

Calcutta Chamber of Commerce hosts special GST session on return filing challenges

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The Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, one of India's oldest and most esteemed trade organisations, established in 1830, successfully conducted a Special Session on "GST – Key Issues in Return Filing" at its premises in Kolkata. The session brought together senior tax officials, GST specialists, and members of the business community to discuss recent amendments and ongoing challenges in the area of GST return filing.

The event was attended by Mr. Avijit Kumar De, Assistant Commissioner, CGST & CX, Pr. CCO, Kolkata Zone, Department of Central Goods and Services Tax & Central Excise, Government of India, and CA Shivani Agarwalla, Chartered Accountant, GST Expert and National Faculty, GST, ICAI, as Guests of Honour.

The session commenced with a welcome address by Mr. Hari Shankar Halwasiya, President of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce. "At the Calcutta Chamber, we have consistently sought to create platforms for con-

structive dialogue. With the GST framework continually evolving, it is vital for businesses to stay informed and compliant. This session reflects our commitment to assisting industry in adapting to regulatory changes," he remarked.

In his address, Mr. Avijit Kumar Destressed the importance of compliance and adherence to correct procedures in GST return filing. He noted that while it is the taxpayer's responsibility to ensure timely and accurate submissions, it is equally the department's duty to conduct lawful scrutiny of returns. He indicated that the session would examine common issues related to return filing, departmental scrutiny, and possible challenges during audits and investigations. Mr. De also assured attendees of his willingness to respond to their concerns and provide practical guidance to navigate routine interactions with GST authorities.

CA Shivani Agarwalla offered an overview of the complexities within the GST regime, which, despite being envisioned as a "Good and Simple Tax," still presents

challenges in interpretation and application. She outlined the transition from excise and service tax to GST's supply-based taxation, and highlighted areas such as retrospective amendments, judicial decisions, misclassification issues, and on-the-spot recoveries. She concluded by encouraging businesses to be well-versed in their legal rights, including the right to a fair hearing under the GST law.

The session was moderated by Mr. Madhav Prasad Sureka, Chairman of the Tax Committee and Past President of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce. He led a dynamic discussion between the panel and attendees, ensuring that the concerns of the trade community were acknowledged and explored.

Also in attendance were Mr. Anant Saharia, Senior Vice President of the Chamber, members of the Executive Committee, and professionals from a range of industries.

The event reaffirmed the Chamber's ongoing efforts to promote regulatory awareness, encourage dialogue, and support policy advocacy to enhance the ease of doing business in India.

