

### **FBR urged to resolve industry issues**

KARACHI: Businessmen have expressed concern that despite Prime Minister Imran Khan's orders to cooperate with the business community, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is squeezing the traders who are already under the tax net.

Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Acting President Nasir Khan said the business community was worried over no response and low priority given to the issues faced by businessmen, which was affecting the relationship between the FBR and business community, required for conducting a smooth business.

"The issue of CNIC has still not been resolved despite Covid-19; the issue has reduced business activities," he highlighted. "Numerous laws and regulations have been imposed on businesses while at high-level meetings FBR officials are unable to respond, which is only time-consuming." Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) former president Haroon Farooqui said a hidden lobby was working on its agenda and disturbing the overall trade-friendly atmosphere, creating gap between traders and the FBR.

Speaking to The Express Tribune, Farooqui said, "Unless SMEs are encouraged by friendly policies of the FBR, Pakistan will never achieve its goals of prosperity and industrialisation." Officials at higher levels should have autonomy to resolve and decide on the issues being raised in meetings, said Khan.

"This apex body of trade and industry has no say in various crucial decisions being taken by the FBR, ie formation of resolution committees and issuance of SROs," he said.

"It seems that there is a wide communication gap between the apex body of trade and industry, the FPCCI, and the FBR," he said, adding that if the situation did not improve then the net result of efforts to resolve trade-related issues would be zero. FPCCI Budget Advisory Council Convener Zakaria Usman stated that the FBR lacked consistency in policies, which were changed frequently, affecting the work of businessmen.