

Pendency in redressal of grievances

1846. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a huge pendency still in the redressal of grievances in income tax matters;

(b) what are the existing systems of disposal;

(c) whether it is adequate and effective;

(d) whether there will be a new approach to quicken the process of disposals as the system in vogue does not serve the purpose; and

(e) whether there will be a move to pay interest to the tax payers for holding their money in the case of tax payers' money hold by the department?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S.PALANIMANICKAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Sir, The Income-tax Department has 3-tier Grievance redressal machinery as below:

(i) **Central Grievance Cell under Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes.** This cell functions directly under an officer of the rank of a Director to the Government of India.

(ii) **Regional Grievance Cell under each Chief Commissioner/ Director General of income-tax.** In places like Delhi, Kolkata Mumbai, Chennai etc. where there is more than one Chief Commissioner, the Regional Grievance Cell functions under the Chief Commissioner-I.

(iii) Where no Chief Commissioner or Director General is posted, Grievance Cell functions under the Commissioner of Income Tax.

In addition to this, we already have Income-tax Ombudsman in place with the objective of enabling the resolution of complaints relating to public grievances against the Income Tax Department and to facilitate the satisfaction or settlement of such complaints. One round of publicity was already given to this Institution, through advertisement in leading National and regional newspapers through DAVP. Necessary processing is being done to release a second round of advertisement/publicity through print/electronic media.

(c) Yes, Sir, it is effective.

(d) Sir, the institution of Ombudsman has been brought recently only with this purpose. His level of seniority and experience has ensured speedy disposal and effective implement of the settlement of grievance mechanism in the Income-tax Department.

(e) Sir, when the refund is delayed and the delay is attributable to the Department, interest is being paid to the assesses.