Green shoots in economy? At 4.27 crore in June, e-way bills coming back to pre-lockdown levels

Bill generation hits 18.32 lakh, valued at over ₹54,500 crore, on June 30

**OUR BUREAU**

New Delhi, July 5

E-way bill generation is inching towards pre-lockdown levels, with more than 4.27 crore bills generated in June, against an average of 5.3 crore per month in the pre-Covid period.

To curb tax evasion, the government has introduced the e-way bill system for inter- and intra-State trade. The bill, which is to be carried by the person in charge of a consignment of goods of value exceeding ₹50,000, is generated from the GST Common Portal. The validity of the e-way bill depends on the distance that the goods have to be transported.

An upsurge in e-way bills is seen to signal a pick-up in economic activity, as it reflects an improvement in the movement of goods.

According to data released by the GST Network, the IT backbone of the indirect tax regime, with the phase-wise relaxation in lockdown, e-way bill generation reached 18.32 lakh, with a value of over ₹54,500 crore, on June 30, the last day of Unlock 1.0. Both the numbers are the highest in their respective categories since the enforcement of the lockdown.

E-way bill generation, which used to be around 20 lakh a day pre-Covid, came down drastically after the enforcement of the lockdown in March. The month witnessed the steepest fall, with e-way bill generation plunging to about 0.49 lakh on March 25.

In a month-on-month comparison, April witnessed a sharp dip at 84.53 lakh e-way bills, valued at ₹3.9-lakh crore.

*‘Gathering pace’*

With easing restrictions, the number grew rapidly over May and June. The data substantiate that the economy is gathering pace with the movement of goods rebounding to close to pre-lockdown levels and GST collections rising sharply, said experts.

“The upward trend means Unlock 2.0 is going to have more reasons to cheer,” said the GSTN. It added that as part of easing the compliance burden, the e-way bill validity was extended to ensure the hassle-free movement of cargo that were stuck on highways during the lockdown.