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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

Finance Minister: There is a need for move towards a mindset of voluntary compliance and payment of legitimate taxes should be considered as part of the process and nobody should think that tax evasion is acceptable; Payment of due tax is a responsibility of every citizen; Coordination between the Central and the State administration is important for smooth transition of GST regime so that the taxpayer of the country does not suffer.

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The Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley said that there is an urgent need for change in mindset and India has to move towards a mindset of voluntary compliance. He said that the payment of legitimate taxes should be considered as part of the process and nobody should think that tax evasion is acceptable. The Finance Minister further said that the payment of due tax is a responsibility of every citizen. The Finance Minister was delivering the Inaugural Address after inaugurating the Professional Training Course of 68th Batch of IRS (C&CE) Officer Trainees at National Academy of Customs, Excise and Narcotics (NACEN) in Faridabad (Haryana) today. Addressing the young IRS Officers, the Finance Minister inspired them to be hardworking and efficient while ensuring integrity and credibility in their careers. The Finance Minister expressed his faith in the probationers to be able to carry-out the onerous task of smooth rolling-out and administering the new indirect tax administration system i.e. Goods and Services Tax (GST). Shri Jaitley impressed upon the gathering the importance of coordination between the Central and the State administrations in smooth transition from the old to the new Indirect Tax regime so that the taxpayer of the country does not suffer. The Finance Minister also reminded the officers that the economy of the country is undergoing major changes and that shall continue to challenge them to be capable officers at every stage of their career. The Finance Minister stressed on the ‘Culture of Correctness’ and ‘Fairness’ that every officer should follow in their work as Revenue Officers. He also wished NACEN well in the construction of the new Training Campus and Academy in Palasamudram, Hindupur, Andhra Pradesh. He concluded his address by motivating the officer trainees to train well and become officers who can lead this country into economic glory.

Along with the Union Minister of Finance, Shri Arun Jaitley, Chairman of Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC), Mr. Najib Shah, Members of the Central Board of Excise and Customs – Smt. Vanaja Sarna, Shri Ram Tirth and Shri S Ramesh also graced

the occasion with their presence. The function was also attended by senior district authorities including the Municipal Commissioner of Faridabad, Ms. Sonal Goel.

Earlier, the event commenced with traditional lighting of the lamp and presentation of a sapling to the Union Finance Minister.

In his Welcome Address, the Director General of NACEN, Shri P.K. Dash spoke about the history of NACEN and introduced the 68th Batch to the gathering. The strength of 68th Batch of IRS(C&CE) is 186 officer trainees, consisting of 32 female officers and 154 male officers, including 5 Bhutanese Officers. The average age of the batch is 28, with the youngest probationer being 23 years old. The batch consists of 50 per cent engineers, 16 per cent Doctors, 11 per cent MBAs, 3 per cent Law graduates, 2.2 per cent PhD awardees, 11 per cent Masters and 4.9 per cent Bachelors degree holders. The Director General also thanked the Finance Minister for backing NACEN's efforts to develop a new state-of-the-art world class academy at Palasamudram, Andhra Pradesh.

The Chairman, CBEC, Mr. Najib Shah in his address talked about the content and process of training that the IRS (C&CE) probationers undergo while at NACEN. He also stressed on the importance of the IRS(C&CE) Officers in guarding the economic frontiers of the country as well as facilitating the trade for which CBEC has taken lot of initiatives in the recent past.

The event concluded with a Vote of Thanks by the Associate Course Director of NACEN.

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