

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3586
ANSWERED ON:23.12.2008
WTO NEGOTIATIONS
Sai Shri Nand Kumar

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

- (a) whether the Under Secretary of Commerce of the United States (US) has commented adversely on India's views on the World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations as reported in the Times of India dated 11 June, 2008;
- (b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;
- (c) whether the Government has taken up the issue with the US authorities; and
- (d) if so, the details in this regard and the outcome thereof?

Answer

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

(a)to (d): Yes, Sir. According to the news report, the US Under Secretary of Commerce reportedly accused India of trying to wreck the Doha round of trade talks at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). However, the fact of the matter is that the Doha round is a development round and the outcome has to strike a balance between trade liberalization and development needs. The needs and interests of the developing and least-developed countries are at the heart of the Doha work Programme. A substantial and effective reduction in domestic support and tariffs in agriculture by developed countries while enabling developing countries to protect and promote the interests of their low-income and resource poor farmers, infant and vulnerable industries, is a key priority for India in the negotiations. This has been the consistent position taken by India during negotiations.

On Non Agricultural Market Access (NAMA), India has indicated its willingness to take substantial cuts in its bound tariffs provided the developed countries show reciprocity. This is important to preserve the mandate of less than full reciprocity (LTFR) in reduction commitments. By undertaking these tariff reductions, India would also be providing real market access or cuts in its applied rates. It has also been pointed out as per the mandate in the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration that participation in sectoral initiatives must be on a non mandatory and a good faith basis without pre-judging the outcome.