

## **BEFORE FILING OF REFERENCES: FBR DECIDES TO CONDUCT IN-DEPTH ANALYSES OF CASES**

**ISLAMABAD:** The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has decided to conduct an in-depth analysis of all cases before the filing of references with the High Courts and the Supreme Court of Pakistan to end frivolous litigation in higher courts.

The FBR has also decided that only potential cases where strong grounds of appeals exist would be challenged in higher courts. In this connection, the FBR has issued instructions to all Chief Collectors of Customs and Director Generals of Customs, here on Wednesday.

The FBR has issued instructions on the recommendations of the Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO). According to the FTO's office recommendation, the FBR should refrain from frivolous litigation in higher courts. The FTO has directed the FBR that the FBR Member legal to circulate specific institutions to all field formations seeking assurance that before the filing of reference before the High Courts and Supreme Court of Pakistan, an in-depth analysis of cases is carried out and only potential cases where strong grounds of appeals exist are put to further litigation at such higher judicial fora, the FTO's recommendations added.

## **MINISTRIES, PROVINCES: MOC CONVEYS SUGAR EXPORT MECHANISM**

**ISLAMABAD:** The Ministry of Commerce (MoC) has conveyed sugar export mechanism to the concerned ministries and provincial governments.

According to Office Memorandum (OM) of January 18, 2023, the MoC has noted that the Cabinet has ratified the decision of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet taken on January 11, 2023 regarding export of sugar during the year 2022-23.

The ECC of the Cabinet has allowed export of 250,000 MT of sugar, inclusive of previously approved quantity of 100,000 MT, as per the following terms and conditions:

The maximum limit for realisation of export proceeds shall be within sixty days of opening of LC for export of sugar. Quota for export of sugar shall be distributed among provinces in the following manner: (i) 61 percent for Punjab on first come first serve basis; (ii) 32 percent Sindh through the Cane commissioner of the province; and (iii) 7 percent for KPK on first come first serve basis.

According to the Commerce Ministry, the State Bank of Pakistan shall update the ECC on export of sugar on fortnightly basis, whereas the Pakistan Sugar Mills Association (PSMA) shall undertake that the price of sugar will not increase in domestic market from Rs 85-90/kg (ex-mill) for 2021-22 stocks.

In case of increase in domestic sugar price, the SBP shall recommend to the ECC further discontinuation of exports on immediate basis. No subsidy whatsoever shall be provided to the exporters by Federal/ Provincial governments.

The MoC has urged the PSMA and Cane commissioners to ensure approved MIPs and timely payment to sugarcane growers. The Commerce Ministry has also requested all stakeholders to implement the decision of the ECC/Federal Cabinet in letter and spirit and to facilitate the export of sugar as per the directions of ECC/ Federal Cabinet.

R 19-1-2023

## **IRAN FOR SWIFTLY FINALISING FTA: TRADE LEADER INSISTS FTA WILL HELP REMOVE IMPORT, EXPORT BARRIERS**

**KARACHI:** A trade delegation of Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, led by Morad Nemati, has underlined the great potential of increasing bilateral trade between Pakistan and Iran.

"Although a preferential trade agreement exists between Iran and Pakistan, there should be a free trade agreement (FTA) to further improve the trade volume," Nemati emphasised while talking to business leaders during his visit to Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI).

"The business community believes that the FTA has been pending for a long time that needs to be shaped up at the earliest to remove import and export barriers," he remarked and called on the business community to push the government of Pakistan to expedite work on the FTA so that trade could grow substantially.

Talking to The Express Tribune, Union of Small and Medium Enterprises (UNISAME) President Zulfikar Thaver, while calling Iran a brotherly country, underscored the need for finalising the FTA, enhancing border trade and making a currency swap arrangement. "We need FTA for purchase of chemical and petroleum products as oil supply on credit is the need of the hour," Thaver said.

Pakistan and Iran on Monday signed 39 memoranda of understanding (MoUs) to boost economic relations and cooperation in various fields such as transportation, tourism, fisheries, mines and minerals.

Both sides agreed that Zahidan Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture and Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry would jointly invest in developing the necessary infrastructure in the areas of customs, trade, transportation and aviation.

The MoUs are aimed at ramping up bilateral trade to \$5 billion annually, opening an additional border crossing point at Kohak-Panjugur, raising the number of items in PTA and reducing tariffs. Efforts are already underway to reduce the import tariffs on fresh fruits.

“Despite excellent brotherly relations, the bilateral trade is below potential and it can be pushed to \$5 billion per year,” KCCI Senior Vice President Touseef Ahmed stated.

He insisted that the FTA would take Pak-Iran trade to high levels and lead to deep financial and economic cooperation. “The existing barter trade basket also needs to be expanded to include more products to facilitate imports and exports and further strengthen economic integration.”

KCCI Vice President Haris Agar stressed the need for establishing banking channels, which would substantially raise the trade volume, as the business communities were unable to directly send and receive payments.

TR 19-1-2023