

FTO begins probe into tax amnesty cases

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) has started investigation of over 12,000 pending cases of aggrieved taxpayers who could not avail Assets Declaration Scheme 2019 despite payment of due taxes before the deadline.

For availing the facility, the taxpayers had already paid tax amounting Rs2.6 billion before the deadline, but could not benefit from the scheme.

In a formal complaint filed by 300 aggrieved persons with the FTO, the complainants claim that they could not declare assets due to failure of the online system of the Federal Board of Revenue in spite the fact that they had paid the tax.

An official statement of the FTO said that the ombudsman has started investigation and intends to resolve the long awaited issue, which has created anxiety among the aggrieved taxpayers. During investigation, the FTO also heard the viewpoint of FBR members Inland Revenue (Operations), Legal, Information Technology, and Inland Revenue (Policy).

During the meeting, the FBR officials claimed that FBR's online system was intact till the last minute. Different aspects of the issue were discussed during the meeting of FBR senior officials with FTO. "Hopefully the issue to be resolved soon", the statement added.

Members of Pakistan Tax Bar Association and representatives of the business community had also lodged the complaint before the FTO.

The association claims that the prime purpose of the amnesty scheme was to broaden the tax net, documentation of the economy and to revive the tax system. The taxpayers must not be victimised for the failure of online system of FBR.