

CBDT to Install Cheque Deposit Machines at ASKs

In order to make the department more taxpayer friendly, CBDT has decided to install cheque deposit machines at Ayakar Seva Kendras (ASKs) and launch a modified website to assist assessee to ascertain their tax liability. As per the road map prepared by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the tax department will roll out several such initiatives, including expeditious refund in case the mismatch in TDS filing is up to ₹1 lakh, over 3-4 months. "We have planned for upgradation of ASKs over the next 3-4 months. It is proposed to introduce automatic cheque deposit machine to facilitate the tax payers by providing them banking facilities," a revenue department official told PTI, explaining the rationale behind the move. "Currently, there are 297 ASKs in the country. This year, we will add 65 more to the 297 and they are all being upgraded as per the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to provide quality service," the official said. As part of the facilitation drive, the department has already started sending SMS alerts to as many as 2.5 crore salaried taxpayers informing them of their quarterly TDS deductions. It also plans to extend this SMS facility to another 4.4 crore non-salaried taxpayers.

(Source: Press Trust of India)

Number of Income Tax Payers in India Soars

The number of income taxpayers in India is finally growing in a significant manner after hovering around 3 crores for quite some time due to the increased transparency through digitisation and also efforts to get hold of the tax evaders.

According to the latest income tax data released by the Central Board of Direct Taxes for FY13 (AY14) and FY14 (AY15), the number of income tax returns filed between FY12 and FY14 has increased by about 79 lakh to cross 3.91 crore.

While the number of income tax returns filed by the firms went up from 8.59 lakh to 9.19 lakh, company returns increased from 5.81 lakh to 7.01 lakh—in the case of individuals, it has jumped from 2.89 cr for FY12 to 3.65 cr for FY14. This may see further improvement when the data for FY15 and FY16 is released.

(Source: The Businessline)

Why India Fared Badly in World Bank's Doing Business Survey

India has fared badly in World Bank's Doing Business survey, inspite of Narendra Modi-led government's slew of reforms in the last two and half years to make it easier

to do business in India, due to its low ranking in the "post-filing index" criteria introduced for the first time this year under the parameter "paying taxes".

The post-filing index is based on four components—time to comply with value-added tax (VAT) or goods and services tax (GST) refund, time to obtain VAT or GST refund, time to comply with corporate income tax audit and time to complete a corporate income tax audit. In "paying taxes", the new post-filing index component accounts for 25% of the overall indicator.

India scores abysmally low on "post-filing index" criteria at 4.27 out of a maximum score of 100. This has brought down India's "paying taxes" ranking by 15 notches this year to 172 among 190 countries. This has negated India's improvement in other areas with its overall ranking improving just by one notch to 130 in this year's ranking.

(Source: www.profit.ndtv.com)

Housing Society Certificates to Now Suffice for Tax Benefits

The Income Tax Appellate Tribunal's Mumbai bench has recently passed an Order as per which a letter from the housing society showing the possession of the house in the borrower's name is sufficient for the borrower to claim income-tax exemption on the home loan. According to income tax rules, home loan borrowers can claim up to ₹2 lakh exemption on the interest paid on the loan. They can also claim exemption on the principal up to ₹1.5 lakh.

It is possible to get a bank loan without the completion certificate, if it is a property under construction. If it is a completed building, then the bank uses its discretion before approving the loan. Since there are so many government department and agencies involved in issuing this certificate, sometimes there is a delay.

(Source: www.financialexpress.com)

CBDT Directs to Widen Tax Base and Prevent Avoidable Disputes

The CBDT in its fresh directives has asked the taxman to take steps for widening the existing tax base, prevent avoidable disputes and ensure that the honest taxpayer is facilitated while stressing that tax evasion cases are handled without fear.

While stating that the guiding principle for the taxman should be to "facilitate honest tax payers while focusing upon effective enforcement in a fair, transparent and objective manner", the new CBDT boss, Shri Sushil Chandra, who took over on November 1 added that "every possible step" should be taken to achieve the revenue collection targets and even exceed them.

(Source: <http://www.business-standard.com/>)