

**IT returns: FBR urged to restore old form**

President of Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Junaid Esmail Makda has reiterated his demand that keeping in view the complications in the FBR's revised form this year, the previous form should be restored for filing income tax returns because all taxpayers and practitioners are well-acquainted with the previous version; therefore they would absolutely have no problems in easily submitting their returns via the old form.

Makda noted that this year, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has made the businesses attributes section mandatory which was optional last year whereas it has been observed that the said attributes list is incomplete, leaving enough room for errors and misfiling which is likely to create issues between FBR and filers.

"Restoration of previous form, which was agreed upon after great deliberations, will help a number of taxpayers in the Active Taxpayers List; otherwise, the new form is likely to shrink the number of active taxpayers and prove counterproductive for all the efforts being made to enhance tax base of the country," he said, citing that many KCCI's members were finding it difficult to submit their Income Tax Returns through the new form as it was too cumbersome, wastes a lot of time and contains some IT related glitches as well, making it an exercise in futility.

"Prior to implementing such technically difficult and cumbersome forms, the FBR should carry out massive awareness campaigns by holding workshops and seminars at all levels as the filers belong to all three segments of the society i.e. the upper, middle and lower class," he said.

In this regard, KCCI president requested the FBR to make the attributes section optional as per past practice and it should be made mandatory only after the attributes list is completely accurate and comprehensive in consultation with the stakeholders. He was fairly optimistic that keeping in view the grievances being faced by a number of taxpayers, FBR would consider KCCI's request to restore the previous form for filing Income Tax returns as per aspirations of the business and industrial community and in line with present government's policies.

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