

Income tax offices, Ayakar Seva Kendras to remain open on March 29-31 for returns filing

The Ministry of Finance said that in order to help taxpayers file their returns income tax offices and Ayakar Seva Kendras (ASK) would remain open from March 29 to 31. March 29 is Mahaveer Jayanti, March 30 is Good Friday and March 31, the last day of the financial year is a Saturday. The last day of belated tax filing for the year 2016-17, along with the regular filing for 2017-18 taxes is March 31.

"To facilitate filing of Income Tax returns and completion of associated work, all income tax offices throughout India shall remain open from March 29-31, 2018. The ASK centres will also be kept open on these days. All efforts will be made to provide assistance to taxpayers and to facilitate filing of returns by them," the finance ministry said.

Due to this 5-day long holiday rumours and speculations on social media were running rife that banks would be non-operational for five days, leading to obstruction of day-to-day bank dealings. The reports also said that cash would dry up as no ATMs would be refilled during those five days.

Putting these speculations to rest, a union leader clarified that Saturday, March 31, would be a working day. D Thomas Franco Rajendra Dev, General Secretary of All India Bank Officers Confederation told IANS, "Banks will work on March 31 (Saturday) and there is no continuous holidays as per messages on social media."

Contrary to what was previously believed, March 31 is the fifth Saturday of the month and hence will be a working day, unlike second and fourth Saturdays. Some banks are also planning to work full time on Saturday, while in some only corporate offices might stay open. ATMs are most likely to function smoothly, as maintenance of ATMs are outsourced to third parties.

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