

## **I-T dept gets kudos for faster refunds**

The government has speeded up tax refund swith some taxpayers getting them within a week of filing returns. The quick response has helped the tax department win accolades - a rarity given that in the past it has faced criticism for holding up refunds to show healthier government finances.

"Historic! I-T refund in less than a month of filing! Jai Ho!" tweeted Bhaskar Bhattacharya, a former MNC executive. Others such as chartered accountant Kamlesh Vikamsey and Krish tweeted that they received refunds within a week and 10 days, respectively.

Although there are cases of taxpayers still complaining of delayed refunds, officials said there are fewer instances than in the past. The government is now looking to improve the process further. "Have noted the other suggestions regarding I-T refunds. Will have them looked into," revenue secretary Shaktikanta Das tweeted.

During April and May 2015, refunds are estimated to have increased to Rs 39,000 crore, compared to around Rs 32,000 crore a year ago, sources said. In number terms, the increase is more impressive with 39 lakh refund cases being cleared during the first two months of this fiscal year, compared to around 20 lakh last year, pointing to a near doubling of the cases.

In fact, the process has become smoother from the last financial year itself as the government issued refunds of Rs 1.12 lakh crore, compared to Rs 89,000 crore in 2013-14 - an increase of around 26%. In all, over 1.35 crore refunds were issued during 2014-15, which was 31% higher than the 1.03 crore refund cases in the previous financial year.

*(Times of India)*