

एम. अजित कुमार

अध्यक्ष

M. Ajit Kumar

Chairman



भारत सरकार

वित्त मंत्रालय

राजस्व विभाग

केन्द्रीय अप्रत्यक्ष कर एवं सीमा शुल्क बोर्ड

नार्थ ब्लॉक, नई दिल्ली-११० ००१

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Dear colleague

I hope you and your family members have had a wonderful start to the New Year 2021. Hard work always pays and the news on the work front was very positive for the department right on day one. The GST revenue during December 2020 has been the highest ever since the introduction of GST in 2017 and it is the very first time that tax collection in cash terms has crossed Rs. 1.15 lakh crore. Indirect tax revenue collection as a whole is also expected to show good results once the Central Excise returns are filed later this week. An economy that is revving up and a judicious mix of policy changes and enforcement action have combined to give us a rousing start to the New Year. The sincere work of our officers appears to have paid off. Credit goes to team CBIC and all stakeholders including our colleagues in the State Governments and, of course, the compliant tax payers for their contribution towards nation building.

The year 2021 has also opened up newer avenues for the department. The Government on 28th December 2020 bestowed CBIC with the responsibility of being a regulator with respect to dealers in precious metals and precious stones and real estate agents under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act, 2002. The new role enjoins upon us a proactive approach in handholding the stakeholders and sensitizing the field officers right from the initial stage.

In my previous letter, I had mentioned the need to take stock of the goals set and the targets achieved, not only at personal but also at the professional level. Many officers I have met have spoken to me with pride of the contributions made by them and their offices during the past year. Some of these have not found adequate reference in my previous letters due to paucity of space. Nevertheless, their contribution to the department has been immense and their achievements worthy of mention.

With the budget presentation in Parliament being at hand, the Tax Research Unit, which plays a pivotal role in completing the Budget exercise, comes to mind. For the forth-coming Budget, it has been tasked, amidst the ongoing pandemic, to study issues raised during the wide-ranging consultations with trade bodies, associations and think tanks and suggest measures that would achieve the goals set by the government and judiciously satisfy the aspirations of our citizens. The unit has also been contributing significantly to the decision making process of the GST Council by virtue of JS, TRU-I being the co-convenor and driving force of the Fitment Committee. It has been a center of excellence, giving officers privileged to work in the unit exposure to the heart of government policy making.

The Directorate of Logistics (DoL) has successfully established our first Customs K9 breeding and training Centre at Attari, Amritsar during the year. It also came out with a comprehensive K9 manual which has been shared widely with sister agencies and departments of Government. It was able to extend the hardware-based video-conferencing facility to an additional 27 locations thus raising the total locations connected to 105. Further, a new software-based VC connectivity with a capacity to connect 10,500 officers at a time has been introduced. To improve vigil and prevent smuggling activities, DoL procured and installed another 74 videoscopes at Airports/ACCs/ICDs/LCSs across the country. These equipment have the capacity to detect articles viz. valuables/gold/contraband concealed in cavities in baggage, aircrafts, vessels and containers.

The Directorate of Legal Affairs, (DLA), the legal cell of the CBIC, has put into place a comprehensive monthly review of the work being done by Standing Counsels in High Courts as well as a monthly review of all the new cases filed before High Courts so as to analyse and evaluate the critical legal aspects involved that may have wider legal ramifications. The legal cell played a critical role in filing of SLPs before the Hon'ble Supreme Court and monitoring of important issues at all appellate levels while ensuring proper defence before Hon'ble High Courts. DLA has also got created a link on the CBIC site under the tab 'Legal Affairs' for posting of full judgements which have all India ramifications. All formations should use this link to post judgements and update themselves of the latest legal position as pronounced by the Courts.

The quality of its work force is an indicator of the inherent strength of any organisation. In spite of the unprecedented challenges posed by Covid-19 and campuses being temporarily closed, NACIN and its zonal campuses quickly adapted to the online training modules. For the year 2020-21 (up to November 2020), in 1108 training modules organised by the NACIN and its Zonal Campuses, 88,661 officers have been trained. NACIN staff have also shown courage and dedication in going ahead to successfully conduct the yearlong induction training of OTs of the 71st Batch of IRS (C&CE) as well as the Furbisher course of the 70th batch of IRS (C&CE) officers while strictly following COVID protocol. NACIN, in collaboration with international organisations such as WCO, US Department of State and ADB, had also conducted online training on critical Customs matters such as Strategic Trade Control Enforcement (STCE), Coordinated Border Management and Low Technology Threats to Public Transportation for officers of Indian Customs and SASEC Customs administrations. Further, honouring the close bilateral relations between India and Maldives, a specialized online training on Intelligence, Investigation and Information Gathering, Analysis and Enforcement for Maldives Customs Service (MCS) officers was conducted in November 2020.

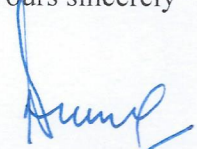
I have still not been able to cover all our formations and directorates. I hope to do so in the days to come. However, rest assured that all of them have raised the bar of performance and have been equal partners in ensuring that good work gets done in a year during which life had been drastically disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The year ahead promises to be an exciting one. With economic activity and policy initiatives helping garner more revenue, the remaining months of the financial year will be critical to close the gap with revenue targets. Policy initiatives and enforcement action will have to be continued to ensure a level-playing field for the honest taxpayer. I am confident that you would continue to perform in the manner that has made December a month of record revenue collection.

I take this opportunity to again wish you and your family members a happy, healthy and prosperous year ahead. Let the New Year help each one of us participate in contributing to the change we want to see in the department.

with best wishes

Yours sincerely


(M. Ajit Kumar)

To,

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