

CUSTOMS JOURNAL

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Editor's Note



Aminath Liusa
Editor

I welcome dear readers to the 157th issue of CJ! This issue also features news of important events that took place in the past month.

This issue meets us at a time when a lot of changes are taking place within the organization. Some changes have been made to the organizational structure with the aim of strengthening the internal mechanisms, management policies, principles and decision making. Required amendments have also been made to the officers in the higher authority level to reflect the new changes in the structure. It is hoped that when fully implemented, these will ensure that authority and decision-making has a clear source, the work of management and oversight is efficient, and the needs for direction and decisions are well addressed.

As the first CSR activity for this year, our officers have spent this morning with the "Beautiful Eyes of Maldives"; children with Down's syndrome from the support group of the Down's Syndrome Association of Maldives. Our officers decorated Meerubahuru Maalan and prepared various activities for the children, including coloring, hand painting and table tennis. The kids also enjoyed snacks and sweets during their visit.

Two of our officers, Chief Customs Officer Iqbal Ismail and Senior Customs Officer Grade 1 Mohamed Majid have graduated from the Bachelor of Science in Security and Law Enforcement Studies program conducted by Institute for Security and Law Enforcement Studies (ISLES) of Maldives Police Service. This is the first time any of our officers have done majored in Security and Law Enforcement Studies. Several more of our officers are currently at various stages of this program and will be graduating in the upcoming batches.

In the area of enforcement, our officers seized 817 grams of narcotics from a Bangladeshi male aged 33 who came from Dhaka, Bangladesh (via Colombo) on 16 January 2016 via Srilankan Airlines. Two other seizures were also made on 6th and 24th February in which a total of 58 bullets Heroin was discovered.

On the training front the sixth batch of the Customs Brokers Course have graduated and received certificates. In a special ceremony held on the occasion, certificates were distributed to the participants by Commissioner General of Customs Mr. Mohamed Junaid. A total of 12 participants graduated from this batch.

Twenty three Grade 10 Students from Muhyiddin School spent a half day in Customs on 25th February 2016 learning about the formalities involved in bonding goods at the warehouses in Hulhule'. This field trip was organized in an attempt to provide a practical environment for a module they are studying on Bonded Warehouses in a commerce related subject.

Flip through the pages to find out more information on the events that made headlines in the past month. Happy reading everyone!

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Changes to Organizational Structure

As per CG Directive 3/2016, effective from 21st February 2016 the new organizational structure has come to effect and appointments have been made as follows:

1. Directorate of Human Resources and Corporate Services

Directorate Head

Assistant Commissioner of Customs Ismail Nashid.

2. Directorate of Enforcement

Directorate Head

Assistant Commissioner of Customs Aminath Rasheeda.

3. Directorate of Customs Procedures and Operations

Directorate Head

Chief Superintendent Mohamed Maseeh.

4. Commissioner General's Bureau

Division Head

Senior Superintendent Ahmed Niyaz.

5. Tariff and Trade Division

Acting Division Head

Deputy Chief Superintendent Dr. Fathimath Mohamed

6. Sea Port Operations Division

Division Head

Chief Superintendent Abdulla Waheed

7. Airport Operations Division

Division Head

Deputy Chief Superintendent Abdulla Ali

Deputy Division Head

Senior Superintendent Mohamed Nizar

8. Intelligence and Risk Management Division

Division Head

Chief Superintendent Ismail Hamdoon

Deputy Division Head

Deputy Chief Superintendent Mohamed Hameed

9. Investigation and Legal Affairs Division

Division Head

Deputy Chief Superintendent Al.Uz Rafeeq Moosa

Acting Deputy Division Head

Senior Superintendent Ahmed Simah

10. Finance Division

Division Head

Deputy Chief Superintendent Dr. Fathimath Mohamed

11. Administration and Logistics Division

Division Head

Chief Superintendent Fathimath Sodhaf

12. Human Resources and Capacity Building Division

Division Head

Senior Superintendent Ahmed Simah

13. Information Technology Division

Division Head

Deputy Chief Superintendent Mahmood Riyaz

Acting Deputy Division Head

Senior Superintendent Muaz Ali

As per CG Directive 4/2016, effective from 1st March 2016 appointments have been made as follows:

1. Regional Customs Operations

North Region Head

Senior Superintendent Mohamed Ahmed Didi

South Region Head

Senior Superintendent Mohamed Waheed

2. Records Management Section

Section Head

Senior Superintendent Ahmed Igbal

3. Passenger Clearance Section

Section Head

Senior Superintendent Hussain Shaaz

4. Investigation and Prosecution Section

Section Head

Senior Superintendent Fathimath Dhiyana

5. Intelligence and Risk Management Section

Acting Section Head

Superintendent Mohamed Rishfan

More external sections assigned to process Goods declaration

With reference to CG Directive 48/2015, In a bid to speed up the processing of the goods declaration, the Commissioner General, has decided to involve sections other than those to which the declarations have been submitted in the stages of processing them.

As such, declarations submitted to Sea Cargo Documentation Section and Air Cargo Documentation Section will be assigned to officers in H.Dh Hanimaadhoo Operations Section for processing.

At the moment, H.Dh Kulhuffushi is also involved in this process.



File photo: Deputy Commissioner Mr. Ismail Abdulla along with former CEO of MPL converses with an official of the Auditor General's Office.

Customs seizes 817 grams of Cannabis

Customs has seized 817 grams of narcotics from a Bangladeshi male aged 33 who came from Dhaka, Bangladesh (via Colombo) on 16 January 2016 via Srilankan Airlines.

On X-ray scanning, Customs Officers noticed suspicious materials concealed in his luggage. On physical inspection, they found one polythene packet wrapped inside a diaper changing mat in his luggage. The subsequent tests of the alleged substance confirmed that the contents of the polythene packets were prohibited psychotropic substance- cannabis. The total weight of the packet including the packing was 817 grams.

A similar seizure was also made on 6th February 2016 in which 36 bullets were extracted from a passenger in an internal concealment case. These bullets were later tested positive for Heroin.

The passenger and the seized drugs were handed over to Maldives Police Service to investigate the case further.



Visiting RKC expert call on CG

The visiting RKC expert Ms Kameswari Subramanian paid a courtesy call on the Commissioner General of Customs Mr. Mohamed Junaid. The meeting was held in CG Office, Customs.

In the meeting, Ms. Kameswari Subramanian briefed the Commissioner on the on-going RKC gap analysis project being carried out under her consultancy. Discussion also took place regarding ways to speed up accession to RKC, as well as on other matters of mutual interest.

The retired Customs Officer from India, also the former chair of the WCO Permanent Technical Committee, Ms. Kameswari Subramanian, has been sent by the ADB to facilitate the gap analysis.



Muhyiddin School Students Take a Field Trip to the Bonded Warehouses

Twenty three Grade 10 Students from Muhyiddin School spent a half day in Customs on 25th February 2016 learning about the formalities involved in bonding goods at the warehouses in Hulhule'. This field trip was organized in an attempt to provide a practical environment for a module they are studying on Bonded Warehouses in a commerce related subject.

Students spent the first part of the program at the Head Office learning about the requirements for and procedures involved in establishing a bonded warehouse, familiarizing the documentation involved in registration of bonded warehouses and importation of goods from Bonded Warehouses. The control mechanisms established in the bonded warehouses and the responsibilities of the Bond Keepers were among other areas that were covered in this interactive session.

The second part involved a field trip to Hulhule' where the students took turns in exploring the different kinds of bonded warehouses established in the Customs Controlled Area, the types of goods bonded in these warehouses, how the goods are released from the warehouses for registered customers and what documentation are required in order to clear the goods.



MCS Officers complete B.Sc in Security and Law Enforcement Studies

Two of our officers, Chief Customs Officer Iqbal Ismail and Senior Customs Officer Grade 1 Mohamed Majid have graduated from the Bachelor of Science in Security and Law Enforcement Studies program conducted by Institute for Security and Law Enforcement Studies (ISLES) of Maldives Police Service.

In a ceremony held at Iskandharu Building, certificates were awarded to the graduates by Chief Guest Minister for Home Affairs Honorable Umar Naseer.

The BSc Security and Law Enforcement Studies is a program that is accredited by the Maldives Qualification Authority (MQA) as a Maldives National Qualification Framework (MNQF) level 7 degree. This internationally recognized program is facilitated by Foreign Experts from UK.

Several of our officers are currently studying at various levels of this program out of which certificates were also given away to those participants who have completed their Year 1 which is equivalent to a diploma of this program.

Congratulations to the graduates!





Customs Officers participate in National Campaign against Mosquitoes

A nationwide campaign against mosquitoes was carried out on 13th February. The Health Protection Agency has been conducting this annual campaign since 2012.

To begin the campaign, HPA initiated a "Cleaning Day". Our officers took part in this cleaning event carried out to prevent the spread of diseases propagated by mosquitoes.

Via this campaign, locations are being inspected for possible habitats where mosquitoes could breed, and such areas would be exterminated. Locals are also being given information regarding mosquitoes, their breeding periods, and how to prevent mosquito-propagated diseases.



12 Participants Graduate from Customs Brokers Training Course

The sixth batch of the Customs Brokers Training Batch graduated and received certificates on 16th February. In a special ceremony held this afternoon, certificates were distributed to the participants of Customs Brokers Training Course by Commissioner General of Customs Mr. Mohamed Junaid.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony, Commissioner General highlighted the roles and responsibilities of the Maldives Customs in an import-based country, and hence emphasized the importance of brokers in our community. Adding to this he also expressed his hope for the newly

graduated brokers to use their knowledge and wisdom to improve relations between Customs and its stakeholders, and facilitate international trade.

The Customs Brokers Training Course is aimed at training professional individuals who are thorough with relevant laws and regulations to be able to efficiently perform everyday dealings as a mediator between importers and Customs. In addition to the 12 participants who graduated today, 94 other individuals have previously completed this course.



Seventh Batch of Customs Brokers Course begins

The seventh round of Customs broker training course has begun at the Customs Academy. The training continues with a total of 24 representatives from various private firms in the import/export business.

Customs broker training course is approved by the Maldives Qualification Authority at Level 3 of the Maldives National Qualification Framework. The objective of this programme is to develop technically competent individuals who would assist with the enforcement of clearance procedure in accordance with the broker regulations, Customs Act and other export/import related

laws and regulations.

Among areas covered in this MQA Certificate level 3 accredited course includes:

- Module 1: Brokers Regulation and Customs Procedures
- Module 2: Valuation Process
- Module 3: Documentation Process
- Module 4: Harmonized System

All classes of the course will be held at the Customs Academy and will be taken by qualified Customs Officers.

Final National Expert Mission on Customs Valuation for the Sri Lanka Customs

On the 15th of February 2016, Assistant Commissioner of Customs Mr. Ismail Nashid attended the “Request for a human resource contribution to the Final National Expert Mission on Customs Valuation for the Sri Lanka Customs” which was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, under the sponsorship of ADB.

The objectives of this Mission, which is the final activity for Sri Lanka Customs under this Multi-year Assistance scheme, are to support the PCMs to deliver a three-day workshop on Customs Valuation and PCA to further deepen their knowledge and experiences as national trainers, and guide the PCMs to better use the newly developed training module. Accordingly, as the tangible product of this

Multi-year project, upon completion of this Final Expert Mission, the Sri Lanka Customs will have their own trainers as well as new tailor-made training module and their supporting materials.

The expert mission was concluded on the 19th February 2016.

ASYCUDA world Technical Training Batch 1

Seven officers from Maldives Customs Service had attended the training session, ASYCUDA World Technical Training Batch 1 held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 22nd February – 4th March 2016. This training was sponsored by the EIF Tier Trade Facilitation Project, Output 2 (Development of ASYCUDA World in Maldives Customs Service).

This training session (Basic Level) aimed at transferring as much as possible the UNCTAD ICT knowledge and experience to the core technical team of the Maldives customs, in order to allow them to participate in the technical installation, configuration, administration and maintenance of the ASYCUDA World system.





Reunion Seminar on Customs Modernization for GRIPS Graduates of 2000 to 2004

On the 29th of February 2016, Chief Superintendent Ismail Hamdoon attended the “GRIPS reunion” which was held in Japan, under the sponsorship of Japan Customs.

This program was intended be an exceptional opportunity to enhance the network among GRIPS graduates as well as Japan Customs. During the program, various activities were held, such as a discussion on Customs modernization based on the reports to be made from both participating graduates and Japan Customs and field visits to some of the regional Customs offices in Japan.

Ismail Hamdoon returned back on 4th March 2016.

Monthly Statistics – January 2016

Total revenue collected during January 2016 has increased by 16% compared to the same period last year. A total of MVR 182.2 million was collected as customs duty and other charges this January while this figure stood at MVR 157.6 million for the same period last year.

Although revenue has increased, Import statistics for January 2016 show a 15% reduction when compared to the same period last year. A total CIF value of MVR 2.46 billion worth of goods were imported in January this year while this figure stood at MVR 2.88 billion for the same period last year.

The main reason for the decline in imports this January when compared to January 2015 is due to the fact that an aircraft worth of 431 million was imported in January 2015.

Looking at the distribution of imports in January 2016, food items was the most imported item with a CIF value of MVR 517.0 million. This is followed by machinery and electronics and fuel with CIF value of MVR 441.4 million and MVR 234.8 million (10%) respectively.

Export statistics for the month of January show a reduction of 14% when compared to that of January 2015. As such, FOB value of MVR 276.5 million worth of goods were exported from Maldives in January 2016 while MVR 320.1 million worth of goods were exported in January last year.

Top most imported countries for the month of January are Singapore, United Arab Emirates (UAE), India, China and Sri Lanka. Most exported countries are Thailand, Sri Lanka, France, Germany and USA.



File photo: A batch of vinegar bottles unfit for human consumption, ready to be destroyed.

Imports incl. fuel

Imports excl. fuel

Exports

Customs duty

15%
2.5 billion

16%
2.1 billion

14%
276.5 million

16%
182.2 million

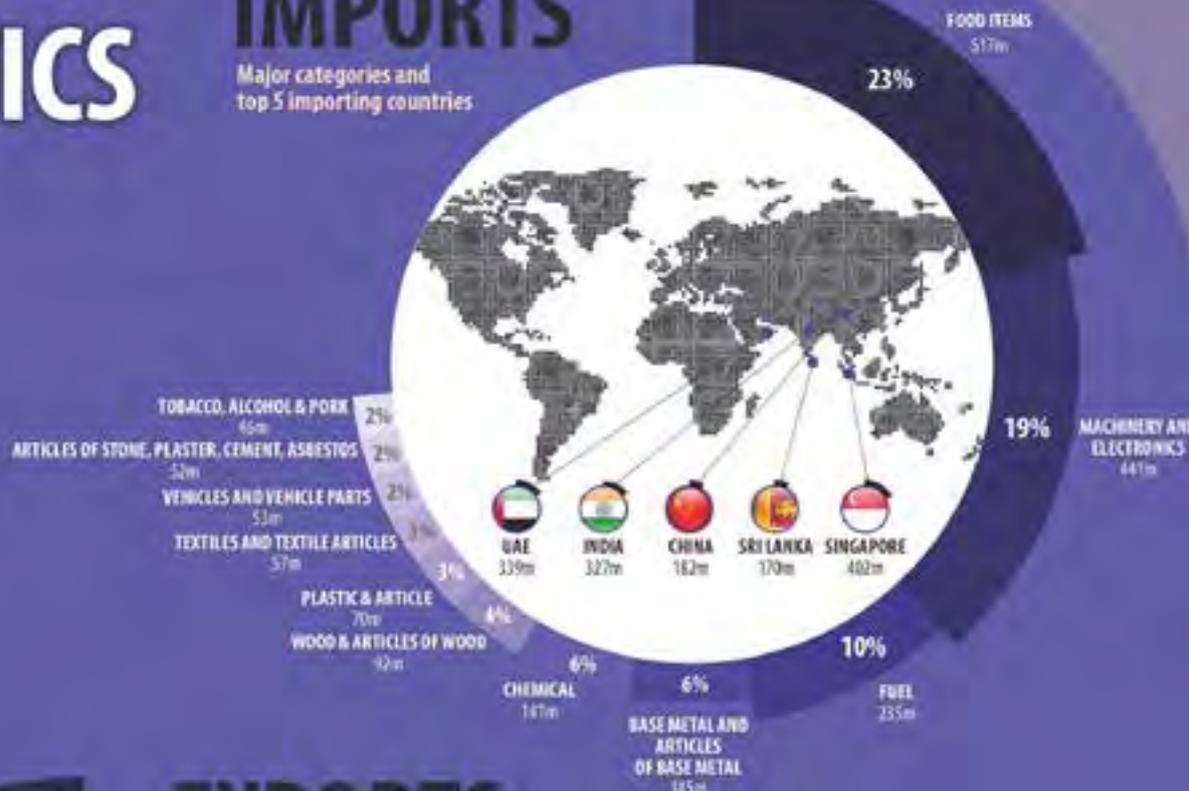
Year summary
at the end of
January 2016,
compared against
2015.

MONTHLY STATISTICS

JANUARY 2016

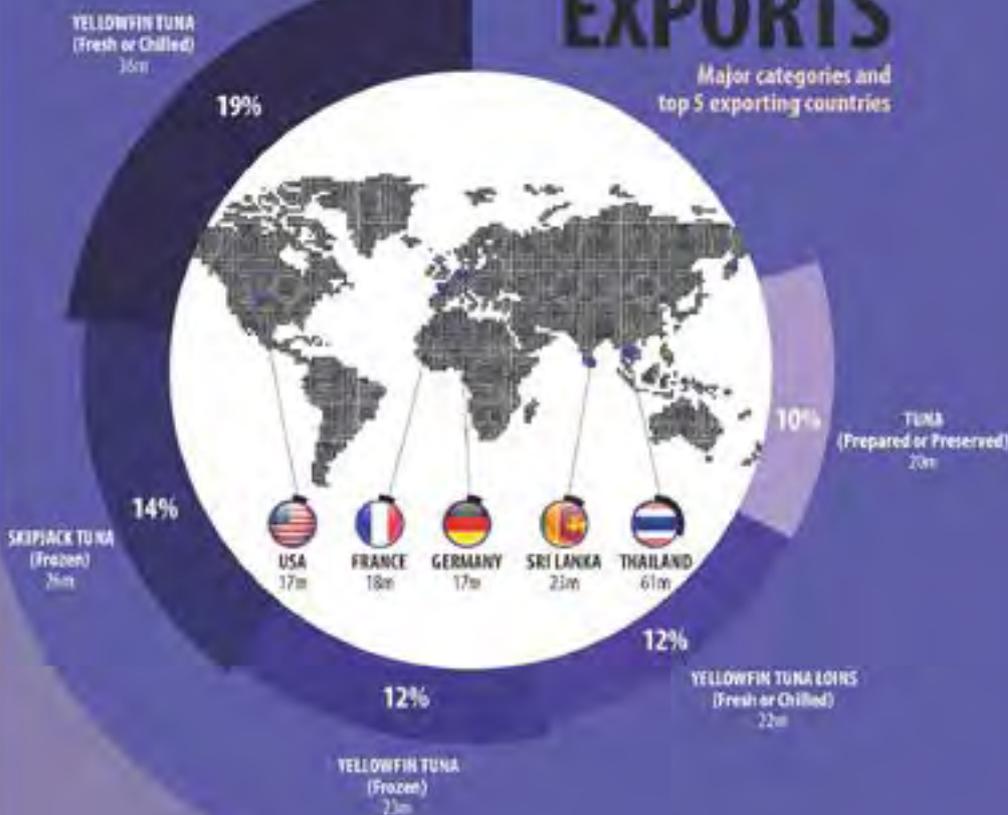
IMPORTS

Major categories and top 5 importing countries



EXPORTS

Major categories and top 5 exporting countries



Fuel makes up one-sixth of total imports (CIF) on average. Lower fuel prices compared to the same period last year, showed a significantly low growth in total imports despite consistent increase in other categories of imports. In addition to this there was an aircraft valued 431 million imported in January 2015.

Imports are measured in CIF, exports in FOB, and are given in Maldivian Currency

Information provided on this sheet may be subject to post-audit modifications.



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CG Open 8 Ball Billiard Tournament

The CG Open 8 Ball Billiard Tournament has begun on the 28th of February. The tournament was inaugurated by Commissioner General of Customs Mr. Mohamed Junaid.

The tournament is organized by the Customs Recreation Club, and will go on until the 9th of March. Participants are categorized into 1st and 2nd division. With 22 officers in the 1st division and 42 officers in the 2nd division, a total of 64 players are participants in this tournament.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, CG Junaid highlighted the importance of strong relations and mental wellbeing of employees working in a stressful enforcement organization such as Maldives Customs Service, and recommended on improving relations, friendships and unity within the employees.



COG3 Aminath Shiura Abdul Baaree and CCO Husna Mohamed has been selected as the best and second best female Basketball Player (respectively) for the Haveeru Sports Awards.





SCOG3 Hussain Haleem takes part in the 100 meter event at the 12th South Asian Games

Customs Officers enjoy with the “Beautiful Eyes”



As the first CSR activity for this year, our officers spent the morning of 27th February with the “Beautiful Eyes of Maldives”; children with Down’s syndrome from the support group of the Down’s Syndrome Association of Maldives.

Our officers decorated Meerubahuru Maalan and prepared various activities for the children, including coloring, hand painting and table tennis. The kids also enjoyed snacks and sweets during their visit. At the end of the gathering, Chief Superintendent Mr. Abdulla Waheed presented a takeaway gift pack to each child.

Down’s syndrome is a genetic disorder typically associated with physical growth delays, characteristic facial features, and mild to moderate intellectual disability. It is one of the most common chromosome abnormalities in humans, occurring in about one per 1000 babies born each year.

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