



Ministry of Finance

Customs and Postal Department hold First ever Joint Conference to deliberate on streamlining imports and exports by post; To cater to the SMEs and to boost the Make in India program, Customs Department proposes new simplified procedures for exports through India Post.

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Indian Customs and Department of India Posts held a First ever Joint Conference at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi yesterday to deliberate on streamlining of imports and exports by post. Commissioners of Customs from all the States having Foreign Post Offices (FPOs) were present along with their counterpart Post Master Generals.

Imports and exports by post are the 6th highest cited citizen grievances under CPGRAMs. Customs and Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) have worked together since a year to liberalise, reform and align laws relating to imports by Post. Since 2016, e-Commerce exports had been allowed through FPOs under MEIS incentives from the post offices at Chennai, Mumbai & Delhi. Now, Customs may be leading the reform race by permitting e-commerce exports through all FPOs, though without MEIS benefits for now. One of the major bottlenecks in the Postal System is the absence of Professional Logistics Companies which can facilitate SMEs going global through online presence and leaving postal logistics to third parties. In order to cater to the SMEs and what may come as a major boost to the Make in India program, Customs are proposing new simplified procedures for exports through India Post. In a progressive move, Amazon and DHL had been invited for making presentations on global best practices and identifying bottlenecks faced by exporters in India. "From a private sector perspective, it was great to see customs and posts coming together to find solutions for Indian e-commerce", said Dr. Pritam Banerjee, Director (South Asia) from DHL. Chief Commissioner of Customs, Shri Sunil Sawhney, said that improvement in infrastructure at Foreign Post Offices and leveraging strengths of postal department's pan-India outreach can unlock massive export potential.

Customs is planning some of these initiatives on the back of introducing non-intrusive technologies like x-ray scanning at Foreign Post offices to expedite release of goods. These measures are also likely to control smuggling of narcotics, as evidenced from the recent seizure of 300,000 tablets of psychotropic substances. In order to strengthen law enforcement, Customs will scan mail bags at the airports itself for identifying suspect consignments and contraband items.

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