

PTBA demands probe into fake circulars

KARACHI: Pakistan Tax Bar Association (PTBA) on Saturday demanded of a law enforcement agency to conduct investigation against individuals circulating fake/forged statements regarding the date extension of income tax returns filing for tax year 2019.

The PTBA said fake and forged circulars are doing round on Whatsapp and Facebook regarding an extension of date for filing of income tax returns for the tax year 2019.

The PTBA said the FBR extended the last date for filing income tax returns up to December 16, 2019 and further to December 31, 2019.

“On December 16, 2019, a forged / fake letter bearing similar signature of a government official was circulated on different Whatsapp groups around 12 noon,” PTBA said in a letter to Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). “Further at 2:15 pm same fake circular was on air by some TV channels. However, the original circular was issued by the FBR (Federal Board of Revenue) by evening at 5:15pm.”

The tax bar said the same was repeated again on December 31, 2019. Tax consultants and taxpayers were busy in filing of returns on the last date but suddenly at 3:45pm another fake circular appeared on different social media groups showing date extension up to January 15, 2020.

PTBA further said second fake notification was circulated on the same date on various social media groups at 8:55pm and appeared on various TV channels. This fake circular said the last date was extended up to January 31, 2020. However, the FBR issued the date extension notification later at 10:55pm.

The PTBA provided fake letters and screenshots of TV channels airing the news to the FIA authorities. “The fake circulars created miserable situation for tax consultants, FBR and taxpayers,” the PTBA said.

The PTBA complained that the reputation of FBR and tax bars was tarnished due to such activities. Leakage of confidential information affects the goodwill of an institution and it is also against the constitution of Pakistan.

The tax bar said forged/fake circulars attract various offences under Prevention of Electronic Crime Act 2016 as well as offences under Pakistan Penal Code 1860.