

## **Reasonable taxation, ease of doing business govt's priority: FM**

*Says maintaining the speed of reforms and eliminating discretions would be the thrust areas of the govt going forward as it completes one year in office*

Making taxation more reasonable and improving ease of doing business will be among his top priorities going ahead, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said on Sunday, as he outlined the economic road map of the Narendra Modi government for its second year.

The government will also strive to maintain the speed of reforms, he said.

The finance minister also dismissed any perception that nothing has moved on the ground on the policy front in reviving the economy and said that such a view was confined only to a section of critics.

Answering a question about voices from India Inc complaining that the government was not walking the talk, Jaitley said there was no such “overwhelming perception”.

Some reports complaining about the economy not having taken off were “inspired news items referring to a dozen people without naming a single”, he said.

The minister said that a section of corporates voicing disappointment were those who were used to a “system of largesses”. On taxation, Jaitley said, the effort would be to make it “more reasonable”.

The government, which came to power in May last year, plans to roll out a common goods and services tax (GST) by April 1, 2016. On indirect taxes, he said, the corporate tax rate would be brought down to 25 per cent from 30 per cent over a period of four years.

The government also intends to eliminate the exemptions while reducing the rate of corporate tax, though these would be retained for the individual taxpayers.

“I would keep exemptions but keep that for individual tax payers and in the last two years I have strengthened the kind of exemptions,” he said, adding it would help in increasing demand and promoting growth.

Speaking about the challenges before the government, he said: “One, there is a huge road map how to ease your doing business here...I would say (that) is work in progress”.

To help boost private investment and improve execution of projects, the effort would be to replace the practice of giving permissions and push the pending legislations such as GST and the land acquisition law, Jaitley said.

*(Business Standard)*