

FBR refunds Rs5bn to trader in one month instead of scheduled 10 years

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) refunded Rs5 billion to a trader in connection with export of food items, including nuts and sweets, during the last financial year.

Mohammad Ibrahim Khan, a member of the Public Accounts Committee from the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI), raised the issue during a meeting of the PAC held in the Parliament House on Wednesday.

Mr Khan said the FBR refunded the huge amount to Usman Trade Linker, Multan. He said the trader was not well-known and had been living in a five-marla house in Multan.

He said the money was to be paid over a period of 10 years, but the payment was made in a single month.

PAC told that trader belonging to Multan lives in a five-marla house

Mr Khan said an audit para was raised on this refund last year and the matter was referred to the Regional Tax Office, Multan Zone, but its reply was still awaited.

He also handed over a letter related to the refund to the committee.

PAC chairman Rana Tanvir Hussain referred the matter to the auditor general of Pakistan and directed him to take it up with the FBR and submit a report to the committee next month.

Another PAC member Noor Alam Khan of the PTI shared a development with the committee related to the purchase of a luxury vehicle for official use by the Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL).

He said the government had imposed a ban on the purchase of luxury vehicles for official use. However, the incumbent OGDCL managing director purchased a Toyota Camry for Rs12 million disregarding the ban.

The PAC referred the matter to the auditor general.

The committee also examined the audit paras related to the alleged irregular award of contracts, overpayments and price escalation of different closed and ongoing projects of the National Highway Authority.

The PAC took up a matter related to functioning of its 18 subcommittees. The PAC was told that because of Covid-19 these subcommittees have become dormant. It was decided to hold meetings of the main PAC and its subcommittees on regular intervals.

The auditor general office was asked to expedite its functioning, especially convening the departmental accounts committee well before the PAC meeting.

The committee decided to continue meeting during the National Assembly session while observing all precautionary measures to avoid Covid-19.