

Paperless customs compliance for exports soon: Johri

FE BUREAU

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A NEW SYSTEM is in the works where web-based registration of goods exports would be allowed, to facilitate the integration of Customs systems with other regulatory agencies. The system for outbound shipments will be in line with the existing clearance process for imports and will ensure faster clearances for consignments, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) chairman Vivek Johri said on Thursday.

"We still have a physical process for registration on the exports side...but we are working on a system where web-based registration of goods is possible which would mean that there's no need for any broker or exporter to travel to a port to submit documents to customs for initiating processes," Johri said.

VIVEK JOHRI
CBIC CHAIRMAN

We are working on a system where web-based registration of goods is possible which would mean that there's no need for any exporter to travel to a port to submit documents to customs for initiating processes

Indian Customs Electronic Gateway (ICEGATE) is the national Customs portal of CBIC that provides e-filing services including electronic filing of the Bill of Entry (import



goods declaration), Shipping Bills (export goods declaration), e-payment of Customs Duty, Common Signer utility for signing all the Customs Documents, to trade, cargo

carriers and other trading partners electronically. At present, about 43,542 users are registered with ICEGATE who are serving over 1.25 million importers/exporters.

"You are familiar with the single window on the import side. We are trying to introduce something similar on the export side. There are export consignments that require regulatory intervention from control agencies, say drug controllers, or other agencies. We are trying to integrate Customs ICEGATE with these agencies. This will further compress the time taken to release export consignments," Johri said at CII National Exports Summit.

In the budget for FY23, there was an announcement made that SEZ and SEZ units will be integrated into the ICEGATE and ICES (Indian Customs EDI System) platform.

What that would mean is that SEZ units would get the same level of facilitation and benefits that normally importers get.

Johri also said that the average release time, which is measured by the time of arrival of goods to the port and their actual departure, of export cargo, has been halved. The Trade Facilitation Action Plan, which ends in 2023, has set a target of an average release time of 24 hours and 12 hours for exports through seaport and airport, respectively.

"There is a need for further compression in release time taken by regulatory agencies...The target is quite steep... We are very consciously working on reducing the average release time," Johri said. He also said that 80-85% of the average release time of export cargo is on account of the time taken after Customs clears the consignments.