

PBIF chief curious over 27pc boost in revenue

KARACHI: President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum (PBIF) Mian Zahid Hussain has said government's announcement to boost revenue by 27 percent to Rs4.963 trillion without introducing any new tax is beyond understanding.

The decision would put additional burden on tax administration which would be transferred to the business community amid sluggish economic activities, negative growth rate, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said revenue target would only be achievable if a mini-budget was introduced adding to the problems of the masses and the business community.

He said the public sector companies were wasting Rs600 billion but the budget document was silent about it.

He noted relief had been stressed in the budget but there was no roadmap for it while pushing up GDP growth to 2.1 percent is difficult in the present national and international circumstances.

He said virus, locust, political friction, government's expenses, economic downfall, increasing circular debt, and seven percent budget deficit would be major obstacles in increasing the growth rate.

He said the government had claimed improved construction activities but reduced consumption of cement was contradicting the claim. Reduced spending has been envisioned except for the defence and debt servicing which will be hard to manage for the government.

The budget proposes a 12 percent hike in defence budget, Rs2.946 would be spent on debt servicing while Rs100 billion would be raised through privatization which is discouraging.

He said subsidies had been reduced by 48 percent; power sector subsidy would be brought down from Rs200 billion to Rs124 billion, petroleum levy had been increased by 73 percent, while Rs70 billion had been earmarked for corona related schemes which included helping the poor.