

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:390  
ANSWERED ON:22.04.2013  
AGREEMENT OVER TRADE FACILITATION  
Kumar Shri P.;Lagadapati Shri Rajagopal

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to negotiate an agreement over trade facilitation at the World Trade Organisation and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has put forward any condition for initiating any such negotiation on agreement over trade facilitation at the World Trade Organisation;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the response of the developed nations in this regard;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to bring on board other developing nations including the BRICS nations on the issue; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof along with the efforts made by the Government to garner their support in the matter including the discussions held by the Government on the issue with the BRICS and the other developing nations so far on the issue and their response thereto?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

a) to e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 390 FOR ANSWER ON 22ND APRIL, 2013 REGARDING "AGREEMENT OVER TRADE FACILITATION"

(a) Yes, Madam. The mandate for trade facilitation negotiation is contained in the July 2004 Framework Agreement to which India is a signatory. The trade facilitation negotiation is a part of WTO's Doha Round Trade talks. It seeks to develop a set of multilateral trade rules for further expediting the movement, release and clearance of goods, including goods in transit across the international borders. It also aims at enhancing technical assistance and support for capacity building in this area. It further aims at provisions for effective cooperation between customs or any other appropriate authorities on trade facilitation and customs compliance issues.

India is engaged in the ongoing WTO trade facilitation negotiation since its inception.

(b) As mentioned above, the trade facilitation negotiation is underway since the year 2004 in which India has been actively engaged. The July 2004 Framework Agreement inter alia prescribes that the results of the negotiations shall take fully into account the principle of special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries.

(c) The developed countries are also participating in the trade facilitation negotiation and have tabled proposals of their interest in this area. Whereas India and other like-minded developing countries are negotiating an agreement keeping in view the limitation of resources and capacity to implement the proposed disciplines, the developed countries aim for an ambitious outcome. The final result would be based upon a right balance of interests of the developing countries and the developed countries (i) within the trade facilitation agreement (internal balance); and (ii) between trade facilitation and other tracks of the Doha Round trade negotiations (external balance).

(d) & (e) Yes, Madam. India and other like-minded developing countries are negotiating the proposed trade facilitation agreement with a view to safeguarding and strengthening the interests of developing countries including the least developed countries. In this regard, India is closely coordinating its positions with other developing countries including the BRICS nations on various issues involved in the negotiation.