

# FM to GST officials: Leverage tech for better taxpayer services

**PITCHING FOR TRANSPARENCY.** Engage with stakeholders to understand their concerns, enhance compliance and streamline processes, urges Nirmala Sitharaman

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Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday urged all the GST formations to leverage technology to plug the loopholes as well as provide better taxpayer services. She also called for clarity on classification related issues should be looked into at the earliest through appropriate channels.

Sitharaman was addressing first-ever National Conference of Enforcement Chiefs of the State and the Central GST Formations. She "advocated for sharing of emerging best practices, emphasising the need for seamless coordination across States in the larger national interest," a Finance Ministry statement said.

She also stressed on the significance of holding such meetings regularly among enforcement chiefs of Centre and States, and to leverage this platform for discussing obstacles, exchanging successful strategies, and collectively advance towards a more robust and harmonious tax infrastructure.

The Minister exhorted the GST officials to engage with stakeholders to understand their concerns, enhance com-



**TAKING STOCK.** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at the one-day National Conference of Enforcement Chiefs of State and Central GST Formations, in New Delhi, on Monday PTI

pliance, streamline processes, and work collaboratively towards making the tax system more transparent and efficient.

Speaking on this occasion, Minister of State in the Finance Ministry Pankaj Chaudhary expressed optimism about achieving a monthly target of ₹2-lakh crore in GST revenue soon.

## TAX EVASION

The meeting noted that the nationwide crackdown on fake registrations and bogus billing from May last year alone has resulted in detection of ITC tax evasion of ₹49,623 crore, involving 31,512 bogus firms. It was also said that fake ITC evasion of ₹1,14,755 crore

from the year 2020 till date.

In his speech, Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra emphasised the crucial role of enforcement in ensuring the success of the GST system. "He outlined key priorities - targeting high-risk areas, combating tax evaders, balancing enforcement with taxpayer rights, strengthening collaboration between Central and State authorities, and gathering feedback for improvement in policy and technological interventions," the statement said.

Chairman of Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) Sanjay Kumar Agarwal said that fake entities and GST evasion not only erode our national revenue but also distort

fair competition and fuel an underground economy. He highlighted the importance of strong data analytics and use of technology and the need to stay ahead of the perpetrators of GST evasion.

## STATES' PRESENTATION

On this occasion, various States made presentation about good practices. Maharashtra State GST showcased the real time monitoring dashboard of suspected non-genuine tax payers (NGTPs). As on February 29, State has identified 41,601 suspected NGTPs out of which 6,034 NGTPs were detected.

Gujarat highlighted the recent success of GST Seva Kendras in reducing the number of fake registrations. The recent case involving fake registration wherein 20 people have been arrested under Gujarat Control of Terrorism and Organised Crime Act, 2015 was also highlighted as a case study of best practice.

Karnataka highlighted unique case typologies such as bill trading in services sector and mild steel scrap, misclassification etc. West Bengal highlighted the benefits of establishing a cyber forensic lab aiding investigation of GST frauds.