

Income Tax strike hits survey operations

The crucial survey operations conducted by the Income Tax department to detect tax evasion have been severely hit due to a long drawn employees agitation in the national capital. I-T employees and officials, except those of the Indian Revenue Service (IRS), have been agitating to press their demands including to review their cadre and promote senior ranks of Income Tax Officers (ITOs) to the rank of Assistant Commissioners.

The employees today staged a 'walk out' from all the I-T offices as a mark of symbolic protest.

"We are agitating with regard to our various demands since October and we have also submitted a notice to the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) earlier. The work of conducting surveys on business premises, surveys to check TDS deductions and other verification work has been suspended under protest," General Secretary of Income Tax Gazetted Officers Association (ITGOA) Basaanand said.

A senior IRS (Income Tax) officer, however, said that they are ensuring that the survey operations do not suffer because of the agitation by the employees of these federations and have asked other officials in their cadre to pursue the exercise.

Members of the Income Tax Employees Federation (ITEF), comprising personnel in junior ranks, have also come together for the agitation with the ITGOA for demanding filling up of more than 750 posts of Assistant Commissioners by promoting officials from their cadre.

The I-T department has three employees federations, the third one being the IRS Officers Association.

"The CBDT is looking to enhance the strength in all its ranks and is in talks with relevant ministries to get sanctions for new posts," the officer said.

"The much needed cadre review and restructuring exercise to meet growing number of assesses and related assessment work has been pending for more than two years which is urgently required for addressing the excessive work-load due to huge vacancies.

"The vacancies for the years 2010-11 and 2011-12 have not been filled up. The department is already facing acute shortage of manpower both at the staff and officers level, especially at cutting edge level of Assistant Commissioners who are looking after very big assessments, thus playing a crucial role in revenue collection," the demand letter of the agitating employees said.

The Joint Action Council (JAC) comprising both federations has, however, decided to ensure that there is no inconvenience to the tax paying public, Basaanand said.