

## **Over Rs.5,000 cr dues declared so far under Sabka Vishwas Scheme**

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**A mid-term review reveals that a total amount of Rs 5,472 crore has already been declared under the scheme.**

More than Rs.5,000 crore worth dues have been declared so far under the government's 'Sabka Vishwas Scheme', which is for settling pending disputes of service tax and central excise. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has asked its principal chief commissioners to be more proactive in persuading eligible taxpayers to take benefit of 'Sabka Vishwas Scheme'.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had unveiled the Sabka Vishwas (Legacy Dispute Resolution) Scheme, 2019 with the objective of settling pending disputes of Service Tax and Central Excise in the budget. A mid-term review reveals that a total amount of Rs.5,472 crore inclusive of pre-deposit amount of Rs.4,225 crore has already been declared under the scheme, sources said.

Efforts are being made to maximise declarations by December 31, 2019 when the scheme ends. Senior CBIC officials are confident the scheme is likely to gain further momentum in the coming days as taxpayers would not forego this opportunity.

It may be noted that while launching the scheme, it was seen that a total Rs.3.6 lakh crore is locked up in 1.83 lakh cases at various quasi-judicial, appellate and judicial forums under Service Tax and Central Excise put together. The CBIC has made it clear that the performance of the field formations would be adjudged in terms of their outreach and ability to persuade the taxpayers to avail the scheme.

The Principal Chief Commissioners or Chief Commissioners of CGST, who have the information of eligible taxpayers readily available with them, have been asked to proactively contact these taxpayers numbering about 1.8 lakh, sources said. This includes cases under investigation, adjudication as well as arrears of confirmed demand. These cases invariably drag on for years, burdening the taxpayers especially those in the MSME sector.

The introduction of GST which has subsumed these legacy taxes has given an opportunity to the government and also to taxpayers to settle these cases. Official sources said that under this scheme relief is to the tune of 70 per cent of the duty involved if it is Rs.50 lakh or less and that of 50 per cent if it is more than Rs.50 lakh.

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This is for cases pending in adjudication or appeal or in investigation and audit in latter cases, the duty involved must be quantified and communicated or admitted by the taxpayer in a statement on or before June 30, 2019. In cases of outstanding arrears of revenue, the relief is 60 per cent of the duty amount if it is Rs.50 lakh or less and 40 per cent if it is more than Rs.50 lakh, officials said.

In all cases, there is full waiver of interest and penalty and exemption from prosecution. There are, however, some exclusions such as if the person is convicted in the same case, officials added.