

JOINT COUNCIL OF ACTION OF INCOME TAX ASSOCIATIONS: WEST BENGAL

3, Govt. Place West: Kolkata-700 001. Phone: (033) 2210-3998

Joint Convenors: Sayantan Banerjee, Sumit Kumar Bose & Manmohan Nayak

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PRESS STATEMENT

The budget collection target for the Income tax Department for the current fiscal is Rs 8 lakh crore which is nearly 56% of the total revenue collection target of the Govt of India. From the trend of revenue collection during the 1st half of the current fiscal it seems the desired goal is a distant dream. Although, given the fact that, the target is around 8% of the national GDP (for the year 2014-15) the target should not have been difficult to achieve had the Department performed the normal duties expected from it.

It may be recalled in the year 2013-14, the Income tax Department had undergone a major overhaul in order to ensure more efficiency with regard to better services to the common tax payer and maximise the revenue collection. The Union Cabinet approved the Cadre Restructuring proposal of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on 23.05.2013 creating 20,751 new posts cutting across different cadres. While giving assent to the said cadre restructuring proposal the GOI had obtained an assurance from the Board that an additional amount of Rs 25,000 crore per annum will be collected over and above the normal budget target.

But the picture of revenue collection since Cadre-restructuring is as under:

Financial Year	Original Target (Cr.)	Revised Target (Cr.)	Actual Collection (Cr.)
2013-14	6,68,109	6,36,318	6,38,495
2014-15	7,58,421	7,36,221*	6,95,988
		7,05,628*	
2015-16	7,96,995	--	2,86,766**

* Target revised twice ** Collection till date

Sadly, the Department failed to achieve even the revised budget target, let alone, the assured additional collection of Rs. 25,000 Crore, in the first 2(two) years of Cadre-restructuring.

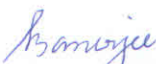
The Department has promised the GOI that 1crore new Assesseees will be added to the total number of existing Tax-payers in 2015-16 financial year. But the fact states otherwise. The number of existing Tax-payer of 3,28,58,821 as on 01-04-2013(before Cadre-restructuring) has not increased much in the first 2(two) years of the Cadre-restructuring and **adding another 1Crore new Assesseees in this financial year is also not achievable, without active participation** of the entire workforce of the Department.


The genesis of this dismal performance lies in the selective implementation of cadre restructuring proposal only for the privileged Direct Recruit officers while denying others the legitimate benefits of the Restructuring. Most of the posts upto the level of Deputy/Assistant Commissioner of Income Tax(DCIT/ACIT) are lying vacant even after more that 2(two) years of Cadre-restructuring approval, however all the posts in senior-management and supervisory cadres such as Pr.CCIT/CCIT/Pr.CIT/CIT have been duly filled up conveniently ignoring the fact that the officers in the cadres of DCIT/ACIT, who are responsible for handling all the big assessees of the country and collect more than 80% of the revenue. As on date the total vacancy in the field is more than 30 % in DCIT/ACIT as well as in all Gr. B and C cadres who directly take part in the collection of revenue and providing Tax-payers services.


In the above context, the entire workforce viz. the employees and the promotee officers who hold the middle management position, comprising of 97% of the total workforce of the Department, are on the path of agitation. They are already in the path of Agitation from 09-09-2015 in the form of non co-operation and have decided to be on a one-day Strike action on 08.10.2015, which would certainly threaten the very functioning of the Department in all its aspects and would, seriously affect the tax collection this year adversely.

The top management positions in the Department are held by the Direct recruit IRS officers, who are a little more than half of the cadre strength of 4923 Group A officers although they constitute only 3% of the total workforce of the Department. But they alone have the privilege of interacting with the political authority, take decisions and the responsibility of the efficient and effective functioning of the department. The employees and officers are agitated over the total apathy on the part of the CBDT and the attitude of the senior officers. Despite the lapse of more than two years of Cadre-restructuring approval, no steps are taken by the CBDT to provide basic minimum infrastructure, viz. sitting accommodation for the vast number of officers and staff; about 30% posts are vacant due to not taking effective steps to fill up those; not even notifying the recruitment rules which are the basic requirement of the recruitment and promotion; and above all taking no steps to promote eligible officers for promoting them as Assistant Commissioners. There is sufficient fund for outsourcing the functions but nothing to purchase computers/ stationary etc. or to effect payment for casual/contingent/contract workers. There appears to be a deliberate callousness on the part of the Administration so as to drag the employees and officers to agitation programmes and put the blame on them for not achieving the tax collection target. It is the continued procrastination in decision making by the top bureaucrats that has brought about the present situation. In such a scenario, the Joint Council of Action, the united platform of employees and promotee officers, are compelled to tread the path of struggle. They feel rightly that the agitation programmes and strike action is in the national interest in as much as early resolution to the problems by the intervention of political authority will bring about a conducive climate to concentrate on tax collection and reach the target during the available period of the next six months.

The Central Joint Council of Action issues this Press Statement with the fervent hope that the Indian print and electronic media will give coverage to it in the national interest and through that the political authority will become aware of the real reasons for not achieving the collection target and take corrective and appropriate steps to address the grievances of the promotee officers and employees of the Income Tax Department.


(Sayantan Banerjee)
General Secretary,
ITGOA, WB Unit


(Sumit Kumar Bose)
General Secretary,
ITEF, Bengal Circle


(Manmohan Nayek)
General Secretary
ITEF, West Bengal Circle Gr. D

JOINT CONVENORS