

BUSINESSES FACING A RESET IN EXISTING PRACTICES: NIRMALA SITHARAMAN

Reform momentum to continue, more active steps being taken up, says FM

ENSECONOMIC BUREAU
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FINANCE MINISTER Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday the government will continue the momentum on economic reforms that has gathered pace during the times of the Covid-19 pandemic. She said the financial sector is being professionalised and the government will continue with disinvestment agenda.

"Even at the time (of) COVID pandemic, the Prime Minister has not lost an opportunity to take deep reforms, to undertake those kinds of reforms which have not seen the light of the day over the decades... The momentum for reform shall continue. Several more active reform-related steps are being taken up," she said while addressing the National MNCs conference organised by industry

chamber Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

The National Infrastructure Pipeline, announced by the government, has attracted attention of large global sovereign wealth funds, who would also get tax concession on their investments. The incentive applies to income earned as dividend, interest or as long-term capital gains on long term investments in a company carrying on the business of infrastructure development.

Sitharaman said the government, as part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, encouraging the setting up of dedicated special manufacturing zones for the production of pharma, medical devices and APIs in several states. The government would continue its focus on disinvestment and privatisation. "Disinvestment agenda continues. We shall go with greater momentum in getting pri-

EXPLAINED **E** Assuring investors

LEADING GLOBAL investors have expressed interest in bringing long-term capital into India, especially in the infrastructure sector. The Finance Minister assured investors that continued reforms push along with tax incentives make India an attractive investment destination.

vatation—that which has been cleared by the Cabinet — to go forward," she said.

The government has set a target of Rs 2.1 lakh crore of receipts through disinvestments, includ-

ing the initial public offer of LIC and stake sale in IDBI Bank. As part of the privatisation plans, the government has cleared plans for complete sale of its equity in Air India, BPCL, Shipping Corporation of India Ltd, while approving majority stake sale in Container Corporation of India along with transfer of management control.

Most companies are facing a reset in existing practices as the pandemic has changed the ways of business. The government has also opened up many of the sectors including defence, nuclear energy and space for private sector as well as foreign investments. She said the thrust on policies will be to promote investment activity in the economy.

"We will have to make sure that policies are right to make India an attractive investment destination," she said.