

March 25, 2020

KTBA ASKS FBR TO GRANT GENERAL ADJOURNMENT FOR CASES DURING LOCKDOWN

KARACHI: Karachi Tax Bar Association (KTBA) on Tuesday urged Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to grant general adjournment for cases as taxpayers may not appear due to lockdown.

The tax bar in a letter to FBR chairperson said that the Sindh government announced lockdown from March 23 to prevent spread of coronavirus, which become pandemic and caused many deaths across the globe.

The KTBA said that though lockdown was extreme preventive measure but such action was mandatory to thwart the spread of coronavirus.

The KTBA informed the FBR that its members providing services within the Sindh provinces were upset in such lockdown as they would not able to appear in any case on behalf of their clients.

The tax practitioners are afraid that their absentia might be treated non-compliance to the cases.

The matter, therefore, is being brought to your knowledge with a growing concern that it is of pivotal importance that taxpayers who are domiciled in Sindh, who cannot open their offices due to lockdown ordered by the provincial government and that too due to exigency of Coronavirus pandemic, should be taken into the much necessary confidence that their interest will not be suffered at the hands of FBR.

The taxpayers and tax practitioners have fears that the coronavirus is in early stages and in case of further expansion the lockdown may be extended.

Hence, in view of the above it is requested to grant General Adjournment to all the pending cases for the next fifteen (15) days till April 07, 2020 including the cases of the Appeal Commissioners' Offices.

It has to be immediately ensured at the FBR level that Status Quo is maintained in recovery proceedings, that cases will not be taken as time barred where the limitation of time is falling within this fifteen (15) days lockdown period or immediately thereafter, appeal which couldn't be filed within these fifteen (15) days are not rejected because of being time barred, no new notices are issued, no ex-parte cases are decided, absenteeism or unintended non-compliance during these fifteen (15) days are not taken adversely.

Last but not the least, the time period required for depositing the Withholding of income tax and Sales tax should automatically be extended.

Needless to mention that either the General Adjournment or the Status Quo in cases of time barred will not materially hamper any assessment proceeding on the part of FBR as there still is left the whole of the April Quarter in hand.