

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1487
ANSWERED ON:03.03.2000
WTO MEETING
SANJAY PASWAN

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

- (a) Whether there is any proposal under consideration of the WTO to include the non-governmental organisations relating to child labour and environmental activists in the list of participants in the dispute settlement process at the WTO;
- (b) if so, the details of such organisations from India;
- (c) whether any such organisation have participated in the WTO meeting so far;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reaction of the Government for participation of these organisations in the WTO level?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN)

(a) & (b) : Proposals have been made by some Member Countries in general without any specific listing, for the inclusion of members of the Civil Society/Non-Governmental Organisations, for participation in dispute settlement proceedings of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

(c) & (d): WTO has been holding symposia from time to time on issues such as environment and development where non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are also invited to express their views. One such symposium was also organised by WTO on 29th November, 1999 at Seattle.

(e): India is opposed to any inclusion of the members of Civil Society/Non-Governmental Organisations in the dispute settlement proceeding of the WTO as this would upset its government -to - government character. Further there is an apprehension that such inclusions may even adversely affect the impartiality of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism.