



Cabinet sanctions tax amnesty scheme

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Nasirul Mulk chairs a meeting of the federal cabinet at the Prime Minister Office.—PPI

ISLAMABAD: The caretaker government has endorsed the amnesty scheme introduced by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government, and has approved the rules issued in the plan.

The decision was taken by the federal cabinet at a meeting held at the PM Office with Prime Minister Nasirul Mulk in the chair.

[Analysis: An amnesty for all](#)

“Government of Pakistan’s US Dollars Denominated Amnesty Bonds Rules, 2018 were approved by the cabinet,” said an official press release issued by the PMO.

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Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi had [announced the amnesty scheme in January](#) this year, encouraging Pakistanis to declare their foreign assets. The government had also offered reduced rates to broaden the tax base and address the challenges to the economy.

The scheme — a one-time allowance — was approved by both the Senate and the National Assembly. The PML-N government believed that to widen the tax net, and get the wealthy to pay their due share, tax rates must be lowered and reforms made to the system.

The opposition — both the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) — have rejected the scheme and termed it a move that allows legalising black money.

PPP information secretary Nafisa Shah had at a press conference said that the PML-N announced the amnesty scheme to lure the business community as part of its election campaign, just as it had done in the past. “Once again, an all-too-similar scheme is being launched to benefit specific people from the ruling elite,” she said.

Similarly, the PTI announced that it would challenge the amnesty scheme in a court of law. The party rejected the five-point scheme of the government and claimed that it was designed to legalise black money.

In a separate decision, the federal cabinet approved the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Pakistan and Sudan for cooperation in human resource development.

The cabinet also offered condolences over the demise of veteran diplomat Jamsheed Marker.

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