

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3560  
ANSWERED ON:23.12.2008  
WTO MEETING  
Sai Shri Nand Kumar

**Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether a meeting of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) member countries was held in the month of June/July 2008 in Geneva;
- (b) if so, the details of issues discussed during the said meeting; and
- (c) the extent to which the Geneva meeting has been able to resolve the disputed issues of various member countries?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

- (a) Yes, Sir. A mini-Ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), attended by about 30 Trade Ministers, was held in Geneva in July 2008.
- (b) The objective of the meeting was to finalise modalities for Agriculture and Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA). Simultaneously, a meeting on Services (a "Signalling" conference) was also held. The programme laid out by the Director General, WTO was to complete the Doha Round negotiations in all areas by the end of the year. In Agriculture, the issues discussed included reductions in overall trade-distorting domestic support by developed countries, tariff cuts, Sensitive Products, Special Products, the Special Safeguard Mechanism for developing countries etc. In NAMA, there were discussions on the coefficient for the tariff reduction formula, flexibilities for developing countries including the anti-concentration clause, sectoral initiatives, specific dispensation for countries with low bindings, Recently Acceded Members (RAMs), Small and Vulnerable Economies (SVEs), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) etc.
- (c) The meeting ended without an agreement on any issue. While Ministers were amenable to moving towards an agreement on several complex issues in both Agriculture and NAMA, there were many others which either could not be discussed at all or on which agreement could not be reached on account of persisting differences. The multilateral process of discussions has since resumed at the WTO in October 2008.