

Taxman gets more teeth to track non-filers of Income Tax returns

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Under the special drive called the 'Non Filers Management System' (NMS), the department, in such cases, used to send intimation letters or notices to the addresses mentioned in the PAN database which many times went undelivered as the information therein was quite old.

A new technology enhancement by the systems wing of the department has added to the NMS electronic database the address used by a person or his associate in the Income Tax Return or Annual Information Return (AIR) filed by him.

While an ITR is supposed to be filed by any person who has taxable income, an AIR is stipulated to be filed by a specific category of people undertaking high-value transactions.

The NMS database is run by using technology intelligence tools to track erring taxpayers who either forget or just skip filing their returns.

"The department found that the addresses provided in the Permanent Account Number database were no longer valid in many cases as the assessee had changed location. Hence, a new pool of data has been provided to IT sleuths by electronically collating the address which such an assessee uses in his ITR or

AIR or may be by the entities connected with such a person.

"In some cases, the department found people have reported income returns from one head but skipped doing so from other such avenues and hence the NMS notice tells them to do so and comply with norms," the official said.

The department is particularly enthused by the NMS drive as recently over 11 lakh taxpayers filed their IT returns for Assessment Year 2014-15 after the department tracked them through this programme.

While the amount of revenue received by the tax department under this drive has not been quantified, a latest report said the department identified a total of 58.95 lakh such taxpayers out of whom 11.17 lakh had filed their returns for the said period in quick time.

Officials involved in the conduct of the drive said lakhs of emails and SMSes were sent to those taxpayers who were registered with the e-filing portal of the department while efforts are being made to reach others, too.

“With multiple address options, the chances of getting such intimation notices or letters delivered to the right person increases manifold, thereby resulting in the overall success of the drive and bringing legitimate income under tax,” the official said.

Once cases are identified under NMS, they are sent to the Actionable Information Monitoring System (AIMS) where the regional IT officials dispatch these notices and keep track of the subsequent developments in each of the cases.

Once an assessee files the correct ITR, the information is finally sent to regional officials and the respective Assessing Officers so they can keep a track of their records in the future.

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