

Glitch in IRIS portal perturbs businessmen

KARACHI: Industrialists have voiced concerns over the glitches in the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) IRIS portal, citing that they were not able to file the sales tax returns. The FBR had extended the date to file the sales tax returns for the month of January till February 25, 2022.

However, exporters were still unable to file the returns in time "because a lot of glitches still persist in IRIS," **Towel Manufacturers Association of Pakistan Chairman Kashif Mehtab Chawla** said in a statement. Expressing grave concerns for shifting the monthly sales tax filing system on IRIS portal, he said, "For the past two and a half months, industrialists across the county are suffering due to the persistent glitches in IRIS". In December 2021, FBR replaced the old system (PRAL) of filing the monthly sales tax returns with the new portal on IRIS, he mentioned. Terming PRAL as a user-friendly system, he questioned why FBR had shifted to a new portal and created problems for the business community."

He recalled FBR's claim of swift refund of sales tax to exporters through the newly-installed system. "However, the exporters are facing problems in submitting their monthly sales tax returns to receive the refunds," he added. He underlined that the IRIS system was not working properly because "the annexure H in the system has many imperfections". Giving technical details, he said that the individual supplier/ business name was not appearing in both annexures A and C. "We are also unable to know the total amount in annexure H, because the sum is not appearing in its last row," he said. Moreover, after the submission of the sales tax returns, "we cannot see the supplier/ customer name like we used to see in annexure A and C of PRAL", he said.

Echoing his views, Topline Securities analyst Saad Ziker told The Express Tribune that due to technical issues in IRIS, the exporters were facing difficulties in recording the sales tax returns, which would ultimately delay their refunds. "This could impact the cash flow of exporters, hence they could face liquidity crunch," the analyst cautioned.