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'Taxmen won't visit jewellers' premises'

K M Sharma



Central Excise and Service Tax chief commissioner Sheo Narayan Singh in Patna on Tuesday

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Patna: Central Excise and Service Tax (CEST) chief commissioner Sheo Narayan Singh has sought to allay the fears of jewellers, who are on strike against the levy proposed in the Union Budget on ornaments, saying the new duty will not bring back 'inspector raj' as taxmen will not visit their premises.

"Since everything is online, there will be no physical verification of the jeweller's premises. It is a voluntary levy which should be declared and deposited on the basis of self-assessment," Singh said at a press meet here on Tuesday.

Jewellers have been on strike since the announcement of the tax in the Budget, resulting in revenue losses worth crores.

Singh explained small-scale manufacturers with a turnover of Rs 6 crore or less had been exempt from the duty while those with a turnover between Rs 6 crore and Rs 12 crore would be given an exemption of up to Rs 6 crore while calculating the tax. A certificate from a chartered accountant ba-

sed on the books of accounts of last two financial years will be sufficient for claiming the exemption.

Silver jewellery ornaments, except those studded with precious stones, do not have to pay the new tax. "The Union finance minister has already ruled out a rollback. It is a step towards implementing the Goods and Services Tax, which will cover almost everything," Singh said.

"No official will ever visit your premises for this tax. In case of any official harassing you, you can complain to us and strict action will be taken against the official concerned," Singh assured the jewellers and added he would hold interactive sessions with trade bodies in the city to dispel their fears.

A helpline number, 0612-2504294, has been launched for jewellers to lodge their grievances, if any.

To ease the process of payment of the new duty, facility will be provided for optional centralised registration of all premises and for accepting previous VAT or BIS records for central excise purposes; Sheo Narayan Singh said.