

Faceless tax assessment plan faces challenges

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NEW DELHI : The government's faceless income tax assessment scheme, launched two years ago to bring transparency to the process, is facing several challenges from those it aimed to help.

The income tax department is fighting dozens of writ petitions by taxpayers seeking redress for grievances ranging from inadequate time to file responses to opaque and arbitrary orders. The petitions have also challenged the constitutional validity of the scheme that aims to eliminate the physical interface between assessing officers and taxpayers. The aim of the scheme was to substitute the discretion of tax officers with a team-based approach.

There are dozens of writs filed by taxpayers challenging the faceless assessment scheme, a tax official said, requesting anonymity.

Tax experts said such cases have increased in number because the new system has failed to give taxpayers the opportunity to be heard, violating their rights.