

- The Income tax department in India has initiated an E-proceeding facility for all taxpayers which is an expanded and extended form of e-assessment (audit) involving direct communication between the taxpayer and the Department for all Income Tax proceedings including assessment (audit).
- It is likely that Goods and Service Tax (GST) would be effective from 1 July 2017. GST will subsume all the indirect taxes and will be a game changer of these times. Under the GST regime, the registration number would be PAN based and the details furnished in the GST return would also be reported to Income Tax department. Also, the Tax Audit report would be furnished before the inspecting GST authority. Such dialogue between these tax departments would lead to reporting of consistent data by the taxpayer and would boost better, harmonized and efficient tax compliances within the Indian economy and widening of the tax base.
- Recently, the Provident Fund administrative charges have been reduced from 1.10% to 0.65% (change of .45%). This will reduce the overall tax rate in India.
- Payment of Employee State Insurance Corporation and Employee Provident Fund Organization contributions can now be made online through 58 banks, debit cards or credit cards.
- Sales tax department of Maharashtra has eliminated physical touch point for filing of tax returns, tax payment and tax compliances by introducing online return filing and online payment through GRAS (Government Receipt Accounting System) for VAT, CST, Profession tax, Luxury Tax and Entry Tax.
- In India, the revision of return of income is a completely online process and revision by itself is not a criteria for selection of a case for scrutiny (audit). In India, selection of a case for scrutiny is based on several parameters under the Computer Aided Selection for Scrutiny (CASS) program.

#### **Setting up of spice park in Telangana**

1939. SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to set up a Spice Park in Telangana;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to help chilli and turmeric farmers by integrating operations for cultivation, post harvest processing for value addition,

packaging, storage and export of spices and spice products by meeting the quality specifications of the consuming countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) Central Government has received proposal from the State Government of Telangana for establishing a Spice Park at Nizamabad for turmeric. It has been intimated to the State Government that the Spices Board would extend all technical support if land and funds for establishing the Spice park is provided by the State. Central Government has also approved the setting up of a Spice Development Agency (SDA) for Telangana having headquarters at Warangal for co-coordinating with the State/Central Agencies implementing programmes for research, production, marketing, quality improvement and export of spices, including chilli and turmeric.

(c) Government implements several programmes for providing assistance to spice farmers, including Chilli and Turmeric farmers, which, on one hand aim at increasing production and ensuring remunerative prices to farmers through pre and post-harvest management and support activities, and on the other hand assist the industry through adoption of upgraded technology in spice processing, setting up of quality evaluation labs, quality certification etc. for facilitating exports. Spices Board is implementing the "Export Oriented Production, Export Development and Promotion of Spices" Scheme wherein assistance is provided to spices farmers which, *inter alia*, includes development of infrastructure for common processing facilities in Spice Parks, adaptation of upgraded technology in spice processing, setting up of quality evaluation labs for sampling and testing of the export consignments for meeting quality specifications of consuming countries, assistance to farmers on post-harvest quality improvement, imparting training to farmers in Good Agricultural Practices etc.

#### **Boosting trade ties with Africa**

1940. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that India aims to boost trade ties with African nations;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that India took necessary steps in this regard during the annual meeting of the African Development Bank in Gujarat recently; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. Various steps