

## No penalty for wrong entry in the first two months of GST implementation: Sitharaman

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Nirmala Sitharaman

Minister assures industry of addressing its grievances under the new tax regime

**COIMBATORE, JUNE 22:**

The Centre on Thursday assured the trade, industry and the public that the roll out of Goods and Services Tax (GST) will do the country good and not the other way round.

Addressing a GST sensitisation meeting here, Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister for Commerce and Industry, said that she realised the need for organising GST awareness campaigns after a meeting at Pudukottai in Tamil Nadu about 10 days ago.

“I put forth the suggestion (on the need to reach out to the people) to the Finance Minister, as also the need to rope in officials to educate the masses about the big transformation that is round the corner. We are here to hear and understand your grievances. The government believes in discussing issues with the various stakeholders,” she said appealing to all to gear up for the “one nation, one tax, one market” regime.

Many participants voiced their discontent over rate-fitment, seeking a reduction in GST rate.

Responding to their plea, Sitharaman said “GST is a business-neutral tax, which is aimed at rooting out corruption and ushering in more transparency in the system. And the GST rates were arrived at after discussing with the 18 committees by the GST Council. The Council meets from time to time to discuss various issues put forth by industry.”

When a representative from the diamond merchants association wanted to know if one could do business with a provisional ID from July 1 as some error had cropped up in the registration process, the Minister said “if an amendment is not possible, I will instruct the Commissioner to correct the technical issue,”.

Responding to a suggestion for a dry run of GST before the actual roll out, she said that the Chartered Accountants Association, Cost Accountants of India or even the Chamber of Commerce could do a dry run every day to instil confidence amongst the assesseees. “All migration related issues can be done on the dry run, as the sensitisation is still not enough, particularly among the small traders.”

Sitharaman also assured the participants that “no penalty will be levied for wrong entry in the first two months of GST implementation,” and the government would consider a review of the situation after three months to see if there is a need for course-correction. She did not rule out teething problems after the roll out.

(This article was published on June 22, 2017)

# GSTN launches call centres

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**NEW DELHI, JUNE 22:**

The Goods and Service Tax Network (GSTN) has launched two dedicated call centres to support taxpayers and officials with the enrolment process and enable smooth functioning of the portal. “The call centres will go live from June 25,” said an official statement. While one call centre is set up in Noida in partnership with Tech Mahindra, the other one is based in Gurgaon in partnership with Infosys. The call centre with Tech Mahindra has 200 trained professionals and its staff size will increase to 400 within one month and will cater to tax payers, businesses, GST Practitioners, TDS registrants and TCS registrants. The call centre with Infosys has a 40-member team and will respond only to tax officials of the States and Centre.

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