 10 days, about 100,000 new tax returns were added to the total numbers. As a result, the number of tax returns reached over two million, the highest ever in the country's history. "Over 90,000 non-filers availed the scheme," a senior tax officer told Dawn.

Secondly, the amnesty scheme was mostly availed by the people hailing from small cities like Faisalabad, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Abbottabad, etc.

In the last tax amnesty scheme, 60pc people from Karachi and 30pc from Lahore had availed the scheme. Islamabad had been on third position in the list of those availing the scheme. Most of them had been rich people who had declared their massive assets to whiten them.

The third outcome of the latest scheme is that maximum people have deposited their local currency in bank accounts. Similarly, people having foreign currency also deposited it in their banks.

"We will be in a position to actually quantify the cash deposits due to the scheme in the next couple of days," a senior tax official said.

## **Implementation of benami law**

Under the Benami Act 2017, tax officials in Islamabad have issued six orders for attachment of benami property in the range of 6,000 kanals of land of PML-N Senator Chaudhry Tanveer for 90 days. The case has now been referred to the adjudicating authority.

Similarly in Karachi eight orders were issued for the attachment of property, in Omni Group cases, mainly owned by PPP leader Asif Ali Zardari. The property is attached for 90 days and its fate will be decided by the adjudicating authority.

These properties have been attached in the light of the cases institute d by the National Accountability Bureau.

On July 1, the government established three major zones, Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad, and 11 sub-zones for adjudicating authorities to deal with benami properties as required under the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 2017.

The government has already established the Adjudicating Authority under the law and it has started functioning from July 1.

Through another notification issued by the FBR, Inland Revenue officers have been posted in the benami zones established under Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act-2017. The benami zones have already started implementing the benami law. Under the instructions of the FBR chairman, action against benami properties has already been initiated.

The FBR will seize the assets of any citizen who has failed to declare them under the government's assets declaration scheme from now on, after the expiry of the declaration scheme.

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