


'No chance of mini-budget at this stage'

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ISLAMABAD: Chairman Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) Shabbar Zaidi said on Tuesday that there is no chance of mini-budget at this stage and the government is not considering any raise in the standard rate of general sales tax from 17 to 18 percent.

On the conclusion of launching ceremony of Pinktober, a breast cancer awareness campaign 2019 at the FBR House, Shabbar Zaidi said that the FBR is ready to extend period up to 1-2 months for not taking any adverse action against the traders for not submitting the CNICs of the un-registered buyers. There is no deadlock between traders and FBR and tax authorities are ready to accept all reasonable demands of the traders. The FBR committee is actively engaged with the traders, he added.

An event was held in the FBR headquarters to mark the start of Pink Ribbon month all over the world to create awareness about breast cancer. This year the building of FBR has been selected for pink illumination.

Shabbar Zaidi said, "If we see the overall revenue collection situation keeping in view the import compression, at present there is no chance of mini-budget."

When asked about possible increase in sales tax rate from 17 to 18 percent, the FBR chairman responded that the government is not considering any proposal to increase the standard rate of general sales tax from 17 to 18 percent.

He said, "I do not think so that the shortfall is Rs 111 billion during the first quarter of 2019-20. The revenue collection would cross Rs 963 billion during the first quarter of 2019-20."

He explained that the import contraction is around US \$3 billion. The effect of this import compression is around Rs 125 billion. "Technically if we minus revenue loss from import compression from total collection then we are above the target for the first quarter of 2019-20. This shows that target has been met," he said.

The tax collection up to 90 percent of highly aggressive target for quarter ended September 30, 2019 has been achieved. Collection now stands at Rs 960 billion. The domestic tax collection increased by 25 percent, he said.

The chairman FBR said that the general public is standing behind the FBR for taking documentation measures and improving tax system of the country.

To a query, he said the FBR will bring a simplified fixed tax scheme for developers and builders, which would create ease of doing business for them. The new scheme would ensure that there should be no problems or harassment for the developers and builders.

Earlier President's House, Parliament House, Supreme Court building, Minar-e-Pakistan and Faisal Mosque had been illuminated to show symbolic significance about breast cancer.

Member Taxpayers Audit Nausheen Amjad Javed addressed on the occasion which was attended by all the officers and staff of FBR. Nausheen stated that it is an honor that FBR has been selected for illumination to mark the Pinktober breast cancer awareness month. She also highlighted the gravity of the situation and the rising incidence of breast cancer among women. She stated Pakistan is reported to have the highest incidence of breast cancer in Asia with every ninth woman at high risk of getting breast cancer in her life. She said that every year 40,000 women die of breast cancer in Pakistan. She highlighted different aspects of the disease with focus on awareness, detection, prevention and treatment.

The Pink Ribbon society thanked FBR for cooperation.