

GST HEADLINES

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GST Network Extends Taxpayer Enrolment Date to End of Month

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The goods and services tax (GST) network has extended the date of enrolment for taxpayers under GST till the end of this month after a tepid response from taxpayers in many states.

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The process of migration of more than 8 million taxpayers to the GST network started in November, with a phased enrolment plan for each state. However, even after expiry of the last date for many states, the registration numbers remained low.

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All traders will need a GST ID number—a 15-digit number based on their income tax permanent account number (PAN)—to operate under GST, which is expected to take effect from June or July 2017.

The network, which forms the backbone of GST, is coordinating with state governments to update information on traders and issue them tax identification numbers (TIN).

“We have extended the enrolment date for all states till end of this month after states requested us for an extension,” said Navin Kumar, chairman of GSTN.

“There is no compulsion for taxpayers to register as of now. So, the enrolment numbers are good where the states have taken an initiative and encouraged taxpayers to register,” he said.

States such as Uttar Pradesh, Assam, the north-eastern states, Odisha and Maharashtra have enrolment rates of less than 50%. Enrolment rates in the southern states are also low, but the registration process started there only at the beginning of January. Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh are among the states that have an enrolment rate of more than 70%.

Kumar said taxpayers will be issued provisional IDs for the time being and will be issued final IDs once the law is passed in Parliament. The registration of service tax and excise assesseees has also started from Monday.

As per government estimates, there are around 6.5 million value-added tax assesseees, 2.6 million service tax assesseees and 400,000 excise assesseees. However, because the annual revenue threshold under GST has been fixed at Rs20 lakh, some traders may go out of the tax net.

“Taxpayers are not feeling the urgency to register under GST because there is still no certainty about the implementation date. But they should keep in mind that there is no luxury of time and GST has to be implemented from September 2017,” said S.D. Majumder, former chairperson of the Central Board of Excise and Customs.

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