

## **Punjab govt to launch online VAT refund system**

The Punjab government will launch an online VAT refund system for traders and industrialists, Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal today said.

Speaking at a meeting with industry delegation from Ludhiana here, Badal asserted that the functioning of state excise and taxation department would be made more transparent.

He said the industrialists would be divided into three categories for payment of tax refund to them.

Category-A industrialists will be eligible for an automatic fast track VAT refund. For category-B, the refund will be given in minimum possible time while for category-C, certain checks would be incorporated for giving tax refunds, he said.

Badal also favoured the industry's suggestion of imposing lumpsum tax on certain categories with a promise of certain amount of tax payment to the state exchequer.

The Minister claimed that Punjab would be the first state that would have most comprehensive interactive portal, which would eliminate submission of paper-based tax returns.

Asking the state industry to declare their income, he said that he could consider waiver of 80 per cent of books and records maintained by them.

Badal promised the industry delegation that he would have a relook at the demand "for making electricity duty vatable".

Speaking about power scenario, Badal claimed that once the power situation turned comfortable, the state government would supply power at cheaper rate to consumers.

He further said by end of this year, thermal plants of the state will start generating power and state will get power at average Rs 3 to 4 per unit against Rs 7 to 8 being spent by the state on power purchase during peak season.

Badal said that the new industrial policy would be investment friendly policy and it would be aimed to eliminate 'Inspector Raj' from the state.

He said that he wanted to make Ludhiana most developed industrial hub of the country and a plan had been finalised to spend Rs 2,000 crore in upgrading the infrastructure of the city alone.

*Source: thehindubusinessline.com*