

## Alleged corruption of tax officers: panel decides to expand scope of probe

A parliamentary panel on Thursday decided to expand the scope of its ongoing probe on account of pending inquiries against alleged corrupt tax officers of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) with the direction to submit details in cases of mega tax frauds. The FBR has been directed to submit details of cases where fake refunds worth billions of rupees were doled out with alleged connivance of tax machinery at cost of national exchequer.

The sub-committee of Senate Standing Committee on Finance led by Senator Mohsin Aziz also asked the FBR for submitting reply before the parliamentary panel in the letter written by Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi raising questions on integrity of key appointments as well as sharing details on account of pending inquiries.

Mohsin Aziz said that corruption is main reason behind the miserable conditions of the country, adding the institutions don't take effective action against the corrupt employees which causes billions of losses to the national exchequer while the country is under the heavy debts. He asked the institutions to take stern action against the employees and recover all the looted money from them.

The FBR told the sub-committee that there were a total of 198 cases of inquiries in 2015 out of which 99 cases settled and 6 officers were removed from the service. The remaining cases have been pending at different courts and in some cases the inquiries are still underway.

The sub-committee was further told that 99 percent cases came on the surface because of internal check and balance placed by the FBR and some cases were referred to NAB and FIA. The sub-committee while examining details decided that details regarding cases of sensitive nature will be asked in the next committee meetings and the people involved will be inquired in this regard.

The sub-committee directed to be provided details of employees involved in the fake cases in the next meeting. President Zarai Taraqiati Bank briefed the meeting about the details of appointments made in the last four years in the bank as well as loans given by the bank.

The convener committee said that bank made more recoveries while it didn't provide loans to the farmers with this proportion so that they could improve their cultivations. He observed that purpose of the bank is to give maximum benefits to the farmers, adding there is a need to pay heed to those districts which are good from agriculture point of view so that the country may benefit from the said districts.