

Government of India
Ministry of Finance
Department of Revenue

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1151
TO BE ANSWERED ON MONDAY, 11th December, 2023 /
Agrahayana 20, 1945 (Saka)

INTRODUCTION OF FACELESS ASSESSMENT GROUPS

1151. Shri Natarajan P. R.:

Will the Minister of Finance be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken note that after introduction of Faceless Assessment Groups (FAG), almost all importers fraternity are facing various problems and difficulties like undue delay in clearing the Bills of Entry, Raising unrelated, irrelevant, unwanted unnecessary queries in piecemeal with the sole intention to harass the importers;
- (b) whether the Government has received any representation from the FFFAI (Federation of Foreign Forwarders Association in India) to resolve the problems being faced by them and on the functioning of FAG;
- (c) if so, action taken/being taken by the Government on these issues;
- (d) whether the Government has conducted any periodical review of functioning of FAG at field level; and
- (e) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE
(SHRI PANKAJ CHAUDHARY)

Part (a): No representation has been received citing instances which indicate that unrelated, irrelevant, unwanted unnecessary queries are being raised with the sole intention to harass the importers;

Part (b): Yes, some representations have been received from FFFAI (Federation of Freight Forwarders Association in India), and other industry associations, conveying difficulties faced, for making suggestions, for improvements in faceless assessment that was introduced in the year 2020.

Part (c, d & e): Based on the feedback received from FFFAI, other industry associations and field formations, Faceless Assessment is periodically reviewed and steps to streamline and improve the faceless assessment process are undertaken. These include addressing risk other than through assessment, bringing higher degree of specialization in the functioning of faceless assessment groups, introducing anonymized escalation mechanism to redress grievance during the stage of assessment, automated system-based generation of examination order in certain cases for enhancing uniformity, reviewing and reconfiguring Faceless Assessment Groups (FAG) and National Assessment Centre (NAC) to better balance workload with manpower deployment.