PRESS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL OF INDIA

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AUDITS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING GOVERNANCE MORE RESPONSIVE TO PEOPLE'S NEEDS says PM

TWO DAY CELEBRATIONS OF AUDIT DIWAS CONCLUDE TODAY

CAG celebrated Audit Diwas and held the Accountants General Conclave today on the theme of 'Fostering Excellence – People, Process and Partnerships'. Audit Diwas marks the setting up of the office of the Auditor General on 16 November 1860.

In his message Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi conveyed his best wishes to the CAG and all officers and staff of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department. He said "*Audit insights relating to the ease of doing business for MSMEs, ease of living in urban areas and the functioning of local bodies can help governments improve their policies and delivery of public services. Thus, audits can contribute to making governance more responsive to people's needs and more efficient in the utilisation of resources.*"

He further stated that "*Emerging technologies offer useful tools to examine large volumes of financial data and identify unusual patterns. They can make the work of auditors more effective, but it is the experience of the professionals and their independent judgement that give audit its true value. As emerging technologies reshape different domains, the Indian Audit and Accounts Department's ability to adapt and equip its officials with new capabilities will become increasingly important."*

Addressing the gathering, the CAG of India, Shri K Sanjay Murthy said that the job of the Department goes beyond protecting public money and is also about earning people's trust. To earn that trust, the Department must examine the issues that matter to people and draw conclusions that the evidence can sustain.

He recalled the address of the Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu at Audit Diwas 2023, who expected the institution to act as a fellow traveller and a guide in the nation's journey of development. The CAG said that the reforms of the last two years, like breaking

departmental silos, auditing themes like ease of living and ease of doing business, and focusing on local bodies, take the Department in this direction.

He said that the task of the Department that the accounts of local bodies are prepared on time and are reliable. He also spoke of the steps taken to reduce arrears in the accounts of autonomous bodies and to help their management in assessing their risks and control systems.

Acknowledging the Hon'ble Prime Minister's message about the need for the Institution to adapt and equip its officials accordingly, the CAG highlighted the various capacity-building efforts that have been initiated to strengthen domain expertise.

Speaking about the data-led audit, Shri Murthy said that access to the digital systems allow audit teams to examine full sets of transactions, and that analysis of data ahead of fieldwork guides field enquiries and has shortened the audit cycle. The Department is building audit-specific AI rather than relying on general AI tools alone, and the projects ready for pan-India rollout.

In his key note address Shri R. Gopalakrishnan, former Executive Director, Tata Sons said that executives in institutions like CAG should keep asking whether their organisation is future ready, and that reflection on one's own institution has to go along with openness to ideas from outside. He said that adaptability has become a leadership issue over the last half century and drew three lessons: adaptation is continual and not episodic, the pursuit of adaptability has to be obsessive, and adaptive responses rest on interpreting the future and not on awareness of the past.

A book on the Institution of the CAG of India, brought out by the National Book Trust, was also released. While releasing the book the Director of National Book Trust, Shri Yuvraj Malik described CAG as one of the few public institutions in the history of Indian republic that has steadfastly upheld its credibility, public trust, efficiency, vision and integrity while continuously evolving and successfully standing the test of time. Highlighting the changing role of Audit, Shri Malik said the CAG and its officers are unsung Heros and it has moved beyond fault finding to becoming an instrument of value addition to the process of good governance.

In the two days deliberations, innovations and best practices across offices were presented. Detailed session on further improving stakeholder consultation, capacity building and in capturing the vision and expectations were held.

Awards for innovation and excellence

The CAG presented the CAG's Awards for Innovation and Excellence in Public Auditing and Accounting to six teams . Further prizes were also given to six teams under CAG's 101 Innovative ideas initiatives.

Prizes were given to the seven national-level winners of the CAG–ICSSR Research Article Competition. The competition followed the CAG–ICSSR Colloquium Series, which was held in 28 States and 3 Union Territories and brought together about 20,000 auditors, academicians and students.

An Executive MBA programme for officers of IA&AD, in collaboration with IIM Mumbai, was launched in the presence of Prof. Manoj Kumar Tiwari, Director, IIM Mumbai. The programme will give officers training in management, strategy and decision-making which will be immense useful for officials to assessing the performance of various programmes and schemes in the changing environment.

Former CAGs of India, Members of the Audit Advisory Board, senior officers of the Government, the Senior Management of the CAG, Heads of Department and officers of audit and accounts offices from across the country attended the Audit Diwas function.



CAG SHRI K SANJAY MURTHY ADDRESSING THE GATHERING AT THE AUDIT DIWAS IN NEW DELHI

The following is the text of the Hon'ble Prime Ministers' message at the Audit Diwas.

I extend my greetings to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India and all officers and staff of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department on the occasion of Audit Diwas. It is a matter of great pride that the Department has completed 150 years of service. Best wishes to everyone associated with the Department on this occasion.

India has a long tradition of accounting and accountable governance. Our history shows the importance given to the careful use of public resources. These values remain relevant as we work towards building a modern and developed India.

The CAG occupies an important place in India's democratic framework. Its constitutional mandate of independent audit is central to ensuring transparency and accountability in public finances. Audit insights relating to the ease of doing business for MSMEs, ease of living in urban areas and the functioning of local bodies can help governments improve their policies and delivery of public services. Thus, audits can contribute to making governance more responsive to people's needs and more efficient in the utilisation of resources.

In recent years, India has undertaken important reforms to improve the management of public finances. Technology-driven financial systems and digital platforms have made government processes more efficient and transparent.

Emerging technologies offer useful tools to examine large volumes of financial data and identify unusual patterns. They can make the work of auditors more effective, but it is the experience of the professionals and their independent judgement that give audit its true value. As emerging technologies reshape different domains, the Indian Audit and Accounts Department's ability to adapt and equip its officials with new capabilities will become increasingly important.

As India moves forward with the vision of Viksit Bharat, the effective use of public resources will be vital to achieving our national aspirations. I am confident that the CAG and the Indian Audit and Accounts Department will continue to uphold their standards while helping governments improve the quality of governance and ensure that public expenditure serves the people.

Best wishes again to the CAG and all officers and staff of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department.

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