

FBR NEWSLETTER



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HUGE IMPROVEMENT IN TRADING ACROSS BORDER INDEX

Editor's Note

by Syed Nadeem Hussain Rizvi

The January edition of FBR newsletter celebrates the recent accomplishments achieved through extensive hard-work of its team helping to raise the bar for the envisioned goals going forward.

FBR's services underscore how through the sincere efforts of its team it is constantly *Creating Shared Value (CSV)* by evolving new policies and operating procedures that not only allow for greater collection of revenue but also contribute towards the growth of the economy.

Significant growth on the back of the export facilitation strategy employed by FBR and huge improvement in Trading Across Border Index highlights FBR's approach to increased revenue collection through social and economic progress. The issue also underlines efforts by FBR to further improve *Ease of Doing Business (EoDB)* by reaching out to stakeholders associated with various Chambers, Industries and Tax Bar Associations.

Taxpayer facilitation is the cornerstone to successfully create a tax compliant culture for which Facilitation and Taxpayer (FATE) Wing held a Webinar on Alternate Dispute Resolution. Furthermore, details pertaining to International Customs Day are also shared in this issue.

Chairman's Message



by Muhammad Javed Ghani

The start of the calendar year began on an auspicious note with the Prime Minister recognizing the impact of the taxation reforms underway and felicitating FBR for admirably implementing them by embracing automation to ensure best possible taxpayer facilitation particularly the focus on **Ease of Doing Business (EoDB)**.

FBR reinforced the ethos of creating an enabling environment for businesses to prosper by celebrating International Customs Day. The event marked FBR's ongoing pursuits by commemorating the theme "**Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience for a Sustainable Supply Chain**". Fruits for our efforts were clearly visible through the improvement in ranking in Trading Across Border Index. Furthermore, significant growth in exports for the period of August, 2020 to December, 2020 were witnessed due to Integrated Strategy adopted by FBR.

These efforts were supplemented by completion of initiatives such as Regional Improvement of Border Services (RIBS) and Pakistan Single Window. Besides, reducing import duties on 1,623 tariff lines and additional customs duties and regulatory duties on 164 items related to textile sector, not manufactured in the country, were also removed in collaboration with all the stakeholders.

Webinar on Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism conducted by Facilitation and Taxpayer Education (FATE) Wing will be part of a series where FBR highlights how easily the taxpayers particularly the business community can resolve their issues. Business community is also taken onboard through FBR's outreach efforts in better understanding their problems and working together to devise sustainable solutions for an enabling environment conducive for economic growth.

FBR will continue to build on its success but it is important to note that the process is infinitely more valuable and important than the result. In order to successfully transform one must continue to trust the process put in place rather than giving up on the first signs of setback. Team FBR is committed to the process of bringing about a powerful metamorphosis where FBR transforms into the very best service oriented organization this country has to offer.

FBR's MILESTONES

- **Improvement in Trading Across Border Index**
- **Growth in Exports due to adoption Integrated Strategy**
- **Webinar on Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) conducted**
- **Celebrating International Customs Day**
- **Successful curtailment of smuggling activities**
- **Outreach programme for Ease of Doing Business by meeting with Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) and Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry**
- **Performance Review of Large Taxpayers Office and Regional Tax Office Islamabad**
- **Launch of crackdown on Sale of Smuggled Petroleum Products**

Prime Minister appreciates performance of FBR

Prime Minister Imran Khan was told that tax receipts had surpassed Rs 2205 billion during first six months of current fiscal, manifesting the fruition of government's taxation reforms. Chairing a meeting to review the tax reforms, the Prime Minister was briefed that owing to tax reforms, a growth in number of taxpayers had been witnessed. Federal Minister Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, Shibli Faraz and Hammad Azhar, Advisor to PM Dr. Ishrat Hussain, Special Assistant on Revenue Dr Waqar Masood, Chairman of Federal Board of Revenue Javed Ghani and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

The Prime Minister was informed that the tax collection was being automated and taxpayers were being given incentives. The automation of the taxation system would enhance transparency and reduce corruption and tax evasion. The Prime Minister was also briefed that tax form had been made far easier for the small and medium enterprises by reducing its pages from five to one and entries from 200 to just 24.

The Prime Minister was told that owing to the introduction of direct link between FBR's system and company through Point of Sale (POS) System, the receipt of Sales Tax had also increased. The Prime Minister appreciated the Federal Ministers, SAPM on Revenue and FBR Chairman for bringing about taxation reforms. He viewed that the taxpayers were in fact the benefactors for the country who deserved applause. Moreover, he also called for measures to introduce measures for encouragement of the taxpayers.

SAPM (Revenue) meeting with Japanese Ambassador

The SAPM (Revenue) met the Japanese Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Kuninori Matsuda. In the meeting, the Ambassador indicated that his country would like to cooperate for developments in socio-economic sectors including water management, healthcare management and natural disasters. In the areas of trade and investment, he said investments by Japanese private sector are likely in technology transfers, textile, fisheries, training and capacity building.

The Ambassador appreciated tax reforms efforts of the Government and said that broadening the tax base, lowering of tax rates, and timely settlement of refunds will be helpful in facilitation of taxpayers.



SAPM thanked the Ambassador for Japan's assistance. He said that Japan is one of the most significant development partners of Pakistan in infrastructure development especially in roads, transport and railways. He assured that tax reforms would continue to provide the necessary enabling environment for investments in Pakistan.

International Customs Day

To mark the International Customs Day on 26th January, a small ceremony was held in Model Customs Collectorate (MCC), Islamabad in view of precautionary measures of Covid-19. Chairman FBR Muhammad Javed Ghani graced the occasion as Chief Guest. The other participants included Syed Hamid Ali, Member (Customs-Policy), Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah (Chief Collector, North) and other officers / officials of Pakistan Customs Service.



While welcoming the Chief Guest, Junaid Jalil Khan, the Collector, MCC, Islamabad referred to the theme "Customs bolstering Recovery, Renewal and Resilience for a sustainable supply chain", set by the World Customs Organization (WCO) for 2021. He highlighted the recent achievements of Pakistan Customs in pursuance of set theme for this year particularly after the challenges posed by spread of corona virus. The Chief Collector (North) highlighted that it was quite onerous for Pakistan Customs to chase the desired milestones owing to the interruptions created by COVID 19, however, all these targets were accomplished due to inspirational leadership of current Chairman.

While speaking on this occasion, Chairman FBR, Muhammad Javed Ghani, stated that the WCO's theme is both in line with the policies, that have been laid down by the Government of Pakistan and fully compatible with the initiatives already undertaken by FBR and Pakistan Customs. He took into account various initiatives undertaken by Pakistan Customs not only to keep the supply chain intact but also to accelerate the same. He highlighted that such initiatives have kept Pakistan at a stable economic pedestal as compared with other regional countries. Chairman FBR particularly referred to the great sacrifice of life rendered by the officers and officials in the line of duty and paid tributes to them. In the end, the Certificates of Merit were distributed amongst the officers who performed well during the last year.



Operation against prohibited smuggled items

Model Customs Collectorate (MCC) Multan has seized a vehicle at Faisalabad which was loaded with 143 cartons of Foreign Origin Liquor concealed under crates of tomatoes. Details of seized goods are as follows:

Total Bottles: 1504, Total value of liquor: 25.568 million approximately, Value of vehicle: 10 million approximately and Total market value of the seizure is 35.568 million approximately.



Collectorate of Preventive Customs, Karachi has carried out a major operation on coastal belt near Dam/Somiani and seized a full loaded boat with smuggled liquor. The strike boat of Customs intercepted smugglers when they were unloading the smuggled liquor. Operation helped confiscate 1500 to 2000 bags of smuggled bottles.

Customs staff posted at Jinnah International Airport, Karachi has continued crackdown on illegal movement of narcotics and contraband goods. Consistent efforts resulted in seizure of 940 grams of Narcotics (Pure Cocaine) which was recovered from a passenger arriving from an African Country via Qatar. Total value of narcotics seized is expected to be Rs. 15 million.



Member IR Operations outreach to improve Ease of Doing Business (EoDB)

Dr Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmed, Member Inland Revenue Operations FBR, held interactive meetings with Business leaders at Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) headquarters and Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) at Federation house to listen to problems of the taxpayers and their real time resolution to provide optimum Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) to taxpayers in concrete terms.





Dr Muhammad Ashfaq also had a detailed working meeting with Karachi Tax Bar at their office, Tax House, Karachi to strengthen the already keenly developed relationship of trust, coordination and collaboration focused on palpable improvements in Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) for taxpayers and collection of revenue. Similarly, he hosted a working meeting with business leaders of Pakistan Yarn Merchants Association and Pak Readymade Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association (South Zone) at Tax House, Karachi.



Member IR operations held interactive marathon sessions with the Chief commissioners and all commissioners of Large Taxpayers Office (LTO), Medium Taxpayers Office (MTO), Corporate Tax Office (CTO), Regional Tax Office (RTO-1) and Regional Tax Office (RTO-2) Karachi and Regional Tax Office (RTO) Hyderabad to review performance and Strategy and share steps undertaken at head office FBR to put systems in place to catapult performance to the next level.



One day session on health & immune system held in FBR

Facilitation and Taxpayers' Education Wing (FATE) of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) arranged a one day session regarding awareness about human immune system in FBR HQ. The purpose of holding this session was to enlighten FBR officers and officials about boosting immune system to fight off viral diseases.



For the session, a renowned Consultant Physician and Dermatologist Dr. Tahira Shahid was specially invited to deliver a lecture on the subject. Dr. Tahira Shahid shared basic tips and precautionary measures to boost immunity particularly in the situation of ongoing corona pandemic. A large gathering of officers and officials were present in the session.



At the end of session, Member FATE Syed Nadeem Hussain Rizvi thanked Dr. Tahira Shahid for sharing valuable information about health and immune system particularly during current corona pandemic situation. Member FATE presented a shield and Member Administration Bakhtiar Muhammad presented a bouquet to the speaker.



After the Session, Chairman FBR Muhammad Javed Ghani also met with Dr. Tahira Shahid and thanked her for visiting FBR.



A free laboratory point was also set up by Advanced Diagnostic Center to provide free testing service of Covid-19, blood cholesterol and blood sugar to the willing employees. Multi-vitamins were also distributed to the employees after the session.



ADVANCED DIAGNOSTIC CENTRE

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BODY MASS INDEX

UNDERWEIGHT (BMI < 18.5) | NORMAL (BMI 18.5 - 24.9) | OVERWEIGHT (BMI 25 - 29.9) | OBESE (BMI ≥ 30)

Where do you stand?

IDEAL CHOLESTEROL

Desirable Level | Borderline High Level | High Level

Less Than 200 Mg/dl | 200-239 Mg/dl | 240 Mg/dl and Above

BLOOD SUGAR

mg/dl	Fasting	Random
Normal	70 - 100	< 140
Borderline	101 - 120	140-200
Diabetes	> 126	> 200

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Exports facilitation strategy of FBR leading to significant exports growth

Federal Board of Revenue has devised an Integrated Strategy which has amply contributed to significant increase in exports of Pakistan from US\$ 1.6 Billion (in August, 2020) to US\$ 2.4 Billion (in December, 2020). Growth in exports of Pakistan in December, 2020 is up by 18.3 per cent as compared to US\$ 1.993 billion in the corresponding month last year. While mentioning factors that have facilitated growth in exports, FBR has stated that import duties on 1,623 tariff lines, pertaining to basic raw material and intermediate goods were reduced to zero through the Finance Act, 2020. In pursuance of this strategy, additional customs duties and regulatory duties on 164 items related to textile sector, not manufactured in the country, were also removed in collaboration with all the stakeholders. All these measures were undertaken with the objectives of neutralizing adverse impact of COVID 19 pandemic, especially for the exporters, and to make their products competitive vis-à-vis those of their competitors in the international market.

Under the initiative of "Make in Pakistan", the Duty Drawback rates for at least eight (08) sectors were revised upwards by FBR. During the whole exercise, more than 434,000 claims were disposed of and approximately 7800 exporters have benefited from this Initiative. Similarly, FBR has paid ninety (90) percent more refunds of Sales Tax during July-December, 2020 as compared to the corresponding period last year. This led to significant rise in volumes of exports in the form of increase in TEUs (i.e. Tonnage Equivalent Units) / Containers from 35,477 in July, 2020 to 62,591 in December, 2020, showing a growth of 43%. In order to tangibly contribute to exports, all the Export Facilitation Schemes were simplified / rationalized for their optimal use by the exporters. First of all, extension in utilization period of different export facilitation schemes was allowed for a period of one year from 1st March, 2020 to 28th February, 2021. Secondly, retention period for plant and machinery, under the Export Oriented Units Scheme, was reduced from 10 years to five years.

Thirdly, for the prompt redressal of grievances, one administrative tier is reduced (under Duty and Taxes Remission for Export Scheme and Manufacturing Bond Scheme) and Regulatory Authority is created to facilitate the exporters. Moreover, the investors in Export Processing Zones have been facilitated in payment of duties/taxes on the disposal of machinery in the tariff area. These facilitation measures have led to increase in number of exports Goods Declarations (GDs) from 71,190 in July, 2020 to 79,756 in December, 2020, posting an increase of 11%. In the same vein, total number of Exports Goods Declarations (GDs) (from 1st July, 2020 to 31st December, 2020), remained at 408,472 vis-à-vis 333,943 during 1st January, 2020, showing an increase of 18%. To realize the objective of facilitation / promotion of exports, an automated system of filing the claim to the final sanctioning of Duty Drawback Claims for the payment of Duty Drawback Claims to the exporter was rolled out on 1st October, 2020.

As a matter of fact, export Goods Declaration filed in Customs WeBOC system is being considered as the Duty Drawback Claim. State Bank of Pakistan credits the system sanctioned payments in the accounts of exporters online directly. In addition to the said automation initiative, Green Channel clearances of the exports GDs / Consignments were increased from 74% in July, 2020 to 77.3 % in December, 2020. Similarly, for speedy payment of Sales Tax refunds to exporters, FASTER PLUS System has been implemented. FBR has also removed regulatory duty on import of cotton yarn, till 30th June, 2021, which is a basic raw material for the value-added textile industry of Pakistan. Being committed to the national goal of increase in exports, Federal Board of Revenue is making all out efforts to assist exporters by continuously making improvements in its laws and procedures.

Restoring Taxpayer's confidence through Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanism - Webinar

Facilitation and Taxpayer Education (FATE) Wing conducted a Webinar on Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) on 14th January, 2021. The Webinar highlighted how ADR mechanism can be availed by the taxpayer and what are the benefits that accrue by availing this mechanism. The session was streamed live on FBR's Facebook page. Numerous queries and questions raised by the viewers were taken by the panel. The following panel took part in the Webinar:

Principal Speaker I: Secretary ST (IR Operations) - Zubair Khan

Principal Speaker II: Secretary (Reforms & Modernisation) - Ali Wahed Khan

Guest Speaker I: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) - Sardar Yasir

Guest Speaker II: President Rawalpindi Islamabad Tax Bar Association (RITBA) - Rashid Ibrahim

Moderator: Secretary FATE - Rashid Javaid Rana



Member Legal meets with President & Vice President Rawalpindi/Islamabad Tax Bar Associations

Member Legal FBR, Syed Ghulam Abbas Kazmi had meeting with President and Vice President of Rawalpindi / Islamabad Tax Bar Associations on 21st January, 2021. During the meeting Member Legal enlightened the Tax Bar Association representatives on the e-filing of appeals before Commissioner Inland Revenue (Appeals). Member Legal assured that the Tax Bar Associations' feedback would be incorporated in the system to improve e-filing of Appeals before Commissioner Inland Revenue (Appeals).



Performance Review - Large Taxpayer Office - Islamabad

Member Inland Revenue (Operations) FBR, Dr. Muhammad Ashfaq Ahmed, visited Large Taxpayer Office (LTO) Islamabad and had meeting with all the officers of LTO Islamabad. The LTO Islamabad team gave presentation on performance during first 6 months of current Tax Year. The Member later on had candid discussion with all the officers on various issues faced by them.



E-Khuli Kutchery at Regional Tax Office Abbottabad

E-Khuli Kutchery was held on 7th January 2021 by Mr. Afaque Ahmad Qureshi, Chief Commissioner RTO, Abbottabad. Commissioners as well as ADCs participated in the said Kutchery. This was conducted through Zoom. Chambers of Commerce and Industry as well as Trade Associations of Hazara Division were informed regarding the E-Khuli Kutchery so that the taxpayers could share their observations, problems along with suggestions.



During the meeting, different questions were raised by the taxpayers of Mansehra, Abbottabad and Haripur regions. Most of the questions were regarding e-registration/e-filing which were addressed by the host. One participant suggested to train their staff for e-filing to which RTO requested to share the detail of the trainees so that they could be guided in filing of returns. One participant requested for guidance regarding change in particulars in his profile. He was briefed accordingly.

In the end, the taxpayers highly appreciated the effort by the team of RTO, Abbottabad.

Half Yearly Performance Review Regional Tax Office (RTO) - Islamabad

Dr. Shamsul Hadi reviewed half yearly performance at Regional Tax Office (RTO) Islamabad. He also distributed certificates and shields to the best performing officers at RTO, Islamabad.



Ongoing reforms lead to huge improvement in Trading Across Border Index

In a major achievement towards ensuring Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), Pakistan has improved 31 positions (from 142nd to 111th) on the rank of Trading Across Border Index. Federal Board of Revenue made Trading Across Borders easier by focusing on three crucial areas: enhancing the integration of various agencies in the Web-Based One Customs (WEBOC) electronic system; reducing the number of documents required for import / export clearances; enhancing capacities of Pakistan Customs officials for playing pro-active role in smoothly regulating border trade.

Climbing up the ladder in Trading Across Border Index has enabled Pakistan in jumping up 28 places – from 136th to 108th – in World Bank's (WB)'s 'Ease of Doing Business 2020' and securing a place among the top 10 countries who have done the most in the corresponding / past year to improve the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) in their countries. With this milestone Pakistan is the sixth global reformer and first in South Asia that has brought ease in doing business for the national / international trade. It is important to note that border facilitation is amongst the top priority areas as per the comprehensive policy laid down by the Government.



Concerted efforts by Pakistan Customs, under FBR, led to impressive performance in terms of compliance to the provisions of World Trade Organization (WTO)'s Trade Facilitation Agreement; hence, complementing Pakistan's rise in Trading Across Border Index. Pakistan Customs has pursued implementation of effective customs controls so that compliant trade is thoroughly facilitated, while lesser / non-compliant trade is diverted to detailed scrutiny. This strategy worked well, as conceived by Pakistan Customs, and has gone a long way in reducing the dwell time (at the borders / ports) for imports / exports in Pakistan by increasing the percentage of clearances through Green Channel.

For instance, the time required for documentary compliance to effect exports has been reduced from 55 hours to 24 hours, and the time required for overall border compliance to effect exports has also been reduced from 75 hours to 24 hours. Similarly, the time required for documentary compliance to effect imports has been reduced from 143 hours to 24 hours, and the time required for overall border compliance to effect imports has also been reduced from 120 hours to 24 hours.

In order to further improve Pakistan's position in Trading Across Border criterion, Federal Board of Revenue is pursuing simultaneous completion of Regional Improvement of Border Services (RIBS) and Pakistan Single Window. Regional Improvement of Border Services (RIBS) is being implemented at Torkham, Chaman, and Wahga and is the Flagship program that aims at improving border-crossing facilities which are key transit points to Afghanistan and India.

Pakistan Single Window, on the other hand, would integrate at least 46 departments / agencies in Pakistan and would make trading across border a hassle free and seamless operation.

Landmark initiatives for a Tax compliant culture

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Government of Pakistan

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Ushering Prosperity with Unity

FBR
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Needs Your Support

To broaden the tax net and facilitate taxpayers ensuring transparency

Landmark initiatives of the FBR

<p>Facilitating Taxpayers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New, simple and easier, wizard based online tax return form Information of payable tax, online tax payment and verification Data of every citizen available at FBR معلومات Portal Online tax refund system 	<p>Anti-Smuggling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crackdown against sales, storage and transportation of smuggled items Registration of FIRs, arrests and punishments to the smugglers and their facilitators Incentives for whistleblowers regarding smuggling of contraband goods 	<p>Documentation of Economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Registration of Designated Non-financial Businesses and Professions (DNFBPs) Mandatory for accountants, real estate agents and jewelers to report suspicious transactions Heavy penalties in case of non-compliance 	<p>Complaint Redressal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving complaints through post, email, website or In-person Chairman FBR hearing complaints under Section 7 Open door policy and formation of special committees at federal and provincial level Establishment of Integrity Management Cell and Khuli Katcheries Tax Asaan Mobile App and helpline for guidance of the masses
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Let's Move Ahead

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<p>شکایات کا فوری ازالہ</p> <p>شکایت کی وصولی بذریعہ ایک ای میل، ویب سائٹ یا ہارلسٹیکس کے تحت چیئر مین ایف بی آر کی جانب سے از خود خدمات کا ازالہ اور نو ذمہ داری کے ساتھ ساتھ وفاقی اور صوبائی سطح پر شکایات کی تشکیل اور چیئر مین ایف بی آر کی طرف سے شکایات کا ازالہ</p>	<p>دستاویزی معیشت کا فروغ</p> <p>غیر مالیاتی معیشت کا فروغ اور پیشہ ورانہ (DNFBPs) کی رجسٹریشن</p>	<p>انسداد سمگلنگ</p> <p>سنگل شدہ سامان کی تجارت، ترسیل اور ذخیرہ اندوزی کے خلاف کریک ڈاؤن</p>	<p>ٹیکس گزاروں کی سہولت</p> <p>نیا سامان اور آسان و ذمہ دار آن لائن ٹیکس ریٹرن فارم</p>
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Launch of Crackdown on Sale of Smuggled Petroleum Products



Revenue Division
Federal Board of Revenue
Government of Pakistan

UNDER PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN'S DIRECTIVES

**LAUNCH OF CRACKDOWN
ON THE SALE OF SMUGGLED PETROLEUM PRODUCTS**

From 11th January, 2021

Annual Sale of \$2 Billion Smuggled Petroleum Products
Annual Revenue Loss of Rs.200 Billion

Pakistan Customs, Frontier Corps, District Administrations, Law Enforcement Agencies and Provincial Governments
Launching Joint Operation against petrol pumps involved in the illegal sale of smuggled petroleum products.

Report petrol pumps involved in the sale of Smuggled Petroleum Product at
Helpline 051-111 772 772 | Identity of informer shall remain confidential.

VIOLATION OF CUSTOMS ACT 1969 IS PUNISHABLE WITH
5-14 years rigorous imprisonment
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Confiscation of smugglers' property i.e. petrol pumps, tankers, godown etc.

Pakistan Customs' Resolve - Smuggling Free Pakistan

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سمگل شدہ پٹرولیم مصنوعات کی فروخت کے خلاف 11 جنوری 2021 سے

کریک ڈاؤن کا آغاز

سالانہ 2 ارب ڈالر کی سمگل شدہ پٹرولیم مصنوعات کی فروخت

قومی خزانے کو سالانہ 200 ارب روپے کا نقصان

سمگل شدہ پٹرولیم مصنوعات کی فروخت میں ملوث پٹرول پمپس کے خلاف قومی اداروں

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5 تا 14 سال قید با مشقت
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پٹرول پمپ ٹینکرز سمیت سمگلرز کی جائیداد کی ضبطگی

پاکستان ٹیکس کا عزم - سولنگ سے پاک متحدہ پاکستان

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You can share your contribution via email @ fbrnewsletter@fbr.gov.pk



Feedback

Your feedback is extremely important in helping us improve the communication process between FBR and its family. We would like your suggestions, comments and valued advice in helping to further improve the newsletter.

You can send in your feedback to newsletterfeedback@fbr.gov.pk



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