

**Press Information Bureau
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FM: Government is working on a target date of 1st April, 2017 for the roll out of the Goods and Service Tax (GST) in the country.

The Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley said that the Government is working on a target date of 1st April, 2017 for the roll out of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in the country. He said that till 16th September, 2017, that is one year after the provisions of the Constitution (101st Amendment) Act, 2016 being brought into force, the Constitution empowers the Central Government to levy excise duty on manufacturing; and service tax on the supply of services. The Finance Minister said that similarly the Constitution Amendment Act empowers the State Governments to levy sales tax or Value Added Tax (VAT) on the sale of goods till that time i.e. 16th September, 2016. The Finance Minister Shri Jaitley said that so far the Government is following the road map for implementation of GST as per the schedule. The Finance Minister Shri Jaitley was making his Opening Remarks at the Fourth Meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee attached to the Ministry of Finance held here today. The subject of today's Meeting was the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

The Finance Minister Shri Jaitley further said that the First Meeting of the GST Council was held in a very cordial and constructive environment earlier this month and today, he will hold the Second Meeting of the GST Council. In the GST regime, the GST Council has been created under Article 279A of the Constitution. The GST Council is a joint forum of the Centre and the States. The Council will take decisions on important issues like tax rates, exemption list and threshold limits etc.

Thereafter, the Members of Consultative Committee who participated in today's Meeting sought various clarifications with regard to GST Law and gave suggestions for its better implementation. Some of the major suggestions include need for absolute clarity and transparency with regard to where taxes will be collected, assessed and where the appeal will be filed in case of GST regime. The members said that it will be challenging task to tackle complex situation arising-out of implementation of GST law in a federal system. Some of the members suggested there is a need for launching a large scale Awareness Campaign especially for the small traders as most of them are still unaware about the complex procedures and processes under GST regime including for registration and filing of returns etc. Some of the members suggested that availability of IT network in all parts of the country, especially in small towns and rural areas, must be ensured as GST system will work only online. Some of the members appreciated the initiative of the Government in getting the GST law passed by both the Houses of Parliament as well as its commitment to implement it in a time bound manner. The members hoped that this law will bring

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Lunawat & Co.

Chartered Accountants

E-mail: ca@lunawat.com, lunawat@vsnl.com.

Website: www.lunawat.com.

relief to the common man by exempting certain essential items from GST and moderate rate of taxation on other items which in turn will bring down the prices of common man consumption items as well as cost of living at large.

Along with the Union Finance Minister, Shri Arun Jaitley, Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar, Minister of State for Finance, the Members of the Consultative Committee who participated in the today's Meeting include Shri Baijayanta Jai Panda, Shri Dilip Kumar Mansukhlal Gandhi, Shri Kailkesh Narayan Singh Deo, Shri Prabhatsinh Chauhan, Shri Ram Charitra Nishad, Shri Subhash Chandra Baheria and Shri Suresh Chanabassappa Angadi (all members of Lok Sabha); Shri Anil Desai, Shri Digvijaya Singh, Shri Rajkumar Doot and Shri Satish Chandra Misra (all members of Rajya Sabha) .

Among the officers who attended the Consultative Committee Meeting include Shri Ashok Lavasa, Finance Secretary, Shri Shaktikanta Das, Secretary, DEA, Dr. Hasmukh Adhia, Revenue Secretary, Ms. Anjuly Chib Dugal, Secretary, Financial Services, Shri Neeraj Kumar Gupta, Secretary, DIPAM, Dr. Arvind Subramanian, Chief Economic Adviser (CEA), Chairman, CBEC Shri Najib Shah and other senior officers of the Ministry of Finance.

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