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PRESS RELEASE

A book “Let us Share”, a publication by the Income Tax department, was released on 4th February 2009 in a public function held at Mavlankar Hall, Rafi Marg, New Delhi by the Minister of State for Finance (Revenue) Shri S. S. Palanimanikkam. The function, organized by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) and the Delhi Chief Commissionerate of the Income Tax Department (ITD) was attended by senior officials, representatives of industry, commerce and professions, and other eminent personalities.

“Let us Share”, which began as an exercise for managing knowledge within the ITD as part of its institutional memory, has now been made public. The idea to share its practices and orders with the public is a testimony to the commitment for openness and transparency with which the department seeks to function.

There is considerable public interest in the internal processes, investigative tools and decision-making mechanism within the Income Tax department. “Let us Share” unveiled these for the benefit of the public for the first time. The readers will find how the department seized huge cash at the airport from a taxpayer on the basis of his cell phone number using ITPS, a data-mining tool enabling 360° profiling of the taxpayer, within an hour’s time. The compilation also unravels the preparations that go into making representation before judicial authorities, as in the much talked about Vodafone case.

The book has an interesting collection of tax scrutiny orders showcasing investigations conducted by the Tax department with telling results and appellate orders containing persuasive and innovative interpretations of law. It includes a variety of search and seizure cases outlining modus operandi of tax evasion, revealing how the investigation wing of the ITD across the country tackled evasion through sustained inquiries and real time surveillance of tax evaders.

The ITD’s attempt in sharing its experience with the public for the first time is in tune with the philosophy underlying the Right to Information Act, i.e. transparency and openness. Through this compilation, which portrays many facets of its work, the ITD also seeks to foster partnership with the public for better appreciation and compliance of tax laws and its fight against tax evasion.

The ITD faces many challenges. It has to contend with complex accounts, ingenious methods of tax evasion, continuously evolving tax laws, complicated cross border transactions and so on, so as to keep pace with these changes. It also has to contend with litigation at various levels. Simultaneously, the ITD also strives to improve

taxpayer services. The emphasis on taxpayer services reflects the changing role of the ITD from an exclusive enforcement agency to a quality service provider. Through “Let us Share”, the department hopes to raise the bar in its journey towards excellence and seek the co-operation of the discerning public in its endeavours.

Outlining the above idea behind publication of the book and summarizing its contents in her keynote address, Smt. Saroj Bala, Member (Revenue), CBDT, assured the Hon’ble Minister and everyone who had assembled in the function and the public in general through the media that the Income Tax Department will collect taxes from the rich and wealthy to provide succour to the poor and the needy just as the gentle rays of the Sun fall on the ocean and carry the life-giving water to parched lands as rain.

In his address, the Hon’ble Minister of State for Finance (Revenue), Shri S.S. Palanimanikkam congratulated the Income Tax Department for taking a big leap and a bold step in the cause of good governance by releasing the book, thereby bringing more transparency in governance. He said the people are entitled to know what the government does and how it functions, and that this effort of the Income Tax department will make other departments also wake up and adopt measures, which are oriented to address welfare of the people.

A new web site with URL <http://incometaxindiapr.gov.in> was also launched on the occasion. The web site, apart from providing linkages of use to taxpayers in an organized manner, contains latest publications in the taxpayer-education series on filing of tax returns, taxation of salaries, valuation of perquisites, computation of house property income and capital gains, and booklets on TDS and FBT, which can be downloaded free.