

# DAWN

Azfar-ul-Ashfaque | Published April 4, 2021

## SRB collection rises to Rs88.5bn

KARACHI: The Sindh Revenue Board (SRB) collection rose 13.66 per cent to Rs88.542 billion during the first nine months (July-March) of this fiscal year compared to Rs77.902bn collected in the same period last year.

In March alone, its collection stood 22.7pc higher at Rs11.463bn from Rs9.343bn in the corresponding month last year.

The SRB needs to generate Rs46.5bn more in the last quarter (April-June) to achieve the Rs135bn target set by Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah for 2020-21, but government sources said it would be a difficult task in view of surging Covid-19 cases, which have already drawn stringent measures to avoid a complete lockdown.

Recently, Mr Murad criticised the PTI-led federal government for failing to meet its revenue target “during its entire tenure of over two and a half years” that he said caused a shortfall of Rs80bn to the province in the head of federal transfers during MFY21.

While appreciating the performance of the SRB, Mr Shah had said that he had been requesting the federal government to hand over collection of general sales tax to provinces and give them a collection target. He said that the SRB was capable of collecting the sales tax on behalf of the federal government.

Currently, the SRB collects sales tax on services under the Sindh Sales Tax on Services Act and its major revenue comes from sectors like port, airport and terminal operators, franchise, insurance, banks, contract execution, telecommunication, construction, technical, scientific and engineering consultants, labour and manpower services and restaurant and cafes.

While the CM was critical of the federal government for its failure to achieve revenue targets, the SRB also missed its target during 2019-20 when it collected Rs105.9bn against the target of Rs145bn that was revised down to Rs135bn due to the pandemic and subsequent lockdown of the economy. However, the amount was 5.6pc more than what was collected in 2018-19.

Despite the general economic slowdown amid the third Covid wave, the 22.7pc growth in March revenue collection is phenomenal, the SRB said in a press release.

“The SRB is focused to achieve the Rs135bn target for FY21 despite the adverse factors such as low economic growth and resurgence of Covid cases,” it concluded.

Published in Dawn, April 4th, 2021