

Avail amnesty plan to avoid trouble, says PM

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Friday once again asked people to take advantage of the tax amnesty scheme ending on June 30, by declaring all the assets to avoid any difficulties in the future.

“I want you to face no troubles. Whole of the data is available with the FBR (Federal Board of Revenue). By visiting FBRs website, you can access your data and know what kind of information we have collected. I don’t want you to face any difficulty. Therefore, I want you take advantage of it (scheme) and steer the country out of this difficult time,” said Mr Khan in his televised message to the nation.

The PM, who had also addressed the nation twice on the subject on June 11, hours after the announcement of the federal budget 2019-20, said the country’s foreign debt had swelled from Rs6,000 billion to Rs30,000 billion during the last decade. He said half of the tax revenue had been spent to repay the mark-up of the said loans. “This means we are entangled into the debt trap. Today, we are taking loans just to pay back the mark-up on the previous loans,” he said.

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Mr Khan said the country’s condition had worsened to this extent only because of corruption and tax evasion.

He assured the people to give up the worry about corrupt elements, as the government would not pardon them in any way.

In order to curb the tax evasion, he said the government needed the public support and believed that without their (public) support, the country could not get rid of the debt trap.

Mr Khan told the people that the tax amnesty scheme gave them a chance to declare the money, dollars, gold they had kept at home, foreign assets and undeclared assets. “This is a golden opportunity for you,” he said.

The prime minister said the country could not get rid of the loans unless both the people and the government made a resolve to do so. He said he had tested his nation during the construction of Shaukat Khanum Hospital, 2005 earthquake and flash floods in 2010 when every Pakistani from across the globe contributed to support the people and country facing the loss worth billions of dollars.

“We can come out of this (debt trap) easily. We have to collect Rs5,500 billion (tax revenue) during next (fiscal) year. I think, we can collect above Rs8,000 billion every year if nation decides so,” he said.

This would help resolve all economic issues, making the country self-sufficient, rid the people of poverty and brighten the future of next generation, he added.

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