

**Government of India
Ministry of Finance
Department of Revenue
Central Board of Direct Taxes**

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PRESS RELEASE

**Hon'ble Union Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman presides over the
164th Income Tax Day celebrations at Delhi**

The 164th anniversary of Income Tax Day was observed by Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) and all its field offices across India today. The main function was held at the Plenary Hall, Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. Hon'ble Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt. N. Sitharaman presided over the event. Hon'ble Union Minister of State (Finance) Shri Pankaj Choudhury also graced the occasion with his presence. Shri Sanjay Malhotra, Secretary, Revenue and Shri Nitin Gupta, Chairman, CBDT were also present on the occasion apart from other officers and officials of the Department.

In her keynote address, Union Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman expressed appreciation for the outstanding performance of the CBDT and its field formation in every sphere of work. Hon'ble FM also appreciated the Department's continued efforts in implementing the 3 'R's viz. Return processing, Refund issue and Redressal of grievances emphasised by her earlier. Hon'ble FM also appreciated the contribution made by taxpayers, tax practitioners/professionals and stakeholders for having been instrumental in driving India's economic growth and prosperity. The Hon'ble Minister observed that increase in tax collection has been achieved in the recent years without any increase in tax rates. It has been made possible through increase in efficiency of the Department. The hon'ble FM noted that systemic changes in the Direct tax administration like prefilling of forms, instant PAN, faceless assessment have boosted the taxpayer's trust and made compliance easy, leading to growth in revenue. Hon'ble FM underlined the various reforms brought in by the Union Government in the Finance Act 2023 to provide relief to salaried class, start-ups, MSME and cooperative societies. Hon'ble FM stressed upon the necessity to work on widening the tax base while making the tax administration transparent, objective and taxpayer friendly. Hon'ble FM called upon the officers/officials of the income tax department to work in this Kartavya Kaal towards achieving the goal of making india a developed country by the year 2047.

Hon'ble Minister of State (Finance), Sh. Pankaj Choudhary, in his address, lauded the Hon'ble FM for her leadership in the difficult time of Covid, Ukraine Conflict and challenges of supply chain. The Hon'ble MoS commended the efforts of officers and employees of the Department for working tirelessly to ensure a fair and transparent tax administration. Hon'ble MoS noted that faceless regime, as launched by Hon'ble PM, has brought about change in the mindset of the people towards the Department. Hon'ble MoS lauded the Department's efforts to make compliance easy

for the taxpayers by introducing Annual Information Statement (AIS), E-verification, Updated returns and alerting the taxpayers continuously. He observed that the introduction of technology-driven initiatives have simplified and streamlined tax procedures and made them more taxpayer-friendly. He hoped that the simplification of tax processes would continue in future.

Secretary Revenue, Sh. Sanjay Malhotra, while extending best wishes to the officers and officials of the Department, expressed appreciation for the Department for robust tax collection increase in tax base and ease of compliance. He further reiterated that the Department should continue to focus on the 3 'I's (Industry, Innovation, Integrity). Citing the example of sportspersons, he underscored the importance of small wins for happiness and urged the Department to continue to progress in that direction. He stressed upon the need to focus more on taxpayer services and increased automation.

Shri Nitin Gupta, Chairman, CBDT welcomed the dignitaries on behalf of the Income Tax Department. Observing that over the years the focus of the Department has been on enhancing taxpayer services and leveraging technology to ease compliances, he gave an overview of some of the remarkable achievements in the last fiscal, including a growth of 17.6% achieved in net collections and an increase of 6.5% in the number of ITRs filed over the previous year. He noted that the motto of 3 R's - quicker processing of returns, issue of refunds and redressal of grievances - outlined by Hon'ble Finance Minister during the FM Award Ceremony of 2022 has been the focus of the Department's functioning. The average processing time for returns is now just 16 days, with more than 42% of ITRs having been processed in 1 day in the last fiscal. Quicker processing has also resulted in quicker issue of refunds, which is reflected in the fact that in the last year refunds issued aggregated to Rs. 3.07 lakh crore, being higher by 37% over the previous year. Extensive efforts have been made on the 3rd R too, as grievances are being redressed expeditiously, with rigorous monitoring as also by using multiple channels for grievance redressals, viz. helpdesks, call centres, social media, Webex etc. He stated that the Department's achievements reflect the collective efforts of its personnel as well as the contribution of the taxpayers, tax professionals and other stakeholders.

As part of the celebrations, several taxpayers from diverse economic and industrial fields were invited, both as a gesture of recognition of the contribution made by them in their respective spheres and as first-hand witnesses to the transformational changes and improvements made in the tax procedures. They shared their experience of dealing with various service touchpoints with the Income Tax Department, the quality of taxpayer services, and the ease of compliance with tax procedures. Among the taxpayers/stakeholders who shared their experience were Shri Mohit Sahney (MD & CEO, Finova Capitals), Shri Aniket Sunil Talati (President, ICAI) and Ms. Supriya Paul (CEO, Josh Talks).

Further, Shri Ravikant, IRS (Retd) 1962 batch, ex- Chairman, CBDT shared his views on the evolution of the Income Tax Department over the years from his wealth of experience of serving in different capacities in the Income Tax Department. He observed that while growth in tax collection can be measured in quantitative

terms, the training and technology cannot be measured in quantitative terms and he appreciated the improvement in training and technology in the Department. Among the serving officers/officials, Smt G.G. Kamei, IRS, Ms. Neha D Desai, IRS and Shri Manish Dhama, Inspector of Income tax shared their experience of working in the Department.

The function ended with a vote of thanks proposed by Smt Subashree Anantkrishnan, Member, CBDT. She thanked the Hon'ble FM for gracing the occasion and inspiring with her words of wisdom. She also thanked all the other dignitaries present on the occasion.

(Surabhi Ahluwalia)
Pr. Commissioner of Income Tax
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Official Spokesperson, CBDT