

# GST has hit exports and small enterprises, says Amit Mitra

Reiterates demand for white paper on GST rollout impact

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GST rollout has hit exports; it has neither benefited small and medium enterprises nor has there been a smooth transition to the new regime, West Bengal Finance and Industry Minister Amit Mitra, has said.

After an apparent pro-industry stand by extending support for the GST, the ruling Trinamool Congress has gone all-out in opposing the tax regime. From multiplicity of tax slabs to inconvenience to small traders, the party has raised a variety of issues.

### 'Suggestions ignored'

Mitra, addressing industrialists at the Assocham (Associated

Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India) managing committee meeting held in the city on Thursday, criticised the Centre for not heeding his suggestions on the troubles that could crop up during GST rollout.

"We had foreseen the troubles that would arise during the switch to GST and accordingly, I had requested a postponement. I had also asked for a white paper on GST preparedness. These were ignored," the Minister said.

"SMEs are in jeopardy and now I come to know that even exports have been hit. I have asked (Arun) Jaitley ji to produce a white paper and call an emergency meeting. The matter has to be taken up at the GST Council. People are desperate," he added.

Mitra urged the apex industry body Assocham to speak out on the difficulties they face because of the new tax regime. He asked the industry body to "give in-



West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra speaks during the 4th Managing Committee meeting of ASSOCHAM in Kolkata on Thursday

puts" to him so that their issues can be taken up at the right forum.

### Invest in Bengal

Mitra also sought investments from Assocham. He asked the industrialists to invest not just in projects but in human capital improvement also, through adop-

tion of ITIs, training programmes and so on. Investments, he said, were coming in sectors such as cement, mining, industrial and garment parks and so on.

Assocham released a study, 'Most Backward Regions of West Bengal', in which it highlighted the industry body's development strategy.