PRESS NOTE

The First Capacity Building Workshop for BRICS – A Leap Forward In Strengthening Customs Cooperation

A Virtual Workshop on Customs Administration for BRICS Nations was conducted from 22nd to 26th November 2021 at the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes & Narcotics(NACIN), Zonal Training Institute, Bengaluru, as part of 13th BRICS Summit, during India's Chairship. The workshop was a fall out of the BRICS Customs Experts' meeting held during in March 2021, wherein Central Board of Customs and Indirect Taxes proposed the conduct of the workshop at the BRICS Customs Training Centre in NACIN, Bengaluru. Customs experts from Federal Revenue of Brazil, Federal Customs Service of Russian Federation, General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China, South African Revenue Service and the Central Board of Customs and Indirect Taxes, India took part in the said Workshop.

This workshop, which is the first of its kind, is considered a milestone in the promotion of cooperation in the field of Customs Administration among the Member States. The strategic areas of present-day Customs such as Customs Reforms & Modernization, Ways to tackle Mis-Pricing including e-Commerce, Risk Management Systems, Leveraging Technology such as AI, Blockchain Technology, Big Data Analysis for Data Sharing, Drug trafficking and effective Customs Enforcement and Identifying Areas of Greater Synergy and Collaboration among Member Nations etc., were widely discussed and deliberated. The members showcased their ingenious technical methods which were employed to have contactless Customs process during the COVID pandemic which kept the trade going.

The experts agreed on the need for more synergy and collaboration among Member Nations for mutual benefits. They were all unequivocal in asserting that smart technology holds the key in respect of Customs reforms and Modernization. Deepening Cooperation among Member Nations and the use of smart technology in Customs administration were the two key themes and takeaways of the workshop. Cooperation in terms of Information sharing, Profiling, Capacity Building and Sharing of best practices and Modus operandi among the Member Nations. Use of Smart Technology in the form of non-intrusive techniques to keep up the fine balance between trade facilitation and enforcement.



Establishment of a dedicated section for BRICS library in the already existing well stocked library of NACIN, Bengaluru was another unique feature of this workshop. In addition to the dedicated physical library for BRICS, setting up a digital library is also underway which will be a unique platform for capacity building and knowledge sharing among the BRICS Nations. It would be a repository of scholastic materials, research papers, periodicals, statutes, materials on trade and commerce, art and culture, etc in the written, audio and video media, exclusively pertaining to the BRICS Member countries which is likely to be rolled out within a year.

Customs Experts on Indian side have given new explication for the acronym BRICS as '**B**ringing **R**esources, **I**ntegrating **C**o-operation for **S**mart customs which was appreciated by all the participants. This first Capacity Building Workshop has laid a strong foundation for mutual benefit, security and cooperation among the Member Nations. The regular engagement among BRICS Members would widen the horizon of cooperation and would translate into action the deliverables discussed during the workshop.

The People's Republic of China will be hosting the next Workshop under the aegis of BRICS during 2022, which will be based on the priority areas identified during this workshop

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