

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4053

ANSWERED ON:23.08.2005

INDO-US TRADE FACILITATION TO WTO

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

(a) whether India and the US have submitted a joint paper on trade facilitation and better exchange of information to the WTO;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the extent to which past differences on trade facilitation between the two countries will be resolved?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGO VAN)

(a) and (b): Yes, Sir. A joint paper (WTO Document No. TN/TF/W/57 dated 22 July, 2005) was filed by India and the United States in the Negotiating Group on Trade Facilitation, WTO for establishing a multilateral mechanism for the exchange and handling of information between Members. The July Framework Agreement of 2004 had reached an explicit consensus to start negotiations on trade facilitation. Trade facilitation negotiations, inter alia, aim at a provision for effective cooperation between customs or any other appropriate authorities on trade facilitation and customs compliance issues. The paper jointly filed by India and USA is to address this issue.

(c): Differences existed in the past regarding inclusion of Singapore Issues in the WTO. The four Singapore Issues are Trade and Investment; Trade and Competition Policy; Transparency in Government Procurement; and Trade Facilitation. In the July Framework Agreement of 1st August 2004, there was explicit consensus to commence negotiation on trade facilitation and to exclude the other three Singapore Issues from the Doha Work Programme.