

Bengal ranked top state in terms of EODB reforms

Pradip Chatterjee | 14 March 2018 10:40 PM

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Kolkata: The Mamata Banerjee government has secured the first position among all states for carrying out major reforms in the sphere of 'Ease of Doing Business' (EODB) in various departments.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday tweeted: "Bengal continues to be No.1 in the country in Ease of Doing Business as per the latest announcement of the department of Industrial Policy & Promotion, government of India. It is all due to our regular and extensive monitoring, right from the grass root level to the state secretariat level, to ensure that projects are implemented on time with minimum hassle. We have to keep this up. My best wishes to all."

An evaluation has been carried out by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), under the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry in the category of "Business Reforms Action Plan 2017", where Bengal has scored 99.73 percent for bringing reforms in regulatory process, policies, practices and procedures spreading across 12 reform areas.

The top five reforms which have been implemented by the state government, fall under different parameters such as access to information and transparency enablers, introducing the single window system for business, availability of land, construction permit enablers and environmental registration enablers.

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It may be mentioned that after coming to power, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had laid enormous stress on EODB to woo more investors to the state. She had also sent a clear message to all the top government officials that a lackadaisical approach would not be tolerated and asked to overcome the age-old practice of "red tapism" in the bureaucracy.

Bengal government has secured 369 reform points in various government projects, thereby cementing its place on the top position, followed by Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. It has been learnt that among the others, the state Labour department has performed exceptionally well. Out of 369, the Labour department has bagged 106 reform points.

The DIPP carried out a comprehensive business-to-government feedback exercise, on the basis of reform evidences submitted by various state governments.

Feedback was also received from businesses on the quality of implementation of the reforms, as claimed by various state governments.

The feedback scores have been used to generate ranking card of states/UTs in terms of reform implementations.

The DIPP, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in partnership with the World Bank Group, released the Business Reform Action Plan (BRAP) 2017 in April last year, for the implementation of various policies by the states and union territories.

The BRAP includes 405 recommendations in 12 reform areas, that include labour regulation enablers, contract enforcement, registering property, inspection reform enablers, single window system, land availability and allotment, construction permit enablers, environmental registration enablers, obtaining utility permits, paying taxes, access to information, transparency enablers and sector specific reforms, spanning the lifecycle of a typical business.

There were 103 new set of reforms introduced last year, focusing on central inspection system, online land allotment system, online single window system for granting construction permits, registration under Inter State Migrant Workmen (RE&CS) Act, 1979, approval for boiler manufacturer and boiler erector etc.

A senior official of the EODB cell of West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation (WBIDC), the implementing agency in the state, on condition of anonymity said: "All the government departments have performed exceptionally well, as a result of which we have been able to score 99.73 percent in the DIPP rankings. It means all the departments have fulfilled the reform parameters."