MEASURES ADOPTED IN RESPONSE OF COVID – 19

Nepal is landlocked country bordering with India and China. In all border customs points and Airport, Customs officers are clearing all types of goods despite of countrywide lockdown until 7 April 2020. This is quite different from the sea-linked countries and it is more challenging too operate Customs offices in many border points.

In the leadership of Deputy Director general, the Customs administration constructed a Quick Response Team at the headquarter, which coordinates all the Customs points, facilitates the supply network, coordinates with private sectors, concerned Government agencies and settles down any problem regarding customs clearances.

In the recommendation of the Quick response team, the high Level Committee (Deputy prime Minister is the chair of the committee) make the policy decision to exempt duty and waive any documents in customs clearance, if needed.

The Government has decided duty exemption in the different essential items to fight against Covid-19 like masks, sanitizers, gloves, PPE, portable ventilators, PCR Machine and thermometers.

Department of Customs had directed all the Customs offices to clear the essential goods within 2 hours and expedite the customs clearance of the medical equipment, medicine and sanitizers and other related items.

To maintain the WHO standards while clearing, Nepal customs is minimizing the physical contact in the Customs yards, increasing the green lane customs clearance and concentrating the central monitoring through WAN to control the other.

Regular meeting, sharing and communication with counterparts are effective in order to facilitate the cross border clearance.

Customs clearance is being performed and copies of the documents are accepted during this time, while the original documents are not mandatory.