F.No.12017/02/2016-Ad.IV-A
Government of India
Ministry of Finance
Department of Revenue

*****

New Delhi, the 4 September, 2016

To
All Chief Commissioners of Customs and Central Excise and
Director General under CBEC.

Subject: Representations received from Secretary, All India Central Excise Inspectors' Association—reg.

Sir,

I am directed to enclose herewith a copy of each of representations (two) each dated 23.08.2016 made by the All India Central Excise Inspector's Association and to request that the views/comments on all the points raised in the representation may kindly be furnished to the Board expeditiously.

Yours faithfully,

Encl. As above:

(B. Ginkhan Mang)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
Tel: 2616 2673

Copy to: Web Manager, Directorate General of Systems and Data Management for uploading the letter on the CBEC website.

(B. Ginkhan Mang)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
Tel: 2616 2673
ALL INDIA CENTRAL EXCISE INSPECTORS’ ASSOCIATION
Ground Floor, C.R. Building (Annexe), Bir Chand Patel Path, Patna (Bihar)-800 001
(Affiliated to the Confederation of Central Government Employees & Workers)
Recognized by the Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India
[vide F.No.B.12017/14/2011-Ad.IV A dated 27.05.2013]

Web page: www.aiceia.blogspot.in
E-mail: sgaiceia@gmail.com

F. No. AICEIA/ADMIN/2016/33
Date:23.08.2016
To
The Member (P&V)
Central Board of Excise & Customs,
New Delhi.

Madam,

Subject: Inspector of Central Excise-Acute stagnation and zonal disparities in promotions to the grade of Superintendent - reg.

It is well established fact that career up gradation is the strongest tool to motivate and enhance the efficiency of the employees and it is the cardinal rule of human resource management. But in the case of Inspector of Central Excise the HR policy of CBEC has failed miserably. At every level this problem was identified as the systematic problem, several committees were formed with so called high powers, some of them submitted their reports and ways to resolve it but no stone was turned in decades. On the issues where a proper initiative can resolve the systematic problems from root, we always miss the train in the name of study group, committee and many assurances.

Due to this situation, officers selected way ahead have to serve under the officers selected years after through same examination and even in the same Grade. This problem is not only demotivating for the officers concerned but also adversely affects the productivity of the department where less experienced officers have to shoulder the greater responsibility.

The Group-B level posts in CBEC have a typical helixial structure, where all the qualified candidates of the same examination are divided in three different streams of Group-B non-gazetted posts and again at the time of entering the Group-A level they get merged to form a single cadre. This issue was regularly taken up as there were wide spread disparities in the career progression of the three streams. The initiative taken by the CBEC in this regard after decades of persuasion resulted in making proposal for the residency period for the three promotional posts of Group-B Gazetted at same level. This shows how superficial we think about resolving the problem. In fact, if this proposal is taken up without
preparation of the All India Seniority List for Inspectors of Central Excise, it will not only aggravate the problem of regional disparity but will also prove fatal for the department.

We have already submitted our proposals for dealing with this issue for consideration time and again and there is no development so far to discuss afresh, so we find it better to put before your good office the concerned notes placed before the higher authorities and decisions of the CBEC. It will certainly reduce the time and labour of the officials as they will not have to examine the issue afresh.

The stagnation in the Grade of Inspector of Central Excise is twofold, viz., intra-cadre and inter cadre. In fact if the inter-cadre disparity is resolved the intra-cadre disparity will automatically cease to exist but for arriving at inter-cadre parity intra-cadre parity is a sine-qua-non, in other words the two faces are complementary to each other.

The points, which are well within the files of CBEC are placed below for your kind perusal :-

1. The CBEC in board meeting minutes of 16.01.1996 (brief no. 72/95) approved the merger of three groups of Inspector, viz., Inspector of Central Excise, Inspector (Preventive Officer), Inspector (Examiner). This decision of CBEC is still to see the ray of the day. (Annexure-A)

2. One Committee headed by the then Member (P&V) Sri S.K. Bharadwaj proposed the merger of the three streams at Inspector level in August 2004. No decision was taken on the recommendations of the Committee. (Annexure-B)

3. Detailed examination of the issue by the Directorate General of Human Resource Development was done in the file no. 8/B/194/HRD (HRM)/2013. After going through these notes nothing is left for understanding the problem. (Annexure-C)

4. CBEC in Board Meeting on 09.04.2014 vide BMB 07/2014 in principle agreed to have recruitment in any one of the three All India Grades of Inspector Central Excise, Preventive Officer and Examiner in view of keeping the promotional prospects free from local factors. (Annexure-D)

5. The Revenue Secretary placed on note before the Minister of State for finance that the CBEC has already approved in principle the proposal of the HRD to have All India Grades of Inspectors of Central Excise, Preventive Officer and Examiner on 13.09.2014. (Annexure-E)

6. In her communication to the Joint Secretary (Admin), CBEC, the ADG(HRM) vide letter under F.No. 8/B/194/HRD(HRM)/2013 dated 18/11/2013 at para 2.4 has informed that the CBEC is contemplating merger of 15 Zone based Cadre of the Grade of Inspector of Central Excise into an All India Cadre, in order to remove prevailing regional disparities in promotion to the Grade of Superintendent of Central Excise. (Annexure-F)
7. In the note of the Revenue Secretary in the Cadre Restructuring file on 30.04.2014 the issue has been discussed in detail with valid concerns, but entire process was made futile in the name of Study Group whose report/status of report is still not known to the stake holders. (Annexure-G)

8. While the Minister of State for Finance was appraised that the study group would submit it’s report by Monday 15th of September 2014 (the crucial date for implementation of the Cadre Restructuring was 30.09.2014) so that matter can be finalized, the report is still awaited and the department moved on with the triumph of Cadre Restructuring with creation of several new posts to weed out stagnation from Group-A service. (Annexure-H)

9. As per the Minutes of the meeting of Cadre Review Committee held on 27.08.2013 circulated vide F.No. 216/2/1/2013-CA.IV dated 25.09.2013 at para 3 sub para iv the CRC observed that the Department should identify the cause of such stagnation in the Group-B feeder grade and ensure that such a situation does not recur in future by taking suitable and effective measures. We are not aware of any such initiative going. (Annexure-I)

From the above submissions, the story of our efforts and their result are unambiguously understandable.

Now, we take the opportunity to brief your goodself about the impact of the Cadre Restructuring on the stagnation of the Group-B executive Cadre in Central Excise through following points :-

a) Regional disparity in promotion to the Grade of Superintendent of Central Excise was 13 years prior to restructuring, which has now arrived at 12 years after CR and growing day by day with officers attaining residency period in faster zones.

b) As on 01.01.2016, the analysis of the Civil List provides that out of 202 promotee officers at the level of Additional/Joint Commissioner, 196 are from Appraisers, 5 from Superintendent Central Excise & 1 from Superintendent Customs.

c) In the year 1992 the feeder to promotion ratio was 4:1 which turned out to be 16:1 the highest in any department/ ministry as placed in CBEC’s CR note to Cabinet at para 1.2- Table-1 (Page 23 of 61)

d) The analysis of the same list exhibits the share of Superintendent Central Excise, in total 120 promotee officers in Deputy Commissioner Grade as 21 while the same for the Appraisers being 97 and for Superintendent Customs being 2.

e) The creation of 2118 temporary posts of Assistant Commissioner for five years is an classic example of illusion and the story of DPC for these posts is a good subject for retiring officers to write in their memoire, how they missed the thin red line.
F. No. AICEIA/ADMIN/2016/35

Date: 23.08.2016

To
The Member (P&V)
Central Board of Excise & Customs,
New Delhi.

Madam,

Subject: Abolition of Control Room Duties for Inspectors of Central Excise - reg.


Further, your kind attention is invited to the meeting held with the Association in your chamber on 10.12.2015 under your chairmanship and a meeting held in the chamber of the Joint Secretary (Admin.), CBEC in which the Association were assured that the matter will be examined at the level of DGHRD and suitable guidelines will be issued.

Madam, most of the zones of Central Excise has the regular control rooms which run on a 24x7x365 basis despite the fact that there is no departmental Publications/Instructions/Guidelines which empower the administration to set up such Control Rooms.

In reply to the various queries made under RTI Act, the CPIO Central Excise departments replied that there is no specific Circular/Notification/Order in respect of assigning Control Room Duty to Inspectors of Central Excise and it is followed as per practice. Further, it also becomes clear from the RTI replies that there is no record showing the involvement of Control Room Officers in any revenue collection. It is reality that many Commissionerates are misusing Inspectors as Security Guards of the premises only.

Madam, the Control Room is one of the classic examples of misuse of manpower in Central Excise and disparities in practices in zones. The DGCEI, which is prime Investigating Intelligence Agency of Central Excise and Service Tax, does not have any full fledged Control Room despite it does well. We spends lakhs of rupees on Control Rooms, which does not give any result. After Cadre Restructuring, the working strength of Inspectors have been diminished and many important branches are have less numbers of Inspectors and many Inspectors are over burdened. Even in this scenario, many zones are still forcing
Inspectors to work in Control Rooms. Following are some recent examples, where the administration forced the Inspectors the works, which are not necessary at all and are great example of misuse of manpower as well as shows the feudalistic approach of the higher officers:

- On 22.12.2015, the Dy. Commissioner (Prev.), Central Excise, Customs & Service Tax, Vadodara-I issued some guidelines for Control Room vide letter F. No. II/39-Prev/2/2014/Gr.A. The para no. 2 of the said letter reads "Officer allotted Control Room Duty will escort the senior officers up to the rank of Joint Commissioner, to their respective cabins." We wrote a letter even no. 35 dated 11.01.2016 to your goodself but nothing has been heard till date.

- It is a bitter truth that when some senior officers visit the office, some of the officers force the Inspectors to give them "Guard of Honor", which is totally illegal and misuse of manpower. The letter dated 03.02.2016 issued by the Asstt. Commissioner (Prev.), Central Excise & S. Tax, Jamshedpur is classic example of it. In the said letter the A. C. (Prev.) ordered the officers to give "Guard of Honor" to the Chief Commissioner on 12.02.2016 and for this he called total 35 officers on training at 16:00 Hrs. on 03.02.2016.

- Moreover, vide letter F. No. II/39-10/Office Order/2007-Estt., dated 11.01.2016, three Additional Commissioners of Surat Central Excise Commissionerates were given the following order-"It is to inform that the Chief Commissioner, Central Excise, Customs & Service Tax, Vadodara Zone is visiting Surat on 12.01.2016. The officers of Surat-I & II, Audit-II Vadodara, Appeals-II Vadodara Commissionerate located in Surat, listed in the Annexure, are hereby directed to remain present in the office compound to participate in the Guard of Honor Ceremony in full uniform without fall at 08:30 Hrs. on 12.01.2016. Officers may note that the attendance will be taken after the parade and strict action will be taken against the absentees." The same news was reported by 'Tax India Online' on 13.01.2016 (copy enclosed) which caused embarrassment to the department.

The tradition of Uniform, Control Room, Protocol and Guard of Honor are the old feudalistic traditions, which do not serve any purpose in tax collection and need urgent abolition.

In view of the above, it is once again submitted that the Control Room Duty of Inspectors is totally a wastage of manpower, which promote feudalistic approach among higher officers. This is absolutely unnecessary, against the basic idea of liberalization and burden on government exchequer

It is, therefore, once again requested to abolish Control Room Duty and Protocols from Central Excise & Service Tax Department which has no relevancy at all in current era of liberalization.

Thanking you in anticipation of an early decision.

Encl. (As above ...........sheets)

Yours faithfully,

Abhishek Kamal
Secretary General

Page No. 2/2
ALL INDIA CENTRAL EXCISE INSPECTORS' ASSOCIATION

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Recognized by the Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India
[vide F.No.B.12017/14/2011-Ad.IV A dated 27.05.2013]

Web page: www.aiceia.blogspot.in

E-mail: sgaiceia@gmail.com

F. No. AICEIA/ADMIN/2015/35
To
The Member (P&V),
Central Board of Excise & Customs,
North Block,
New Delhi-110001.

Sub: Abolition of Control Room Duties for Inspector of Central Excise
   - regarding.

Madam,

Please refer to our letters F.No. AICEIA/Merger/HRD/2012/03 dated
24.06.2014, AICEIA/HRD/Uniform/2014/31 dated 28.11.2014,
AICEIA/ADMIN/2014/48 dated 28.03.2013, even no. 20 dated 12.11.2015 vide
which we requested to abolish Uniform and Control Room Duties for Inspectors of
Central Excise. Further, your kind attention is invited to the meeting held with
this Association in your Chamber on 10.12.2015. During the meeting, the issue of
assigning Control Room duty to Inspectors of Central Excise were also discussed
and your goodself also expressed the view that in the changed scenario the
practice of Control Room Duty needs reassessment. The Association was assured
that the matter will be examined at the level of Board and appropriate measures
will be taken in this regard.

Madam, we once again submit the following facts and instances of futility
and misuse of Control Rooms by the administration in various zones.

Recently, the Dy. Commissioner (Prev.), Central Excise, Customs & S. Tax
Vadodara-I has issued some guidelines for Control Room vide letter F. No. 11/39-
Prev/2/2014/Gr-A dated 22.12.2015. The para no. 2 of the said letter reads
"Officer allotted Control Room Duty will escort the senior officers upto the rank of
Joint Commissioner, to their respective cabins." Madam, this is a burning
example of the misuse of manpower in the offices of Central Excise which is not
limited to Vadodara only. This type of colonial-order by the administration is
rampant in most of the zones of Central Excise. Most of the zones of Central
Excise has the regular control room which runs on a 24x7x365 basis despite the
fact that there is no departmental Publications/Instructions/Guidelines which
empower the administration to set up such Control Rooms.

In a reply to the queries made under RTI Act, the CPIO Central Excise, Mumbai-III, Mumbai-II, Belapur & Raigad Commissionerates replied that there is no specific Circular/Notification/Order in respect of assigning Control Room duty to Inspectors of Central Excise and it is followed as per practice. Further, it also becomes clear from the RTI reply that in these commissionerates there is no record showing the involvement of Control Room Officers in any revenue collection. Even to the utmost surprise of this association, the Authorities issuing the posting Orders of Inspectors have no knowledge of the duties and responsibilities of Inspectors.

Madam, in light of the above facts, you can easily conclude that the Control Room duty allotment to the Inspectors of Central Excise is not only the man power wastage but also a tool to promote feudalistic approach among the higher Officers. The time has come when we have to step out of the colonial mindset which force us escorting the officers to their cabins instead of providing quality service to the taxpayers and collecting revenue for growth of the nation.

Expecting an early decision in the matter which will help the Cadre of Inspector of Central Excise in performing their duty with responsibility and respect.

Encl. As above

Yours faithfully,

Abhishek Kamal
Secretary General
Office Order

Following officers will give Guard of Honour to the Hon'ble Chief Commissioner on 12.02.2016 at 10.30 Hrs. They are further directed to report in uniform before the Assistant Commissioner (Prev.) Central Excise & Service Tax, Hqrs., Jamshedpur at 16.00 Hrs. on 03.02.2016 for training of the same and will assemble at the ground of the new building at the specified time.

Shri A.K. Shaudiya, Supdt. Audit Circle - Leading
Shri Ashwini Kr. Singh, Supdt. Tiaco-I Range, Div-I - Leading

2. Shri Manoj Kumar, Insp. Adp. III Range, Div III
3. Shri Subodh Mishra, Insp. - Div V
4. Shri S.K. Jha, Insp. - Range, Chandil-I, Div IV
6. Shri Kamesh Kumar, Insp. - Hqrs. (Vig.)
7. Shri Manohar Modi, Insp. - Hqrs. (DMC)
8. Shri S.K. Parimal, Insp. - Div VI
9. Shri Daman Mardi, Insp. - Hqrs. (Prev.)
10. Shri S.K. Sinha, Insp. - Div I
11. Shri Baldev Pratap, Insp. - Insp. Div I
12. Shri Sushil Kumar, Insp. - Bistupur S Tax Range, Div VI
13. Shri Kaustuk Gaur, Insp. - Hqrs. (F & K)
14. Shri Som Nandan, Insp. - Div II
15. Shri Sandip Srivastava, Insp. - Hqrs. (Prev.)
16. Shri Roshan Kumar, Insp. - Hqrs. (Prev.)
17. Shri Sanjay Kumar Rajak, Insp. - S Tax Mangan Range, Div VI
18. Shri P.P. Raut, Insp. - Hqrs. (Prev.)
20. Shri Hemant Das, Insp. Audit Circle,
21. Shri H.L. Sahu, Insp. Audit Circle,
22. Shri Arvind Kumar Sinha, Insp. Audit Circle,
23. Shri Md. Ovaisuddlah, Insp. Audit Circle,
24. Shri Arif Kumar Singh, Insp. - Div III,
27. Shri Rambir Kumar, Insp. Adp VIII, Div V
28. Shri Anjani Mishra, Insp. Div-V
29. Shri N.S. Sandil, Insp. Div-V
30. Shri Awdhesh Jha, Insp. Div-III
31. Shri Budheshwar Sundi, Insp. Adp IV Range, Div-III
32. Shri Amarjeet Nayak, Insp., Div-II
33. Shri Sanjay Kumar, Insp. Tisco I Range, Div-I
34. Shri Manoj Kumar, Insp. Tisco-II Range, Div-I
35. Shri Nagendra Kumar, Insp. Adp. Range -III, Div-III

This issue with the approval of the Competent Authority.

Assistant Commissioner (Prev.)
Central Excise & S. Tax, Jamshedpur

Copy for information to the Assistant Commissioner, C.Ex. & S.Tax Div-I/II/III/IV/V/VI and Audit Circle, Jamshedpur. They are requested to instruct the officers of his charge to comply the order.

Assistant Commissioner (Prev.)
Central Excise & S. Tax, Jamshedpur
DDT reported yesterday about a Deputy Commissioner in a written official communication ordering Inspectors to escort senior officers up to the rank of Joint Commissioner to their respective cabins.

A more interesting communication has come to our notice. By an Office order in F. No. II/39-10/Office Order/2007-Estt, dated 11.01.2016, three Additional Commissioners of Surat Central Excise Commissionerates have given the following missive.

It is to inform that the Chief Commissioner, Central Excise, Customs & Service Tax, Vadodara Zone is visiting Surat on 12.01.2016:

The officers of Surat-I & II, audit-II, Vadodara, appeals-II, Vadodara Commissionerate located in Surat listed in the Annexure, are hereby directed to remain present in the office compound to participate in the Guard of Honour Ceremony, in full uniform without fail at 08:30 hrs on 12.01.2016. Officers may note that attendance will be taken after the parade and strict action will be taken against the absentees.

What is happening in the Department? Are they meant for tax collection or ceremonies and guard of honour? And in any case are the Inspectors in the department trained for performing such ceremonial functions?

Just because some officers in the Department are provided with a uniform, does it mean that their services should be misutilised for this kind of farce. The Income Tax department is able to collect their taxes without uniform and without control rooms and guard of honour for their senior officers.

Writing in our Message Board on 30.10.2014, Advocate Gururaj commented,

The photo of the CBEC Chairperson with hand raised in salute makes an anachronistic picture. Is she saluting someone, or is she receiving guard of honour? In either case, this gesture is out of place in a taxation department. Central Excise and Customs departments are not paramilitary forces. Why do they need uniform, why should they salute when they see a superior? The uniform, saluting etc seem like a hangover of British Rai. The moment a person wears uniform, he feels like bossing over citizens who are in multi. These are out of place and out of time, when the tax departments are consciously trying to cultivate customer oriented approach towards tax payers. In my view, only customs officers who deal with passengers either in ports or airports need to wear uniform, so that the passengers can readily identify them as customs officers.

Are the taxpayers impressed with these activities of the department?

When GST comes will there be a guard of honour only for the CGST Chief Commissioner or will the SGST Chief Commissioner also get the honour?

Until Tomorrow with more DDT

Have a nice day.

Mail your comments to vijaywrite@tiol.in

RECENT DISCUSSION(S)

Sub: Guard of Honour for Chief Commissioner

It will remain the same in this department. It is absolutely like British Rai and many times I have said that now the time has
Subject: Guidelines for Uniform for various Group 'A', 'B', and 'C' grades - Abolition of Uniform from Central Excise- request reg.

Please refer to letter F. No. C.30013/11/2011 Ad.IVA dated 02.08.2013, issued by the Director, Ad. IV, CBEC on above subject, vide which the draft guidelines were forwarded to us for giving comments on the issue. Vide our letter F. No. AICEIA/HRD/Uniform/2014/31 dated 28.11.2014 (copy enclosed), we submitted our comments on the issue.

Madam, after a lapse of approx. 02 years, nothing has been heard about the abolition of Uniform from Central Excise. On this occasion, we hereby once again request you to order the abolition of the Uniform from Central Excise on the following grounds/reasons:

1. Uniform is the legacy of "Tobacco-Era". Progressive changes in Excise laws have rendered the Uniform useless in the field activities. The field operations in Central Excise are nothing but akin to that of the field operations in Income Tax, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Directorate of Central Excise Intelligence, Central Bureau of Investigation etc. But out of all the above said organizations, Central Excise department alone is saddled with uniform. When the controls have been shifted to an audit and intelligence gathering mode, Uniform is more of a hindrance than a matter of pride or a necessity for identification or protection.

2. Due to tax reforms, neither the assessee requires attending the Central Excise Office nor the Officers require visiting the factory premises frequently. The digitalization of the department left little space for interaction between the assessee and the officers. Hence the uniform lost its relevancy.

3. Various powers provided to the departmental officers to visit factories and carry out frequent checks have been done away with and in this mode era even LTUs are functioning with officers only termed as "Executives". So, calling for officers to be in uniform in the office throughout working hours is nothing but resorting "Inspector-Raj", which is very much against the policy of the Government.
4. Police, Armed forces, Fire fighters etc., who wears Uniforms, have important governmental and public safety interests in ensuring that members of the public are able to readily identify police officers, Armed forces, firefighters etc. who are on duty. But in case of Central Excise Officers, it does not require.

5. We are set to move into "Goods & Service Tax" regime and we are supposed to be Central GST and IGST Officers while the State Sales Tax Officers would be State GST. When State GST officers would not be wearing uniform, it would be ridiculous for us, who would be performing the same functions of tax collection by way of "Wearing-Uniform".

6. Several expert bodies including the Kelkar Committee, Tax Administrative Reform Commission have recommended abolition of Uniform in Central Excise:-
   a. The 5th CPC in Para 122.3' categorically recommended abolition of uniform for all categories of Central Government employees except;
      "Security Staff, Police Personnel, Nurses and Railway Employees other than Group 'D' Ministerial categories".
   b. The Task Force on Indirect Taxes (Kelkar Committee), 2002, appointed by the Finance Minister, in Chapter 7; Para 6.11.1 (i) stated
      "(i) Central Excise Officers should not be required to wear uniform. This would change the mindset on both side (Department and Taxpayer) and contribute to freer communication."

7. Further, the CBEC spends lakhs of Rupees annually as Uniform Allowances which results in nothing. It does not contribute in tax collection anymore. The only purpose of the Uniform is to glorify the non-uniformed higher officers of the department in the name of Protocol Duty.

    In view of the above, it is once again submitted that the uniform in Central Excise Department is absolutely unnecessary, against the basic idea of liberalization and burden on government exchequer and misused only for the protocols to higher officers. The uniform is not serving any purpose in collection of Central Excise Duty/Service Tax. Hence, we request you to abolish Uniform from Central Excise & Service Tax Department and this is right time when we are going to be the witnesses of the greatest tax reform of all times i.e. Goods and Service Tax.

    Thanking you in anticipation of an early decision.

Encl. (As above ..........sheets)

Yours faithfully,

Abhishek Kamal
Secretary General
ALL INDIA CENTRAL EXCISE INSPECTORS' ASSOCIATION
Room No. 406, 4th Floor, C.R. Building (Annexe), Bir Chand Patel Path, Patna (Bihar) - 800 001
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[vide F.No.B.12017/14/2011-Ad.IV A dated 27.05.2013]
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F. No. AICEIA/HRD/Uniform/2014/31
To:
The Additional Director General (HRM)
Directorate General of Human Resource Development,
Central Board of Excise & Customs,
409/8, Deep Shikha, Rajendra Place,
New Delhi-110008.

Sub:-Guidelines for Uniform for various Group 'A', 'B' & 'C' grades—reg.

Marble,

Please refer to your letter F. No. 8/B/90/HRD (HRM)/2011 (Part-I)/49, dated 21.10.2014 vide which our views were sought on Ministry’s letter F. No. 30013/11/2011 Ad IVA dated 02.08.2013.

On going through Ministry’s above mentioned letter dated 02.08.2014 it has been found that the Board is going to make it compulsory to wear uniform at all times on duty. We do not think that this move will yield any result for the department. Madam, the long-time member of the All India Central Excise Inspectors Association to abolish uniform, we had also requested vide our letter F. No. AICEIA/Merger/HRD/2011/01 dated 24.06.2011 (copy enclosed) to abolish Uniform and Control Room Duty. We want the abolition of Uniform, because of the following:

1. Uniform is the legacy of ‘Tobacco-Era’ Excise. Progressive changes in Excise laws have rendered the uniform useless in the field activities. The helpline operations in Central Excise are nothing but akin to that of the field operation in Enforcement Directorate. Income Tax, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence and Directorate of Central Excise Anti Evasion. Central Bureau of Investigation and Intelligence Bureau. But out of all the above said organizations, Central Excise office is saddled with uniform. When the controls have shifted to an auditors, intelligence, counterfeiting mode, uniform is more of a hindrance than a matter of pride or a necessity for identification or protection.

2. Due to tax reforms, neither the assessee requires attending the Central Excise Office nor the Officers require visiting the factory premises frequently. The digitalization of the department left little space for interaction between assessee and the Officers. Hence, the uniform lost its relevancy.

Date: 28.11.2014

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Arun Kumar

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3. Various powers provided to the departmental officers to visit factories and carry out frequent checks have been done away with and in the modern era even LICs are functioning with officers only termed as "Executives". So, calling for officers to be in uniform in the office throughout working hours is nothing but restoring "Inspector Raj" which is very much against the policy of the Government.

4. We are set to move into Good & Service Tax regime and we are supposed to be Central GST officer while the State Sales Tax officers would be State GST. When State GST officers would not be wearing uniform it would be ridiculous for the Central GST Officers who would be performing the same function of Tax Collection but "wearing uniform"

Several expert bodies, including the Kelkar Committee have recommended abolition of Uniform in Central Excise:

(a) the 6th CPC in Para 122.3; categorically recommended abolition of uniform for all categories of Central Ground employees except:

"Security Staff, Police Personnel, Nurses and Railway employees other than Group 'D' Modern categories"

(b) The Task Force on Indirect Taxes (Kelkar Committee), 2002, appointed by the Finance Minister vide Chapter 7, Para 6.11.1 (i) stated;

"(i) Central Excise officers should not be required to wear uniform. This would change the mindset of both side (Department and taxpayer) and contribute to freer communication"

In view of above, it is once again submitted that the uniform in Central Excise Department is absolutely unnecessary against the basic idea of liberalization and burden on government exchequer. The uniform is not serving any purpose in collection of Central Excise Duty/Service Tax. Hence, we do not offer any view on "Guidelines for wearing uniforms by CBEC officers" instead we request to abolish Uniform from Central Excise & Service Tax Department.

Yours faithfully,

Abhishek Kam.

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