

## Kerala launches app to curb GST evasion by offering attractive prizes to users

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- The app asks its users to upload original bills of their purchases to win prizes, including a cash prize of ₹25 lakh.

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** In a first in India, the Kerala government has launched an app that aims to curb Goods and Service Tax (GST) evasion. The app, 'Lucky Bill App', was launched by chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Tuesday.

The app asks its users to upload original bills of their purchases to win prizes, including a cash prize of ₹25 lakh. Kerala CM said that the bill intended to curb GST evasion by encouraging the citizen to ask for a bill every-time they make a purchase. To reward them into doing so, the app offers cash prize upto ₹25 lakh.

"Often customers walk away without asking for a bill after they make a purchase. The objective behind the app is to prevent this," he said. The Chief Minister said ₹5 crore was earmarked in this year's budget for this project.

Apart from cash prizes, the app will also offer rewards such as gift packs from Kudumbashree and Vanashree as well as KTDC tour packages. The Kerala Cm said that ₹5 crore worth of prizes would be given every year. "Therefore, people should ask for the bill and upload it," he said.

The app, according to the official data has been developed in collaboration with the Digital University of Kerala. Under the project, there would be daily, weekly and monthly prizes as well as a bumper prize, through draw of lots, for those who upload their bills via the app.

Vijayan further said tax collection was important for the development of the State and for that the cooperation of the people, merchants and government officials was essential.

Last week, the government announced that the app would be launched on August 16. The government, grappling with financial woes, is looking at ways to bolster revenues and officials have said the app would also enable the State GST Department to examine return filings with the help of bills uploaded by people.

The move also comes at a time when the compensation from the Centre with respect to the GST has ceased with effect from July 1. There is no clarity yet whether the compensation regime would be extended as demanded by Kerala and various other States.

Officials had said the app would also enable the State GST Department to examine the status of the tax return filings. "This application will help to ensure that the taxation rules are strictly followed", they had said.