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अध्यक्ष
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केन्द्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर एवं सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड
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Dear Colleague

As we are about to turn the last pages of an eventful month of April, there is satisfaction that we have not let down our vigil despite the constraints that the difficult period we are going through has imposed on us. Our intelligence units and field formations continue to thwart attempts of unscrupulous people to evade duty or smuggle goods as is evident from the major cases booked last week and highlighted below. My congratulations to the officers who continued to be alert and have meticulously worked out and executed these cases.

The DGGI Delhi Zonal unit has booked an important case involving non-payment of IGST on free-of-cost import of software by a major software company whose sister company is based abroad and recovered the entire duty amount of Rs 22.68 crore for the period July, 2017 to March, 2020. DRI Lucknow Zonal Unit too has interdicted goods of a syndicate indulging in the import of grossly overvalued 'Fragrance Oil/ Perfumery Compound', storing them in duty-free warehouses or SEZs without payment of duty, and exporting them directly or through front/dummy companies. Investigations have revealed a foreign exchange component of almost Rs 5500 Crore so far in this carousel fraud. The extent of overvaluation is more than 100 times the normal value. Goods having a declared value of more than Rs.150 crore relating to the firms involved have been seized/detained. Further investigation is in progress.

Chennai Air Customs during its close vigil at the foreign post office narrowed down on a parcel which had arrived from USA destined to East Godavari district. 1.7 kg Cannabis of foreign origin valued at Rs. 9 lakhs was found concealed in sleeping bags in the carton box and was seized under the NDPS Act, 1985.

The other notable work by the department includes the expeditious disposal of refund/drawback claims during the ongoing 'Special Refund Drive'. We have been able to process approximately three lakhs refund applications of GST, Customs and Drawback claims, leading to the sanction of an amount of Rs 10,733 crore in the 15 days since 8th April, 2020. This it is felt will provide immediate relief and liquidity to business entities, especially MSMEs.

A Covid-19 – trade dedicated tab on our Zonal websites indicating the steps taken to facilitate trade during this period, is an interesting facility which serves as a one-stop ready reckoner for all the stakeholders from the EXIM trade to keep themselves abreast of the latest

developments pertaining to Customs/ GST procedures. This will help support the trade by giving them authentic critical information on operational aspects so that they do not get confused or misled by rumors and incorrect news. Those zones which are still in the process of doing so should complete this trade friendly facility immediately.

I would like to congratulate the 27 officers of our service who have been recently empaneled as Additional Secretary (1) and Joint Secretary (26). Officers, especially at the middle level, must be encouraged to explore various avenues of deputation in various ministries and departments.

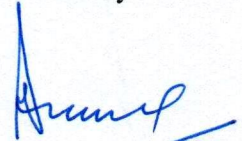
The foreseeable future is likely to see transportation of goods move towards near normalcy. The surge for clearance of containers during this period on grant of OOC, should not catch us unawares at any of the sea/ air ports or land stations/ ICDs or CFS's. We need to talk to all the stakeholders and draw a contingency plan for the systematic evacuation of cargo without causing traffic snarl-ups at the port or in the city. Zonal Chief Commissioners may like to set up a special team under an ADC/JC and make them go through with the planning and drill to meet any eventuality. The active involvement of the port authorities may also be required right away. I trust this matter has already received the attention of Customs Chief Commissioners.

Social distancing may be a dampener to farewell functions during this month-end, but we do feel the pain of parting. Long years in office give way to a new beginning. I take this opportunity to bid farewell to the officers and staff superannuating this month on my behalf and on behalf of all of you. Wishing them and their families peace, happiness and good health in the days to come.

In the end, I would like to appreciate the efforts being taken by various formations to help our weaker and vulnerable brethren in their time of need, news of which keeps coming in. These 'people driven' initiatives must continue as long as the distress continues. I also request the Zonal Chief Commissioner and senior officers to ensure the safety and well-being of their officers and staff.

with best wishes

Yours sincerely



(M. Ajit Kumar)

To,
All Officers and Staff of Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs