



सत्यमेव जयते

विवेक जौहरी

मुख्य सीमा शुल्क आयुक्त

VIVEK JOHRI

Chief commissioner of Customs

## मुख्य सीमाशुल्क आयुक्त कार्यालय, मुंबई अंचल - II

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My dear Colleague,

It has been almost a month since I took over as your Chief Commissioner. Given that Jawaharlal Nehru Custom House caters to the largest port in the country, contributes more than Rs.50,000 crore of customs revenue each year and comprises a staff strength of 2700 personnel, I consider it a great privilege and honor to serve in this capacity. Over the last year or so, great strides have been made by JNCH in contributing to trade facilitation and ease of doing business especially through the successful implementation of the Direct Port Delivery (DPD) Scheme. Challenges have not been small but we have overcome them. I commend and congratulate my predecessors and each one of you for the role that you have played in making this happen and seek your cooperation in strengthening it and further increasing its coverage. Likewise, the switchover to the Goods and Service Tax (collection of IGST) has been smooth.

2. Despite these achievements and the fact that revenue collection has been satisfactory during the year so far, it is a matter of deep concern that the stakeholders and even those watching from outside continue to perceive JNCH negatively. The negative image stems from their experience of harassment, uncooperative attitude of officers/ staff, alleged corruption and air of permissiveness. Some also feel that there is a reluctance to enforce the law effectively. There is no question that this has to change and we all have to work

together to achieve this. I am sure you would agree that there is considerable scope for improvement in service delivery in almost all areas of work that we handle – assessment, examination, refunds, adjudications, export facilitation and drawback. Working in the “business as usual” mode would not be sufficient to overcome this perception. There needs to be a very concerted effort from all of us to work in an integrated, organic manner to improve the quality of service that we provide and thereby, change perception. We have to keep reminding ourselves of this goal constantly until we internalize it fully. Of course, this does not mean that we let our guards down and overlook our most important responsibility of collecting revenue and enforcing the law. So how do we combine these two objectives?

3. There are a few simple suggestions that I would like to make to you in this regard:-

- (i) Please consider yourself privileged to have got the opportunity to contribute to the efficient working of this extremely important and sensitive formation viz. JNCH. It does not matter whether you hold a sensitive or non-sensitive and current or non-current charge. Take pride in whatever job has been assigned and put in your best effort. There is room for improvement wherever you are!
- (ii) I know we do not have all the resources that we would like to have at our command. But when faced with a choice owing to inadequate resources-lean towards responsibility rather than privilege. Please do not be guided only by a strong sense of entitlement but an even stronger sense of duty.
- (iii) Please be available to members of the trade as well as your junior colleagues to meet you and do not grudge if they come to you either with a problem or with honest feedback. Please be vigilant that middlemen do not mushroom and thrive around you owing to your lack of accessibility.

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- (iv) Please be sensitive to the problems of the trade as well as your junior colleagues. Give them guidance and help find a solution promptly. If you cannot, please raise the level soon enough.
- (iv) Please behave with utmost courtesy even if you have to decline a request or take a decision contrary to what the importer/ exporter is seeking.
- (v) Please think constantly of how you can improve things systemically and come up with suggestions in this regard.
- (vi) Above all, maintain the highest standards of integrity and honesty.

4. In brief, I urge you all to work sincerely and fearlessly but with fairness and transparency. I would have preferred to meet and interact with you to share my thoughts and seek your feedback on this urgent and important issue but owing to the sheer number it has not been possible for me to meet everyone. I am confident that you would take this in the right spirit and reflect on these suggestions. In any case, the 71<sup>st</sup> Independence Day is a good occasion to do so. Please do feel free to share any thoughts that you may have on the subject or suggestions for achieving results in this area. I look forward to your cooperation and support.

With best wishes! Jai Hind!

Yours sincerely,

*Vivek Johri*  
11/8/2017  
(Vivek Johri)