

New tax portal to make self-filing a breeze

Be doubly cautious if filing via a mobile app

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The income-tax (I-T) department will launch its new tax e-filing portal incometax.gov.in on June 7. It will replace the existing one — incometaxindiaefiling.gov.in. Not only will the new portal be mobile friendly, a mobile application (app) will also be provided.

Experts say the new portal is likely to be user-friendly. Anyone with a mobile phone will be able to file their tax returns and pay dues without a tax consultant's assistance.

Quick refund

The new portal will be integrated with the I-T department's central processing centre. This is expected to speed up the processing of I-T returns (ITR).

Says Gopal Bohra, partner, N A Shah Associates:

"Taxpayers can expect a quick refund after filing their tax returns on the new e-filing portal." The availability of a mobile app means taxpayers will be able to access critical information faster. Currently, there is a different portal for reporting compliance in matters like specified financial transactions. The compliance/reporting



NOT TAXING ANYMORE

Many hand-holding tools to assist self-filers

- Free-of-cost tax return preparation software available online and offline with interactive question-answer format
- New call centre for taxpayer assistance that will provide immediate answers to queries via chatbot and live agent
- FAQs, tutorials, and videos also available
- Multiple payment options available, such as netbanking, UPI, credit card, and RTGS/NEFT

portal will be integrated into the new e-filing portal.

New dashboard

Once a user logs in, he will see a dashboard where he will be able to view, and act upon, all pending actions. Take for instance a notice under Section 245 of the I-T Act, which calls for adjusting a refund against an earlier demand. The taxpayer must be first given an opportunity to reply, and either accept or refuse such adjustment.

Says Vivek Jalan of Tax Connect Advisory Services, a multidisciplinary consulting firm: "On the new portal, any such notice will show up on the dashboard. On the old one, various pending actions could be viewed at different places."

Pre-filled forms

Pre-filled ITR forms with more

data will be available on both the portal and the app.

Says Abhishek Rastogi, partner, Khaitan & Company: "The pre-filled details will provide a lot of ease in computation and data gathering. However, the system-generated information must be checked before being submitted."

Rastogi adds that in future many people will file their tax returns via their mobile phones. Such tax filers will need to be even more cautious to ensure all details they file are correct.

Adds Bohra: "Taxpayers must reconcile the pre-filled figures with their back-up documents to ensure they don't miss out on reporting any income or report the same income twice."

Proceed with caution

Once the new portal is up and running, taxpayers should first familiarise themselves with it before using it for any compliance purpose.

"Even the I-T department has issued directions to fix case hearings or compliances only from June 10 to give taxpayers time to adapt to the system," says Suresh Surana, founder, RSM India.

Adds Rastogi: "Initially, technical or system glitches may occur. Keep screenshots which you can place as evidence if required."

While paying your tax dues, mention the correct permanent account number (PAN) and assessment year.

"The payment will reflect on the PAN and the assessment year that has been mentioned," says Kapil Rana, founder and chairman, HostBooks.

Almost every Section of the I-T Act has been widely litigated due to differences in interpretation between taxpayers and the department.

Says Jalan: "In fact, on the same issue, sometimes different high courts have taken conflicting stands. Hence, in case of any substantial financial transaction, be careful on the treatment."

In other words, get clarity on which interpretation applies to your case. Similarly, be cautious while replying to notices.

"An incorrect reply could have financial implications," cautions Jalan.

Finally, every time a new government portal or app is announced, numerous counterfeits spring up. So, type in the correct uniform resource locator for the website and download the bona fide app.

