

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4041
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27th MARCH, 2017

TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT OF WTO

4041. DR. K. GOPAL:

SHRI HARI MANJHI:

ADV. M. UDHAYAKUMAR:

SHRI K.N. RAMACHANDRAN:

SHRI RAM CHARITRA NISHAD:

SHRI C. MAHENDRAN:

Will the Minister of **COMMERCE & INDUSTRY** (वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री) be pleased to state:

- (a) the salient features of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of World Trade Organization (WTO) along with its ratification status, country-wise including India and the benefits to the country therefrom;
- (b) whether the Government has started the process to set up a National committee on Trade Facilitation in the country to coordinate and implement the TFA of WTO and if so, the details and the status thereof;
- (c) whether the said TFA is likely to simplify customs regulations for crossborder movements of goods/ lead to reduction in transaction costs/ make it easier for developing countries to trade with developed nations in global markets and also to reduce red-tapism to facilitate trade by reforming customs bureaucracies and formalities and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has introduced a concept note at the WTO highlighting the need for a Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) in services and if so, the details and the status thereof indicating the recent developments in this regard;
- (e) whether India's efforts to garner support for the proposed TFA in Services comes even as it has dragged the United States to the WTO following US's move to hike visa fees for H-1B and L-I categories and if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) whether India had also objected to Britain tightening norms for foreign skilled workers and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती निर्मला सीतारमण) (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

- (a) to (c): Yes Madam, consequent upon the ratification of the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) of World Trade Organization (WTO) by India in April, 2016, a National Committee on Trade Facilitation (NCTF) under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary has been constituted.

The TFA would necessitate simplification of border management procedures and adoption of new transparency measures, all of which are expected to reduce the transaction cost of imports and exports and facilitate smooth movement of goods across borders. As of now 112 members have ratified TFA, including India (list attached).

- (d) & (e): India tabled the "Concept Note for an initiative on Trade Facilitation in Services" at the WTO to facilitate discussion among WTO members with an aim to achieve an outcome. India's proposal on Trade Facilitation in Services and the US visa fee hike for H-1B and L-1 categories are different issues and are being taken up separately at the appropriate level.
- (f) : Government of India has been consistently taking up the issue of tightening norms for skilled foreign workers with the Government of UK at the highest levels. The UK Government has been urged to not accept the recommendations of the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) in the interest of the bilateral trade in services between India and the UK.

The List of Countries which has ratified TFA
(Total 112 Countries including 28 Member States of European Union)

Sl. No.	Country	S. No.	Country
1	Hong Kong China	46	Macao China,
2	Singapore	47	United Arab Emirates
3	United States	48	Samoa
4	Mauritius	49	India
5	Malaysia	50	Russian Federation
6	Japan	51	Montenegro
7	Australia	52	Albania
8	Botswana	53	Kazakhstan
9	Trinidad and Tobago	54	Sri Lanka
10	Republic of Korea	55	St. Kitts and Nevis
11	Nicaragua	56	Madagascar
12	Niger	57	Republic of Moldova
13	Belize	58	El Salvador
14	Switzerland	59	Honduras
15	Chinese Taipei	60	Mexico
16	China	61	Peru
17	Liechtenstein	62	Saudi Arabia
18	Lao PDR	63	Afghanistan
19	New Zealand	64	Senegal
20	Togo	65	Uruguay
21	Thailand	66	Bahrain
22	European Union <i>(on behalf of its 28 member states)</i>	67	Bangladesh
23	Republic of Macedonia	68	Philippines
24	Pakistan	69	Iceland
25	Panama	70	Chile
26	Guyana	71	Swaziland
27	Côte d'Ivoire	72	Dominica
28	Grenada	73	Mongolia
29	Saint Lucia	74	Gabon
30	Kenya	75	Kyrgyz Republic
31	Myanmar	76	Canada
32	Norway	77	Ghana
33	Viet Nam	78	Mozambique
34	Brunei	79	Saint Vincent & the Grenadines
35	Zambia	80	Nigeria.
36	Ukraine	81	Nepal
37	Lesotho	82	Rwanda
38	Georgia	83	Oman
39	Seychelles	84	Chad
40	Jamaica	85	Jordan
41	Mali		
42	Cambodia		
43	Paraguay		
44	Turkey		
45	Brazil		