

# Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurates DRI's 64<sup>th</sup> Founding Day Celebrations on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2021

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) celebrated its 64<sup>th</sup> Founding Day on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2021 in New Delhi.



The celebration commenced with Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurating a function at the Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi, in the presence of Union Minister of State for Finance Shri Pankaj Chaudhary, Secretary, Revenue, Shri Tarun Bajaj, Chairman, CBIC, Shri Vivek Johri and Member (Investigation), CBIC, Shri Balesh Kumar were also present on the occasion along with Pr. Director General, DRI, Shri Alok Tewari.

Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman congratulated DRI and its officers on their performance and commendable service, especially during the pandemic. The Finance Minister also lauded DRI's compact strength of about 800 officers for their relentless efforts despite the imminent risks and expressed her respect and condolences to the brave hearts of DRI who lost their lives during the pandemic.

The Finance Minister stated that the officers may be keeping a low profile but they were acting like the frontline defence forces, doing spectacular work in safeguarding the

economic frontiers of the country. The recent smuggling attempts of huge quantities of narcotics, gold, red sanders, ivory, cigarettes etc. unearthed by DRI were appreciated by the Finance Minister. Smt. Sitharaman said that the message through such enforcement actions should be such that these acts of brazen attempts at smuggling are nipped in the bud.



The Finance Minister further stated that better coordination among law enforcement and intelligence gathering agencies and sharing of actionable intelligence are the way forward in protecting the frontiers of the country more efficiently. Smt. Sitharaman also asked the DRI to focus on interdicting dual use technology items as well as preventing the dumping of toxic wastes into our country.

The function was also graced by Union Minister of State for Finance who addressed the gathering on the occasion. Shri Chaudhary lauded the efforts of the DRI officers who he said had brought laurels through their action against the smugglers and economic offenders and appreciated the role played by DRI in nation building and safeguarding the economic boundaries of the country.

In his address, Revenue Secretary Shri Tarun Bajaj congratulated DRI on the 64<sup>th</sup> Foundation day, adding that the cases booked by DRI could not be evaluated only in pecuniary terms and DRI is contributing in protecting the economic and national security.

Chairman, CBIC, Shri Vivek Johri extended his greetings on the occasion and stated that DRI's work ethics and the results are stupendous. Shri Johri mentioned that the social, economic and cultural impact of actions of DRI is incalculable for preventing smuggling of NDPS, antiquities, wild life etc. The Member (Investigation) CBIC Shri Balesh Kumar praised DRI for its firmly, timely and effective actions on anti-smuggling activities, seizures of contraband including proliferation related high-technology equipment that can harm India's national security and Customs duty evasions across the country.

The function was attended by former Chairpersons and Members of CBIC, senior officers including ex-DGs of DRI. The event was physically attended by about 300 participants and was also streamed live through a digital platform with participation of hundreds of attendees from DRI, CBIC, International Organisations and other officers of Government of India from across the world.



The Union Finance Minister unveiled the “Smuggling in India Report 2020-21” which analyses organised trends on topics such as smuggling of gold, narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances, wildlife etc., commercial frauds and international enforcement operations & cooperation. Pr. DG DRI, Shri Alok Tewari welcomed the dignitaries and presented a report on DRI’s performance in the previous financial year.

On this occasion, DRI ‘*Utkrisht Seva Samman, 2021*’ was awarded to Sh B. K. Aggarwal, an officer of the 1963 batch of the then Indian Revenue Service (Customs & Central Excise) for his distinguished and committed service.

The Founding Day celebrations were also followed by 7<sup>th</sup> Regional Customs Enforcement Meeting(RCEM) for effectively engaging with partner Customs organisations and International agencies like World Customs Organisation, Interpol, UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Regional Intelligence Liaison Office – Asia Pacific (RILO AP). The RCEM was attended by representatives of six countries physically and more than 10 Countries virtually.

The inaugural function concluded with the ‘Vote of Thanks’ by Shri Abhai Kumar Srivastav, Pr. Additional Director General, DRI (Hqrs), New (Delhi).

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