



“Specialized Course on WTO for Policy Makers and Trade Negotiators from Central Asia and Other Countries”

The Centre for WTO Studies (CWS) organized a **“Specialized Course on WTO for Policy Makers and Trade Negotiators from Central Asia and Other Countries”** from 19- 28 September 2016 in collaboration with the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme of Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. The training programme was held at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi and was attended by 25 government officials from 14 countries, viz., Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Niger, Palestine, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Zimbabwe.

The programme was inaugurated on 19th September, 2016 by Dr. Surajit Mitra, Director IIFT. The inaugural programme was also attended by Mr. Abhijit Das, Head and Professor, CWS and Mr. Mukesh Bhatnagar, Professor, CWS.

Considering the importance of Energy trade for Central Asian countries, the Course focused on provisions in GATT/WTO Agreements and regional agreements that are related to trade in energy and ensuring energy security. Some of the Agreements that were covered were the GATT 1994, Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures, General Agreement on Services, Agreement on Trade Facilitation, Free Trade Agreements such as NAFTA and TPP, the Energy Charter Treaty, International Investment Agreements and also disputes pertaining to energy.

The sessions were taken by illustrious members of the academia, legal practitioners and public officials such as Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, Centre for WTO Studies; Ms Anice Joseph Chandra, Director, Department of Commerce, Ms Anuradha R.V., Partner, Clarus Law Associates; Dr James Nedumpara, Associate Professor, Jindal Global Law School; Prof. Mukesh Bhatnagar, Centre for WTO Studies; Dr Murali Kallummal, Associate Professor, Centre for WTO Studies; Dr Prabhash Ranjan, Assistant Professor, South Asian University; Dr Pralok Gupta, Assistant Professor, Centre for WTO Studies, IIFT; Mr Shailendra Kumar, Additional Director General, Prasar Bharti; and Ms Shailja Singh, Assistant Professor, Centre for WTO Studies, IIFT.

The presence of government officials from a recently acceded member of the WTO viz., Afghanistan and from observers that are potentially preparing for accession to WTO- Azerbaijan, Iraq, Sudan and also from countries that are neither members nor observers, viz., Palestine and Turkmenistan created a platform to exchange perspectives on the challenges to and implications of WTO accession. Mr Mozammil Shinwari, the ex- Deputy Commerce Minister of Afghanistan who was also pivotal in Afghanistan’s WTO accession as it’s chief negotiator also attended the programme and exchanged his views on Afghanistan’s accession process. Mr Rajeev Kher, who retired as the Commerce Secretary to the Government of India shared his thoughts on the twenty years’ history of WTO, the state of Doha Round negotiations and the proliferation of FTAs.

During the course of their stay, a number of cultural activities were organized for the participants: such as sightseeing in Delhi that included a visit to Qutub Minar and Delhi Haat and a one-day tour to the city of Agra to visit the Taj Mahal and the Agra Fort.