

## **GST Site to Open soon so Filing won't Tax You**

*Online filing portal to be thrown open to public from next week and will allow tax payers to register themselves in advance and fill in their details*

Much before the April deadline of the roll-out of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the online filing portal is ready to throw itself open to the public from next week, enabling tax payers to warm up to the new system before it finally launches in April of next year. On Thursday, the GST Council finalised a four-tier tax structure of 5, 12, 18 and 28% for the new tax regime, with lower rates for essential items and the highest for luxury and de-merits goods. According to a government official, the GST portal will be hosted at the domain <http://www.gst.gov.in>, which will be launched on November 8, even as the mobile app is currently being developed. “The proposal was discussed in the GST panel meeting today (Thursday) and the date has been finalised. There was no adverse reaction to it,” said the official who requested anonymity.

The portal will allow tax payers whose PAN numbers have been verified by the tax department to register themselves in advance and fill in their details and legacy data. “The idea is to avoid everyone trying to log-in at the same time before the roll-out in April,” said the official adding that the government is looking at getting the tax payers to enter all the data about themselves in their system for it to work smoothly at the time of the launch without any “challenges”.

ET had reported earlier that India's second-largest software company Infosys has been mandated to develop and run the Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) -the entity tasked with providing the information technology infrastructure for it -in a project worth . 1,380 crore. The portal itself will ` be a one-stop destination for filing and processing of all taxes for almost 65 to 70 lakh tax payers in the country and is being designed by a specialised design unit of Infosys.

The GST portal will be a front for the tax payer where registration, return and payments will be filed. It will also provide help-desk support. The technology at the backend will have the power to analyse data for trends on sales, tax filings etc. The portal will allow businesses to register using their PAN and mobile number or Aadhaar number. All businesses will be given a GST identification number, which will be a 15-digit code, consisting of their state code and ten-digit PAN. GSTN has already validated the PAN of 58 lakh businesses from the tax department over the past two years.

The official added that GSTN has already generated the GST identification numbers for around 20 lakh tax payers in eight states and has sent the data to the states for further disbursement. The rest of the tax payers will be covered in batches over the coming weeks, said the official. “We are doing it right now for VAT which covers excise as well, since those paying excise are also registered for VAT. Registration for people paying service tax will begin in January,” said the official.

The entity is also in the process of developing a mobile app through which tax payers can also register themselves and at the same time allow them to file taxes or upload returns.

“We are making the process really simple by allowing people to just take pictures from their phone cameras and then upload them,” said the official, adding that the app is also expected to be ready over the next five to seven days.

*(Economic Times)*