Centre for WTO Studies
विश्व व्यापार संगठन अध्ययन केन्द्र

INDIA, WTO AND TRADE ISSUES

Quaterly Newsletter of Centre for WTO Studies

VOL.3 2012 July-September

Lead Article

Trade Facilitation Gap Analysis

For Border Clearance Procedures In India

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1. Introduction

The Centre for WTO Studies commissioned a study on Trade Facilitation Gap Analysis, i.e. the gap between autonomous trade facilitation steps undertaken and the continuing bottlenecks. The study also broadly examines the trade facilitation negotiations in WTO. The full study is available on the Centre's website (http://wtocentre.iift.ac.in/books_reports.asp).

Trade facilitation for trade promotion and liberalizing trade is significant in international trade discussions. India has 12 major, 187 minor, and many private notified ports; 36 functional international airports clear air cargo. There are 66 of 138 Land Customs Stations (LCSs) along India's international borders which are functional. Also 155 Inland Container Depots (ICDs) and Container Freight Stations (CFSs) clear goods in India's hinterland, reducing congestion at ports, and enabling traders to get goods cleared at their doorstep. Furthermore, 89 additional ICDs and CFSs are being developed.

Increasingly intense competition in the international market place makes it imperative for India to expedite the flow of goods quickly and cheaply. Otherwise its competitiveness in the international market will continue to be adversely affected. Easier foreign trade and export policies and procedures (no more quantitative restrictions on imports; minimized documentation); reduced customs documentation, examination and assessment; and using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), Indian Customs and Excise Gateway (ICEGATE), Risk Management System (RMS) and Accredited Client Programme (ACM), have facilitated trade. But bottlenecks continue.

2. Methodology

The Study Group comprised: experts from the Centre for WTO Studies at the IIFT; a consulting firm - Ace Global Private Limited; and a retired Chief Commissioner of Customs as an independent expert with in-depth

Dr Surajit Mitra: New Director of IIFT

Dr Surajit Mitra has assumed the charge of Director, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi on 5 September 2012. Dr Mitra, a Doctorate in Economics from the University of Cambridge, UK, had distinction of being a Fellow of Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford (International Trade) and Honorary Professor in the Centre for Policy Research (South-South Cooperation).

Dr Mitra, an IAS officer of 1977 Batch, retired as Secretary to Government of India on 31 August 2012. During his tenure of 35 years in the Government, he worked in various Ministries of Government of India including Ministry of Rural Development, Commerce & Industry, Tourism, Defense, Home, Communication, Petroleum, Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises. He was on the Boards of Maruti Udyog, ONGC, IOC, GAIL, BHEL, HMT.

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knowledge and hands-on experience of trade facilitation policies and procedures.

The main stakeholders identified for this study were: importers; exporters; shipping/air cargo agencies; Custom House Agents (CHAs); port operators (sea/air); CFSs and ICDs; and Government regulatory and promotional bodies.

Surveyed stakeholders represented EDI/non EDI ports, sea and air ports, and land borders as detailed in the table below:

Airports	Bangalore, Chennai, New Delhi
Sea ports	Chennai, Kolkata, Nhava Sheva, Vishakhapatnam
Land border/Transit	Petrapol, Raxaul
ICD / CFS	Nagpur, Tughlakabad/ Patparganj

3. Key Findings

3.1 Imports

a) Ports

- Despite increased ports activity, congestion at ports is considerably reduced, without shortage of or waiting for berths at major ports.
- During 2008-2009, 80% of the ships were allotted berths in less than a day; only 2% waited for over two days.

b) Filing of Import General Manifests (IGMs) and Bills of Entry (B/E)[1]

- Under Section 30 of the Customs Act, the importer files the IGM with the Customs to initiate the process of clearance of imported goods. The IGM is a complete list of cargo on board a vessel arriving at a port by which Customs can account for and control the cargo on board. The value of goods is not recorded on IGMs though this data is essential for generating B/Es.
- To register a B/E, Customs verifies that its cargo data matches the IGM. Errors are rectified before Customs admits B/Es and initiates the clearance process.
- Discrepancies between an IGM and advance B/E means the B/E has to be cancelled. It cannot be automatically corrected in line with the IGM. A mismatch between the actual cargo carried by the vessel and the Bill of Lading[2] means both the IGM and the advance B/E have to be amended. This takes time leading to delays.
- During 2008-09, 96.5% IGMs were filed in advance, but delays do occur due to: (i) Errors in the IGMs. Filing IGMs at Nhava Sheva and Kolkata ports takes half a day because 90% of IGMs there have wrong cargo details, container numbers, addresses of importers/suppliers, mark and number of the container, or misspelt port of loading. (ii) CHAs/importers filed only 47% B/Es within 24 hours of filing the IGM; 53% after 24 hours; 26% of these after three days. Though the Customs Act allows advance filing B/Es, only 33% CHAs file advance B/Es or within 24 hours of the consignment's arrival at the port; 50% within 48 hours of the cargo's arrival at a port. They do not appear to treat quick clearance as urgent. (iii) The importer can have the entire cargo assessed under an advance B/E, paying the total duty. Customs cannot adjust duty paid for short landed goods against duty payable on the next consignment. The importer can only seek a time consuming refund of duty. (iv) Importers have to physically file a number of 'declarations'. (v) Breakdowns in ICEGATE, at least once a week for 1-3 hours.

c) Issue of Delivery Orders[3]

To have cargo released, CHAs/importers need a Delivery Order (DO) issued by Shipping Agents or Airlines. This takes up to two days while examination of containers is held up. DOs have limited validity. However no time is lost when DOs are issued simultaneously with filing of B/Es.

Shipping agents have a monopoly on the cargo they bring in. DOs are issued after all dues are paid; in Maharashtra after stamp duty is paid. Importers pay: DO fee (₹2,000 - ₹3,000 per Bill of Lading); destination inland haulage charges; terminal handling charges; shipping line DO fees; container

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1 A declaration by an importer of the exact nature, precise quantity and value of goods that have landed for purpose of payment of customs duty.

2 A bill of lading is a document issued by a carrier, e.g. a ship's master, acknowledging that specified goods have been received on board as cargo for conveyance to a named place for delivery to the consignee who is usually identified.

3 It is a document from a consignor, a shipper, or an owner of freight which orders the release of the transportation of cargo to another party. Usually the written order permits the direct delivery of goods to a warehouseman, carrier or other person who in the course of their ordinary business issues warehouse receipts or bills of lading.

cleaning and washing charges; and survey fees.

d) Shifting Cargo to Container Freight Station[4]/ Warehouse

- Containers are normally unloaded within six hours of a ship's berthing.
- 60% of containers are shifted from the wharf only 12 hours later; the rest after 24 hours.
- In 2008-09, importers paid demurrage for as many as 45% of containers.
- About 12 hours are lost due to: absence or shortage of labour, transport, equipment, and Customs officers to supervise shifting of cargo; congestion at the port gate and/or on the outbound road; incomplete documentation; scanning of container.
- Normally, Steamer Agents entrust Shipping Agents/CFSs to transport containers from the Port Terminal to the CFS. If CHAs/importers could arrange the transportation themselves, it would reduce delays and costs.
- Similar reasons cause delays at air cargo complexes, especially where there is heavy cargo traffic, and at seaports, where insufficient warehousing space adds to delay.

e) Procedures at Container Freight Stations

- CFSs are treated as extensions of ports because they do what ports did earlier, namely, custodianship, accounting, and safe delivery of cargo to importers.
- The Ministry of Commerce approves CFSs; the Commissioner of Customs licenses them. The Customs Department, the regulatory agency for CFSs, promulgated the Handling of Cargo in Customs Areas Regulations, 2009 (HCCAR).
- Security verification holds up containers at CFS gates for about 30 minutes. 66% of containers are unloaded at CFSs within an hour; the rest in 1-3 hours.

f) Assessment Procedures

- Risk Management System (RMS) clears over 50% B/Es all over India. i.e., 50% of documents are assessed for customs duty without Customs officers scrutinizing data furnished by the importers because they are perceived to be of low risk to revenue collection. Designated assessment officers examine the remaining B/Es, and query 9% about: documentation; exemption claims; valuation; licensing; countervailing duty (CVD).
- 60% of the queries relate to deficient documentation and exemption claims. Depending on the complexity of issues, according to Customs data importers/CHAs' replies take: under 6 hours (6.5% of the cases); over 6 hours but under 12 hours (1% of the cases); over 12 hours but under 24 hours (32.5% of the cases); over 24 hours but under 3 days (30% of the cases); and over 3 days (30% of the cases).
- Assessment takes 3-5 days after queries are answered (importers' data).
- Incomplete documentation, or when goods require chemical analysis, or when officers want to make detailed enquiries, importers may have the goods provisionally assessed.

g) Payment of Customs Duty

- Importers paid duty within 24 hours of assessment for 55% of B/Es (of which duty was paid in 22% of B/Es within 8 hours). Duty was paid in over a day for 45% of B/Es.
- Reasons for delay: Disagreement on computed duty; or importers do not give CHAs funds to pay duty immediately upon assessment.

h) Customs Examination and Out of Charge

- After B/Es are processed, the goods are examined.
- Importers pay CFSs ₹63,736 per B/E towards ground rent, equipment, labour, and overtime of about ₹1,000 per B/E to Customs Department if the examination occurs during the second or third shift.
- CFSs generally do not allow importers free storage of containers but charge them on the basis of TEUs (twenty foot equivalent unit).
- 60% of cargo is usually examined three hours after duty is paid, because: (i) legally, only specialized agencies can examine the goods; (ii) shortage of customs officers; (iii) shortage of labour in CFS; (iv) shortage of equipment in CFS; (v) Other reasons (faulty computer system; stacking containers).

i) Examination by other Government Agencies

- Plant Quarantine Organization (PQOI)

The Plant Quarantine Organization of India,

[4] CFS is a place where containers are stuffed, de-stuffed and aggregation/ segregation of export/import cargo takes place.

Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine and Storage, inspects imported agricultural commodities to prevent introduction of exotic pests and diseases into India; and also agricultural commodities meant for export from India, as per the requirements of importing countries under the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Its constraints: (i) no dedicated area for fumigating goods in ports, CFSs, ICDs, and Customs Bonded Warehouses; (ii) PQOI officials have to conduct inspections in the presence of Customs appraising officers, who are usually available only in the afternoon. Effectively, PQOIs can use only half a working day; and (iii) lack of adequate equipment at ports for shifting stacked containers.

- Port Health Organization (PHO)

The PHO is mandated to prevent spread of international communicable diseases as per the Indian Port Health Rules, 1955. It clears 60% of consignments within 3 days of receiving samples; 20% within 3-7 days; while the remaining 20% take over a week (PHO data).

j) Detention of Cargo due to Contraventions

- Adjudications

1% of B/Es detained for contraventions face adjudication. Time taken for adjudications are: under one day (7% of the cases); over one day but under 3 days (24% of the cases); over than three days but under 7 days (29% of the cases); over 7 days but under 14 days (17% of the cases); over 14 days but under 30 days (18% of the cases); and over 30 days (5% of the cases).

- Examination by Special Valuation Branch (SVB)

• The SVB, a section of Customs, investigates all imports.

• 0.5% B/Es are detained because SVB has to examine their declared values.

• Bond with bank guarantees and extra duty deposits are taken for provisional clearances. This can be time consuming.

- Bills of Entry under Export Promotion Schemes

14% B/Es are filed under various import authorizations issued under Export Promotion Schemes (importers/CHAs data). To become operable, the license/authorization has to be registered with the Customs House specified in the license. Registration takes 1.5 days due to: valuation and unit price of the items; product category disputes; legal undertaking; bond/bank guarantee; factory/Central Excise registration; Export House certificate; and verification of genuineness of Central Excise Certificate.

k) Handing over the goods to the importers

• Once CFS liabilities are cleared, importers obtain an 'out of charge' order from Customs officers for actual delivery of cargo from the CFS.

• It takes about six hours from examination to delivery of goods, 3 hours each by Customs officers to issue an 'out of charge' order after examination; and CFS for actual delivery.

• Importers say that it takes over 12 hours for release of 50% of consignments after obtaining the 'out of charge' order due to: shortage of trained staff and labour (84%[5] of the cases); Shortage of transport (60% of the cases); shortage of equipment (33% of the cases); security procedures (33% of the cases).

• Other reasons for delay:

- De-stuffing of LCL[6] cargo containers takes from 10 minutes to 3 hours. CFSs do not allow outside labour for de-stuffing.

- Pasting labels on imported food products containing consumer information (like Maximum Retail Price, date of expiry, etc.) in CFSs or warehouses.

- Released cargo takes 12-90 hours to reach the importers' premises because of substantial documentation required at check posts at the state borders and payment of local taxes like Octroi.

- Often superfluous, documentation adds to clearance delays at CFSs like: B/E; valid delivery order; duty payment documents; Customs 'out of charge'; Bill of Lading copy; CFS payment receipt; High Sea contract copy; IEC copy; and stamp duty paid receipt.

Summary – Import Procedures

The flow chart provides a summary of stages and agencies involved in clearing import cargo.

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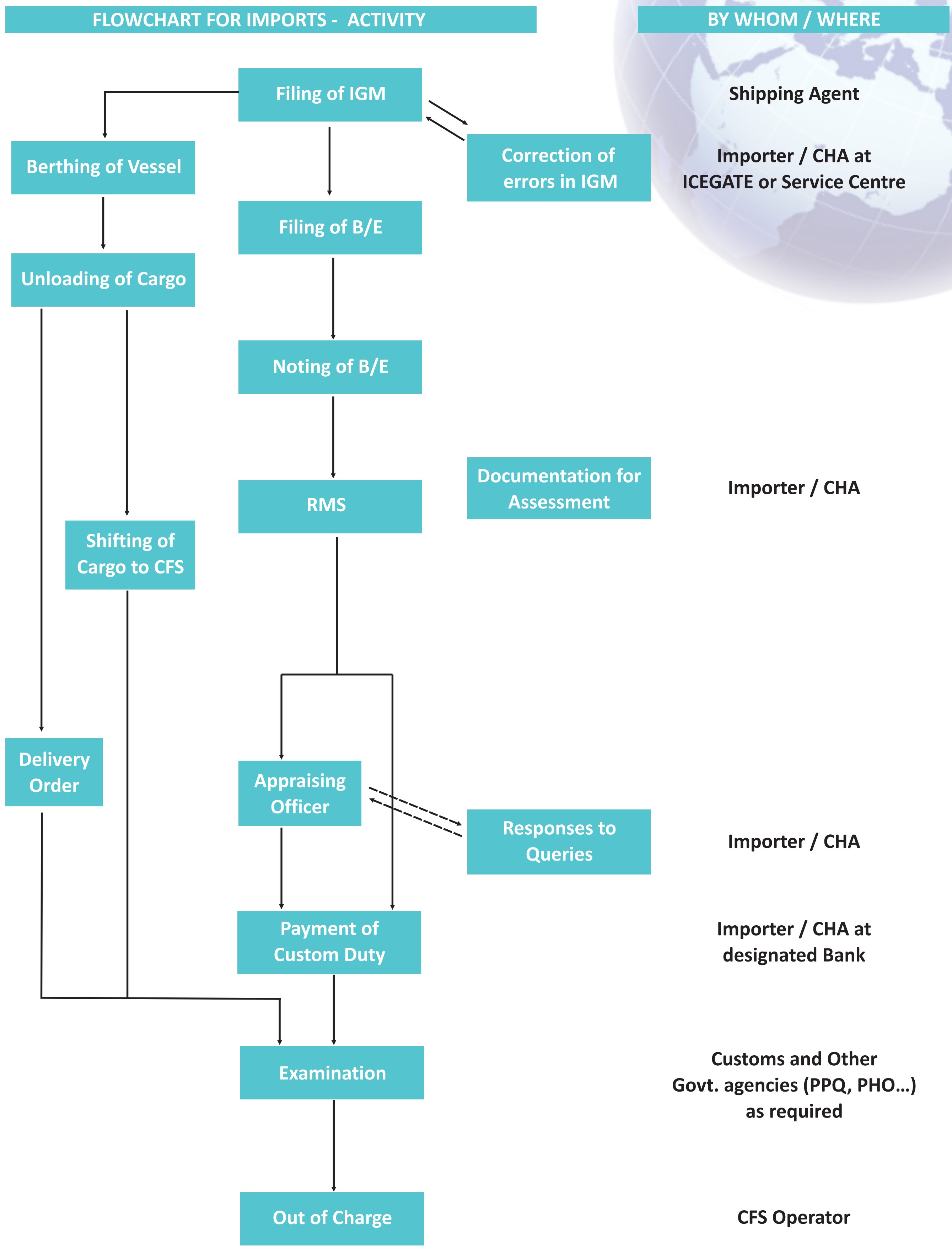
[5] The figures indicate the percentage of respondents citing the specific factor as a cause for delay. As the respondents have cited more than one reason, therefore the total is more than 100%.

[6] Less than Container Load.


FLOWCHART FOR IMPORTS - ACTIVITY
BY WHOM / WHERE
Filing of IGM
Shipping Agent
Berthing of Vessel
Correction of errors in IGM
Importer / CHA at ICEGATE or Service Centre
Filing of B/E
Unloading of Cargo
Noting of B/E
Documentation for Assessment
Importer / CHA
RMS
Shifting of Cargo to CFS
Delivery Order
Appraising Officer
Responses to Queries
Importer / CHA
Payment of Custom Duty
Importer / CHA at designated Bank
Examination
Customs and Other Govt. agencies (PPQ, PHO...) as required
Out of Charge
CFS Operator

3.2 Exports

The processes involved are as follows:

a) Filing of Shipping Bills

- It is difficult for exporters and CHAs to file Shipping Bills from remote locations.
- Heavy traffic slows down the computer system and delays getting Shipping Bill numbers.
- Technologically challenged ICEGATE servers make acceptance of Shipping Bills uncertain.
- 75% registered Shipping Bills are assessed in under one day; 17% take over 2 days.
- Goods exported under various export promotion schemes have more checks which delay processing of documents.
- Procedures include: detailed examination of cargo; collection of samples; collection of specifications.

b) Examination

- Normally, Customs officers must examine export cargo at the port of export, which involves unpacking the goods at CFSs near the port, causing inconvenience and sometimes loss of goods.
- Exporters may have the goods examined by the jurisdictional Central Excise officers in the factory of manufacture or the warehouse.
- Exporters dislike factory examination because of systemic delays and disincentives such as: (i) Excise officers take 2.14 days to examine goods. (ii) 50% exporters paid about ₹4,630 per container as overtime fees for Excise officers who examined cargo at the factory. (iii) For factory examination by the local Central Excise officers at the factory, exporters need permission from the Commissioner of Customs at the port through which the goods are exported. This takes about a fortnight, has limited validity, and has to be renewed.
- Factory examination and stuffing of cargo slows down because of: shortage of Excise staff, transport and containers; extra legal demands from the officers.
- At CFSs examination and stuffing, one working day is lost because of: shortage of Customs officers (3-5 hours lost); shortage of labour (2-3 hours lost); shortage of equipment (2-3 hours lost); improper stacking of containers (1 hour lost); and importers/ CHAs delay in producing cargo/requisite documents.
- In 82% cases, it takes about 2.5 hours for stuffed containers to be loaded on trucks because of: shortage of labour and equipment; only a few trucks nominated by the CFS or the shipping companies can transport containers to the port, increasing delay and cost.
- In 55% cases, Customs officers charge merchant overtime fee for examination and stuffing of the containers. Factory/CFS examination costs exporters about ₹4,000–5,000 per container in merchant overtime fees.
- From the arrival of cargo at the CFS to its departure for the port takes 1.5 days.

c) Drawback

- About 34% of Shipping Bills are filed under the drawback claims. The Ministry of Finance notifies rates of refund which are either all industry rates or specific brand rates.
- The complex and time consuming system of fixing of drawback brand rates is a WTO compatible method of export incentives.
- 50% of exporters wait for over a week for their drawback refunds. Reasons for delay: incorrect claims; incomplete documentation; valuation disputes; and errors in IGM.

d) Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme (EPCG) and other schemes

- Major delay in obtaining EPCG authorization: two months wait for 38% applicants, over 2 months wait for 47%.
- Online authorization and storing on the Customs computer for use by the Department will eliminate transmission of physical authorizations and TRAs between Customs Houses.
- It takes 1-2 months to get scrips in 60% of cases under export promotion schemes linked to export performance.
- For WTO compatibility, explore a zero or very low rate of Customs duty on import of capital goods in high export intensity sectors, eventually dropping the EPCG scheme altogether. Future policy frameworks must consider that India may lose the protective cover of Annex VII of the WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures in the next 5-6 years once its per capita GNP crosses US$1000.

Summary – Export Procedures

Various stages and agencies in export consignment clearance are summarized in the flow chart:

FLOWCHART FOR EXPORTS - ACTIVITY	BY WHOM / WHERE
Filing of Shipping Bill	Exporter / CHA at ICEGATE or Service Centre
Registration & Assessment of Shipping Bill	Customs
Documentation for Assessment	Exporter / CHA
Permission for factory examination	Customs
Examination and stuffing at Exporter's premises	Central Excise
Shifting of Cargo to CFS	Exporter / CHA
Examination and stuffing at CFS	Customs
Waiting period at CFS	
Loading on trucks for delivery at port	CFS Operator
Loading on vessel for shipment	Port Operator

4. Dwell Time Analysis

The overall time taken for clearing import and export consignments is summarized below.

4.1 Imports

Risk Management System (RMS) cleared consignments take 9-10 days from when the imported cargo arrives at the port to its receipt at importers' premises.

Table: Dwell Time Analysis - Imports

Activities	Responsible Agencies / Stakeholders	Time taken
1. Time taken for allotment of berth	Port Operator	1 day
2. Time taken for unloading	Port Operator	-
3. Filing of Manifests, including rectification of errors	Shipping Agent	½ day
4. Filing of Bill of Entry	Importer / CHA	1 day
5. Issue of Delivery Order	Shipping Agents or sub-agents such as NVOCCs and Consolidators	1 day
6. Shifting of cargo to CFS / Warehouse	Shipping Agents	12 hours (approx. 1 day)
7. Procedures at the CFS a. Security check b. Unloading	CFS Operator	 30 minutes 1 hour
8. Assessment, including resolution of queries in documentation Average time	Customs	1 to 3 days 1.5 days
9. Payment of Duty Average time	Importer / CHA	1 to 2 days 1.5 days
10. Customs Examination	Customs	3 hours (8 to 10 days for special cargo)
11. Out of charge and Delivery	Customs/ CFS Operator	6 hours (approx. ½ day)
12. Arrival goods at the importers' premises	Importer / CHA	12 hours (approx. 1 day)
Total		9 to 10 days

Source: Study Group's Survey of stakeholders and data obtained from DG Systems, CBEC

In practice, these procedures take longer, and include time taken for resolving queries relating to B/Es, and unforeseen delays resulting from congestion etc. The table above reflects RMS assessed B/Es (applicable only to 50% of B/Es), not queried much. The rest undergo one or more of the following additional procedures.

Time taken for each such procedure is given below:

Procedure	Percentage of Bills of Entry	Time in Hours
Queries on Bills of Entry	10%	72
Provisional Duty assessment	11.5%	72
Adjudication	1%	72
Special Valuation Branch Scrutiny	10%	168
Registration of licenses and TRA for Bills of Entry under Export Promotion schemes	14%	108

Source: Study Group's Survey of stakeholders and data obtained from DG Systems, CBEC

4.2 Exports

Clearance takes about 3.5 days from when export cargo arrives at the port to stuffing at the CFSs.

Procedure	Responsible Agencies / Stakeholders	Time in Hours
1. Filing and registration of Shipping Bills	Exporters / CHA	-
2. Assessment	Customs	1 day
3. Examination		
a. At factory	Central Excise	2 days
b. At CFS	Customs	1 day
c. Average time taken		1.5 days
4. Stuffing and Transportation	CFS Operator Shipping Line	1 day
Total		3.5 days

Source: Study Group's Survey of stakeholders

5. Recommendations

To expedite cargo clearance of import and export at sea and air ports:

5.1 Import General Manifests

To eliminate IGM errors:

- Section 30 of the Indian Customs Act provides for penalty for non-delivery of manifest to Customs within a prescribed time. There is no penalty for errors. Such a penalty, particularly for repeated offenders, will deter Shipping Agents from such widespread errors.
- The Customs department can permit minor online amendments of IGMs by importers.
- Upgrade ICEGATE connectivity and technology.
- Train Shipping Agents on Customs procedures and correct filing of IGMs.
- In the case of unconditional notifications, the rate of duty should be incorporated in the Customs Tariff.

5.2 Filing Bills of Entry

- Provide incentives for filing advance B/Es, e.g., priority in assessment, adjustment of advance duty paid for a consignment that has not arrived against duty for a subsequent consignment; percentage reduction in the ground rent for cargo clearance; automatic refund/adjustment of excess duty paid if only part of the consignment is landed by one vessel and the balance of goods comes by another vessel.
- Up to date Information Technology system. Consult users when designing/improving computer systems.
- Corrections in IGMs should appear automatically on advance B/Es.

- Disincentives to discourage late filing of B/Es such as: (i) fewer free days for demurrage; (ii) penalty for not filing B/E within 24 hours of cargo's arrival; (iii) no clearance through RMS; (iv) reducing the period for which payment of duty after assessment is permitted without interest.

- Efficient connectivity between Customs stations and users with ICEGATE to register B/Es immediately on filing.

- Eliminate physical and multiple filing of 'declarations'. Build in a legal presumption making importers responsible for data furnished in IGMs and B/Es.

- Include value of goods on IGMs.

- Issue legally binding computer generated B/Es on the basis of IGMs to importers claiming ownership of the goods; make importers responsible for data furnished in the B/E.

- Include a provision in the Customs Act (Section 46) and the rules under which B/Es are filed (Bill of Entry (Forms) Regulations, 1976 and Bill of Entry (Electronic Declaration) Regulations, 1995), specifying that once a B/E, whether computer generated or filed under digital signature, is registered, it will be presumed that the importer has furnished correct data about the cargo. If not, the Customs Department can take appropriate action on the basis of the computer generated B/E.

- Generate B/Es electronically from IGMs, at least for importers with good track records.

- Connect all processes connected to assessment of B/Es and payment of duty online. Eliminate all printouts.

- Expand RMS norms to reduce the proportion of consignments requiring examination.

- Allow more second check clearances of non-RMS goods, i.e. goods checked after processes of assessment and duty payment are completed.

- Expand the coverage of importers under Accredited Client Programme (ACP).

- Reduce the number of rates/slabs of customs duty. Integrate different types of duties/cesses into a single rate of duty; allocate cess etc. from this consolidated collection of duties.

- Make self-assessment entirely importer-driven; enhance the period of demand and penalties for contraventions. For true self-assessment giving the importer full responsibility for assessment of goods, subject to post-clearance audit by Customs, refine the recently introduced 'Self-Assessment' by amending Section 17 and Section 18 of the Customs Act by the Finance Act, 2011.

5.3 Delivery Orders (Dos)

- Shipping Agents to issue electronic DOs on all weekdays instead of the present five days a week.

- Reduce/eliminate fee for issuing DO; integrate it with freight charges.

5.4 Shifting of Cargo to CFSs

- Cut down delay at ports and CFSs by improving equipment, transport, and labour.

- Reduce congestion at exit gate and port roads.

- Empower Customs department through legal and mandatory reforms to permit importers/CHAs to choose their transporter for moving cargo from CFS to ports.

- Allow importers to choose the CFSs from which they want goods cleared when they file DOs. The information should appear on all shipping documents, including Bills of Lading. Meanwhile, effectively apply the provisions of Cargo Handling Regulation, 2009 which empowers the Commissioner of Customs to regulate the flow of goods to various CFSs to prevent monopolization of transport by one or two CFSs.

- Rationalize charges of Shipping Agents for shifting the cargo; make the information transparent and readily accessible to importers/CHAs.

- Institute a regulatory mechanism to monitor activities of Shipping Agents, including for fixation of their charges. The proposed Shipping Trade Practices Bill, 2008 provides for important regulatory mechanisms like compulsory registration of maritime service providers, publication and prominent display of tariff for services provided, mechanisms for complaint and grievance redressal by the aggrieved persons, and stiff penalties of up to ₹10 lakhs for breach of these provisions. The Bill needs to be enacted into law immediately. Meanwhile, an agency like Customs can enforce these provisions.

5.5 CFS Procedure

Synchronize transportation of containers from ports to CFSs with the processing B/Es to minimize idle time of containers at CFSs.

5.6 Assessment

- Self-assessment of duty on imported and export goods by importer or exporter is a major step by the Central Board of Excise and Customs towards trade facilitation. Importers should now get delivery of goods on the basis of this self-assessment, where they are not flagged for examination by the RMS.

- Educate importers/CHAs on documentation required for assessment of goods.
- Standardize the structure and conditions in exemption notifications for easy computerization. Standardized format of notifications and fewer conditional exemption notifications will mean fewer queries.
- Simplify assessment of dutiable goods to rectify major causes of provisional and other assessment delays.
- Notify only one consolidated rate of duty. Allocate the revenue so collected under the different heads of duties which have been merged into one consolidated rate.
- Introduce larger scale on-site examination and post-clearance verification by audit.
- Earmark officers to deal with B/Es with valuation issues, related party transactions, second-hand goods etc. Allow liberal provisional clearance of such goods.
- Make all judicial decisions available to officers online via updated database of the decisions of higher judiciary/tribunals to prevent disputes on issues already decided legally. Make assessing officers accountable for implementation of legal decisions.
- Give advance ruling authority wider jurisdiction to permit any applicant with a legitimate interest in importing a consignment to seek a binding advance ruling.
- Make import authorizations by the Custom House available online upon request, with secure access.
- Simplify Provisional Duty (PD) Assessments by providing for a running bond. Eliminate bank guarantees and bonds for importers/exporters with good track record.
- Ensure better assessment by officers through more proactive administrative mechanisms. Initiate random review assessments by senior officers to ensure that established practices, judicial decisions, tariff advice is followed. Only essential documents are called for - no needless queries are made.
- Refresher courses in classification, valuation and international best practices in assessment, risk management for officers at all levels.
- Minimize adjudications by compounding minor offences.
- Reduce procedural requirements for provisional release of goods in SVB cases. Complete SVB examination within one month of initiation. Exempt importers with good track records from extra duty deposit.
- Departmental adjudicating officers should move away from a predominantly pro-revenue mindset to reduce needless appeals. Performance appraisal of officers should be based partly on the quality of their adjudications and the number of orders upheld at the first stage of appeal.
- Institute faster, more independent appeal mechanisms. First level departmental appeal should help in reducing the Tribunal's workload by passing orders fairly, without pro-revenue bias. The Tribunal is independent but overloaded. More benches can expedite matters.
- The Customs Department should evolve mechanisms to reduce the number of appeals filed in the High Court and the Supreme Court.

5.7 Payment of Duty

Strengthen the system of advance deposit of duty by importers. Self-assessment by importers will encourage. Importers can deposit an amount with the Customs Department at commercial rates of deposit, to be adjusted towards duty. Introduce:

- Incentives for timely payment of duty, like discounts on duty, faster clearance of goods; and
- Disincentives for late payment of duty, like withdrawal of ACP Status, facilitation through RMS, and charging penal rate of interest.

5.8 Examination and out of charge

- Compliance with quality requirement: bi-lateral understanding with supplier countries to accept test reports or other conformity assessment reports of accredited laboratories of country of export to avoid duplication of testing in the country of import.
- For faster, more efficient assessment, examining officers must reduce reference to the Assessing Groups; raise queries at one go, assess goods quickly after that. Senior officers should regularly review and analyse queries to identify the areas that are most questioned, followed by guidelines to minimize them. Standardized format of notifications and fewer conditional exemption notifications will mean fewer queries. Establish a regulatory mechanism for CFSs, preferably by empowering Customs to penalize CFSs for poor quality of services and by making Commissioners of Customs enforce the Cargo Handling

Regulation, 2009 to regulate the flow of goods in CFSs.

- Annual assessment by Customs Department of the work load in CFSs to fill requirement for officers, with additional shifts where volume of traffic makes complete examination and release of cargo during the day impossible.

- CFS operators should maintain updated, user-friendly websites with complete information on procedures, documentary requirement, and charges.

- Use more computer scanners.

5.9 Handing over the goods

- Eliminate superfluous documents required by the CFS at the time of handing of goods.

- Make it mandatory for countries of manufacture to paste labels containing consumer information on imported food products.

5.10 Other Departments

- Once online transmission of authorizations to the Customs and importers starts, DGFT should eliminate paper based import authorizations.

- All import authorizations should be transmitted to the Custom Systems, accessible by Customs and concerned importers/exporters.

- Based on computerized monitoring of export performance by the Central Server, the Customs System can work out the entitlements and transfer/sale of such authorizations.

- Alternatively, DGFT could formulate norms for import authorizations, with Customs carrying out actual operation.

- Reduce the number of Duty Neutralization Schemes. Regular studies by DGFT of the efficacy of such schemes, which are not in the nature of duty neutralization but are for outright export promotion, especially the incremental exports achieved as a result of the schemes.

5.11 ADC/Live Stock/Meat Product/Agricultural Commodities

- Open/designate competent laboratories in the cities or ports where cargo is imported/exported to minimize delay in clearance of cargo and reduce time taken for tests.

- Laboratories should be connected online with Custom Houses to enable a structured online exchange of query memo and test results.

- Set up Government laboratories at major ports to test all specified goods. Or appoint competent private laboratories to carry out specified tests.

- Accept previous test results for identical consignments; vigorously implement existing instructions in this regard.

5.12 Exports

- Incentivise and facilitate remote filing of export clearance documents.

- Extend RMS-based clearance procedures to export clearances; include examination of cargo.

- Extend Accredited Client Programme (ACP) to exports.

- Where no duty/incentive is involved, allow exporters to despatch cargo after intimation to the Customs by means of Shipping Bill.

- The percentage of export examination should be reduced.

- Factory examination should be encouraged by giving priority to examination of export cargo by the local excise officers.

- Dispense with overtime fee and all other fees for export examination, including at CFSs.

- Remove prior permission requirement from Customs for factory examination.

- A multi-agency body consisting of Ministries of Finance, Commerce, Surface Transport, Export Promotion Agencies, etc. should look into infrastructural issues which delay export clearance from factories.

- Improve the infrastructure (equipment, transport and labour etc.) at Ports and CFSs to end delays in loading/unloading, transportation etc.

- Streamline collection of statistics, especially exports statistics; improve quality of data by making exporters file accurate and detailed information.

5.13 Export Incentives

Encourage greater use of Brand Rate of Drawback by permitting self-assessment of the eligible amount of drawback, and taking of credit of the eligible amount by the manufacturer for payment of duty. Post-audit can verify it later. For specified categories of exporters like manufacturer exporters under excise control, this facility can be easily allowed, and a high percentage of eligible duty (say up to 80%) can be allowed to be taken as credit on self-assessment basis.

5.14 Other suggestions

- Government agencies dealing with import and export clearances should have effective grievance redressal mechanisms, with prescribed norms of meetings with the representatives of trade, to be adhered to scrupulously. For transparent and efficient resolution of trade facilitation problems of stakeholders, minutes of all such meetings should be uploaded on websites of the concerned departments. Implement decisions taken in these meetings without further 'examination' by the Customs House/Board.

- Develop a single window system to enable one time electronic submission of documents with Customs, which should transmit them to other agencies whose clearance is required for release of consignments.
- State municipal authorities should streamline and simplify Octroi and filing of N-form formalities.
- Eliminate delays in temporary movement of containers connected with execution of bonds, Customs can exempt duty on containers.
- Simpler methods of payment in banks; private or public sector banks should be allowed to receive payments.
- A common message format for Custom Houses and SEZ through EDI will facilitate online connectivity between them. As trade has set up its IT systems in tune with Customs – EDI and SEZs should do the same. Use IT tools for greater transparency in the working of the various Departments. For instance, Customs should publish the dwell time for release of import and export consignments every month; pending work of interest to trade, like refund claims, adjudication, etc. should be on Custom House websites; the time taken for completing tests of samples and status of pending samples should be on the website of test laboratories and quarantine and health authorities. Details regarding different types of licenses, the status of processing the licenses, and status of applications for fixation of SION norms can be on the DGFT website.

Activities & Events (July – September 2012)

1. ITEC Specialized Course on Select WTO Issues: Agriculture, Services, TRIPs and RTA

IIFT, New Delhi

From L to R: Mr Kartik Kunaal Pratap, Economic Planning Officer, Fiji; Mr K.T. Chacko, Director, IIFT; Mr Muhammad Rezaul Karim, Research Officer, Bangladesh; Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS; Prof. Shashank Priya, CWS

An international training programme was held from 16-25 July in collaboration with the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Department of Commerce, Government of India (GoI). The inaugural session of the programme was attended by Mr Amar Sinha, Joint Secretary, Department Of Commerce, GoI, Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, Centre for WTO Studies (CWS) and Prof. Shashank Priya, CWS. The eight-day training comprised of classroom sessions which focussed on WTO Issues – Agriculture, Services, TRIPS and RTAs, with a strong emphasis on experience sharing. For programme and presentations visit: (http://wtocentre.iift.ac.in/ORP5.asp#).

Twenty six government officials from 16 countries viz., Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Costa Rica, Fiji, Ghana, Honduras, Nigeria, Qatar, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe attended the programme.

Group Photograph: Participants, Resource Persons and CWS faculty

Resource persons for the training programme from the CWS/IIFT were: Ms Tamana Chaturvedi, Dr Sachin Sharma, Dr Pralok Gupta, Prof. Shashank Priya, Prof. Sajal Mathur, Ms Shailja Singh, Dr Murali Kallummal and Prof. Abhijit Das. In addition, outside experts were also invited as resource persons for the training. These included: Dr Manisha Sridhar, Regional Advisor, IPR and Trade and Health, WHO-SEARO; Mr Atul Kaushik, Joint Secretary, Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, GoI; Ms Sonia Pant, Deputy Secretary, Department of Commerce, GoI and Mr Shailendra Kumar, Deputy Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training, GoI.

The training methodology included lectures as well as case studies and a group negotiation exercise. A field visit to Convergys, Gurgaon was organized to provide participants with an opportunity to have first-hand experience of the working of a unit in services sector. A cultural visit to Agra was also organised.

The Valedictory Session was attended by Mr K.T. Chacko, Director, IIFT, Prof. Abhijit Das and Prof. Shashank Priya. The feedback from the participants was positive. They expressed their particular appreciation for the Mock Negotiation Exercise on Agriculture Negotiations.

2. Trade Sift: Trade Policy Workshop

IIFT, New Delhi

From (L) to (R): Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS; Prof. Peter Holmes, University of Sussex; Prof. Jim Rollo, University of Sussex; Ms Lindsey Block, DFID, British High Commission, New Delhi; Ms Sarah Ollerenshaw, University of Sussex.

CWS, in partnership with Inter Analysis, University of Sussex and British High Commission, New Delhi, organised a five-day training programme on TradeSift software in New Delhi from 23 – 27 July 2012. Twenty seven trade experts, including officers from the Government of India and Government of Pakistan, were trained on the software. The software provides convenient tools for analysing trade data.

Group Photograph: Participants, Resource Persons and CWS faculty.

3. Capacity building Seminar on WTO, FTA, Regional Integration and International Trade Issues

Kolkata, West Bengal

CWS partnered with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), International Trade Centre, (ITC) Geneva, the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) and sister organisations to conduct a capacity building seminar on 27-28 July.

Inaugural Address by Mr Amar Sinha, Joint Secretary, DoC, GoI at the Capacity Building Seminar on WTO Regional Integration and International Trade Issues

The seminar was inaugurated by Mr Amar Sinha, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, GoI, who also delivered the keynote address. Mr Manab Majumdar from FICCI, Mr Rajesh Aggarwal from ITC and Ms Shailja Singh from the CWS represented their respective organizations. The seminar was attended by over 150 representatives from the business community. Over the course of two days, trade experts conducted sessions on FTAs, trade remedial measures, Issues in Foreign Trade Policy, International Trade and West Bengal and Intellectual Property Rights.

4. Seminar on Ethiopian WTO Accession Negotiations with focus on Trade in Financial Services

IIFT, New Delhi

From (L) to (R): H.E. Gennet Zewide, Ambassador of Ethiopia to India; Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS; Mr Ravi Bangar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, GoI

CWS organised a four-day seminar for Ethiopian Central Bank and trade officials. The classroom sessions from 30 July to 2 August were followed by a field visit to RBI, SBI, LIC and ICICI Bank offices on 3 August 2012. The programme was targeted for senior level officials from the National Bank of Ethiopia. A senior negotiator from the Ministry of Trade was also in attendance.

The opening session of the programme was attended by H. E. Gennet Zewide, Ambassador of Ethiopia to India, Mr Ravi Bangar, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, GoI, Prof. Abhijit Das and Prof. Sajal Mathur, CWS, IIFT. The four day classroom sessions of the training programme focused on GATS with specific emphasis on financial services, including India's experience and approach to banking, insurance and liberalization of the financial services sector. For programme and presentations visit: (http://wtocentre.iift.ac.in/ORP5.asp#).

Group Photograph

In addition to faculty from the CWS viz. Dr Pralok Gupta, Prof. Abhijit Das and Prof. Sajal Mathur, experts on Financial Services were specially invited as resource persons including Mr Shailendra Kumar, Deputy Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training, GoI; Mr Lalit Kumar, Director (Insurance), Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, GoI; Mr Shashank Saksena, Director (Banking), Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance, GoI; Mr Rajesh Jai Kanth, Deputy General Manager, International Banking Division, Department. of Banking Operations and Development, Reserve Bank of India, Mumbai; Mr Randip Singh Jagpal, Joint Director, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority, Hyderabad; and Ms Sonia Pant, Deputy Secretary, Department of Commerce, GoI.

5. Seminar on Impact of WTO & FTAs on Gujarat

SPIPA, Ahmedabad

The Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration (SPIPA) in collaboration with the CWS organized a one and a half-day seminar on 6-7 August 2012. Professors Abhijit Das and Sajal Mathur served as resource persons from the CWS for this activity. The seminar generated awareness amongst stakeholders on the main issues in international trade and its relevance. The participants were also sensitized on the importance to identify and articulate concerns of Gujarat to the GoI in the WTO/FTA negotiations.

From (L) to (R): Mr Manab Majumdar, Asst S-G, FICCI; Mr Rajeev Kher, Addl. Secy, Dept. of Commerce, GoI; Mr R.S.Sodhi, Chairman, GCMMF; Mr Arvind Agarwal, DG, SPIPA; Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS

Group Photograph: Resource Persons and Participants at SPIPA Seminar

There were 38 participants at the seminar of which 26 were representatives from the Government of Gujarat and State PSUs. The remaining were drawn from the private sector and other stakeholders such as academics and representatives of the media.

Mr R. S. Sodhi, Chairman, GCMMF; Mr Rajeev Kher, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, GoI; Mr Arvind Agarwal, Director General, SPIPA and Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS participated at the inaugural session. This was followed by interactive sessions and panel discussions on: WTO and FTAs and their impact on states; issues of interest to Gujarat in international trade; case studies and experience sharing on impact of WTO/FTAs in Gujarat; stakeholders consultations and private sector participation in trade policy; impact of international trade on handicrafts in Gujarat; relevance of GIs to economy in business; and import – export and foreign trade policy. The valedictory address at the closing session was delivered by Dr A. K. Pujari, Director General Foreign Trade, GoI.

6. Training of Trainers Programme on WTO and International Trade: Strengthening State-Centre Linkages

IIFT, New Delhi

CWS organized a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on 22-23 August 2012 with the support of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GoI. The ToT programme targeted state focal points/nodal officers, state academies of administration, and senior state government officials dealing with agriculture, industry or service sectors. The States participating in this activity were: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh.

From L to R: Prof Abhijit Das, Head CWS; Prof. Sajal Mathur, CWS; Mr S.R. Rao, Commerce Secretary, Government of India; Prof. Shashank Priya, CWS; Mr R.K. Mitra, Registrar, IIFT

The programme was inaugurated by Mr S.R. Rao, Commerce Secretary, GoI. Other senior Department of Commerce officials, IIFT and CWS faculty were also in attendance. Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS delivered opening remarks followed by the Commerce Secretary's keynote address. Prof. Sajal Mathur, CWS delivered the vote of thanks to conclude the inaugural session.

The classroom lectures were supplemented with interactive sessions and hands-on exercises for participants. The issues covered were: Why should State Governments be interested in international trade and WTO issues; Institutional mechanism(s) in the States for addressing issues related to international trade; Specific initiatives taken by the Government of India and State Governments to promote international trade/exports; Stakeholder consultations: creating effective channels of communication; Preparing an export strategy for the State; WTO Agreement on Agriculture and Doha/FTA Negotiations: role of States; Non-tariff measures - Sanitary and phytosanitary, technical regulations and standards: role of States; Industrial subsidies: flexibilities, limits and role of States; Anti-dumping and safeguards: role of States; Geographical indications: scope and potential for States; and International trade in services: importance and potential for States. For programme and presentations visit: (http://wtocentre.iift.ac.in/ORP5.asp#).

Group Photograph: ToT Participants and CWS/IIFT faculty

All faculty members from the CWS served as resource persons. In addition, the programme benefited immensely from the participation of senior policy-makers and experts specifically invited for this activity. These included: Mr Rajeev Kher, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, GoI; Mr Mukesh Bhatnagar, Additional DGFT; Mr Amar Sinha, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, GoI; Mr Manab Majumdar Assistant Secretary-General, FICCI; and Mr Ajay Sahai, DG & CEO, FIEO. The feedback and evaluation received from participants for this ToT programme was positive.

7. WTO Workshop on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures

IIFT, New Delhi

CWS in collaboration with the WTO, Geneva organized a National Seminar on the SPS Agreement from 28-30 August 2012. Twenty four participants attended the seminar, representing various organizations having a

Group Photograph: Participants with WTO Secretariat and Dept of Commerce officials and CWS/IIFT faculty direct link with the subject like Federation of Indian Export Organization (FIEO), Export Inspection Council (EIC), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), GoI Departments of Animal Husbandry, Commerce, Dairy, Food Safety and Standard Authority of India, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) and Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA).

The Inaugural Session of the programme was attended by Mr Rajeev Kher, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, GoI, Mr K.T. Chacko, Director, IIFT, Ms Marieme Fall, Counsellor, Agriculture and Commodities Division, WTO, Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS and Prof. Shashank Priya, CWS. Prof. Abhijit Das welcomed the participants. Mr K. T. Chacko gave the opening remarks and Mr Rajeev Kher delivered the Keynote Address. Ms Marieme Fall briefed the participants about the structure and objectives of the seminar. Prof. Shashank Priya delivered the Vote of Thanks.

From L to R: Ms Marieme Fall, Counselor, WTO Secretariat; Mr Rajeev Kher, Additional Secretary, DoC, GoI; Mr K.T. Chacko, Director, IIFT; Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS; Prof. Shashank Priya, CWS

The three-day seminar comprised classroom sessions by the WTO resource person, Ms Marieme Fall. Other resource persons at this activity were: Mr A. K. Gupta, Advisor (WTO), APEDA ; Dr S. S. Ghonkrokta, Director (Enforcement), Food Safety and Standard Authority of India; and Dr Murali Kallummal, CWS. The seminar was well received by the participants.

8. Fifth South Asian Training Programme on CGE Modelling

SAWTEE, Kathmandu

CWS in partnership with South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Kathmandu and South Asian Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM), Dhaka, jointly organized a training programme on Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) modelling from 27 – 31 August 2012. The training programme sought to build the capacity of researchers in South Asia by providing them with basic knowledge of CGE modelling using General Algebraic Modelling System (GAMS) software so that they are able to contribute to informed trade, climate and development policy making and implementation in South Asia.

Group Photograph: Participants at the Training Programme

9. Training Workshop on WTO and International Trade Issues for Himachal Pradesh

Fairlawns, Shimla

Group Photograph: Participants and Resource Persons at the HPIPA Training Workshop

A training workshop was held at the Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration (HPIPA) on 4 September 2012. The main focus of this training programme was to generate awareness among stakeholders of the impact of WTO and international trade issues on Himachal Pradesh (HP).

From L to R: Mr Dinesh Malhotra, Director HPIPA, Dr Shrikant Baldi, Pr. Secy.(Finance), HP, Prof. Sajal Mathur, CWS, IIFT

Dr Srikant Baldi, Principal Secretary, Finance delivered the inaugural address. Mr Dinesh Malhotra, Director, HPIPA, Dr. K.K. Handa Core Faculty, HPIPA and Prof. Sajal Mathur, CWS also participated in the opening session. This was followed by presentations by CWS and State government officials on the WTO and its impact on States; WTO and the industrial sector in HP; WTO and the horticulture sector in HP (with focus on apples); Implications of international trade for HP; Geographical indications of HP; and trade in services (with focus on tourism). Dr. K.K. Handa, Core Faculty, HPIPA and Prof. Sajal Mathur, CWS received positive feedback from participants at the closing session of the workshop.

10. Stakeholder consultations

Pune and Mumbai

Resource persons and participants at the stakeholder consultation, Pune

The CWS, in partnership with the Department of Commerce, GoI, organised stakeholder consultations on issues of relevance to WTO's work programme on 12-13 September 2012. These include the issue of remanufacturing and the expansion of Information Technology Agreement. The consultations were held in Pune and Mumbai on 12 and 13 September, respectively.

From L to R: Mr Manab Majumdar, Asst-SG, FICCI, Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS; Mr Vijay Kumar, Director, Dept. of Commerce, GOI; Mr Arun Sachdeva, Snr Director, Dept of IT, GOI and Mr Nitya Nanda, TERI at the stakeholder consultation, Mumbai

11. Seminar on WTO and its Impact on the Kerala's Economy,

IMG Thiruvananthapuram

The Institute of Management in Government (IMG), in collaboration with the CWS, organized a two day seminar on 17-18 September 2012. Prof. Abhijit Das and Prof. Sajal Mathur served as resource persons from the CWS for this seminar that was attended by participants from the Government of Kerala, private sector and other stakeholders such as academics and representatives of media.

L to R: Prof. Shashank Priya, CWS, IIFT; Mr Manab Majumdar, Asst Secy General, FICCI; Mr S.K. Goel, Chairman, CBEC; Dr Biswajit Dhar, DG, RIS; Mr Yann Duval, UNESCAP.

Mr K.M. Chandrasekhar, Former Cabinet Secretary and Ambassador of India to WTO, Dr Nivedita P. Haran, Additional Chief Secretary and Director, IMG delivered the inaugural and welcome address, respectively. This was followed by presentations by CWS resource persons and State government officials and experts on: WTO and its impact on States; WTO & Kerala's economy; Kerala's industrial Sector and WTO; Trade in services (with focus on tourism); TRIPS; Implications of WTO on the agriculture/plantation sector in Kerala; and Enhancing competitiveness to meet the challenges of WTO.

Lighting of lamp at the Inaugural Session of the Seminar on WTO and its Impact on Kerala's Economy

WTO's RTPC at the CWS

The CWS is hosting the second edition of WTO's flagship Regional Trade Policy Course (RTPC) for Asia-Pacific countries from 24 September to 16 November 2012. Government officials from the Asia-Pacific region are participating in this 8-week course. The course is being attended by 25 participants from: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Samoa, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Chinese Taipei and Viet Nam.

Mr. S.R. Rao, Commerce Secretary, Government of India; Mr. K.M. Chandrasekhar, Patron of RTPC 2012; Dr. Surajit Mitra, Director, IIFT; Mr. Jorge Vigano, Senior Counsellor, WTO; and Prof. Abhijit Das, Head, CWS participated at the inaugural ceremony held on 24 September 2012.

The two month RTPC will cover all WTO subject areas. Resource persons for this training programme will come from the WTO Secretariat and also include regional experts and faculty of the CWS/IIFT.

Faculty Participation in Outreach Programmes (July – September 2012)

	Participating Faculty	Outreach Activity/Topic	Date	Location
1.	**Prof. Abhijit Das**	Speaker at National Workshop for Media on "International Trade & Gender Dynamics in India".	10 August	New Delhi
		Speaker on"India's Export Scenario – Issues & Challenges" at the 3rd Export Summit 2012	28 August	New Delhi
		Chaired session on "Growing Trend of NTBs in the Textiles & Clothing sector" at the Capacity Building Programme on Implications of NTBs on Textiles & Clothing Exports of India organized by the Textiles Committee	25 September	New Delhi
		Speaker on "International Trade in Textile and Clothing: Emerging Trends"at the Indian Textile Summit 2012 organized by Confederation of Indian Textile Industries.	27 September	Mumbai
2.	**Prof. Shashank Priya**	Resource person with sessions on Trade Facilitation, Customs Valuation, Rules of Origin, Import Licensing Procedures and Preshipment Inspection at the ICAI Post Qualification Course in International Trade Laws & WTO	7-8 July	New Delhi
		Panellist at International Conference on "Government Procurement and Customs Valuation"	13 July	New Delhi
3.	**Prof. Madhukar Sinha**	Participant at UNODC Working Group meeting on "Anti-Corruption: Legislative, Policy and Practice Review"	12 July	New Delhi
		Participant at the consultations of the World Bank Procurement Policy Review	30 July and 8 August	New Delhi
		Invitee at Workshop on "Integrity in Public Procurement & whistle blower Protection in India" organized by Transparency International India	22 - 23 August	New Delhi
		Resource Person at Training of Trainers Programme on "Effective Management of Intellectual Property Assets" organized by WIPO in cooperation with the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (MSME)	19 – 21 September	Noida
4.	**Prof. Sajal Mathur**	Resource person at Training Programme on "International Trade and Business Management" for Indian Foreign Service Probationers with session on "Handling WTO Issues in Trade Policy Formulation".	16 July	New Delhi
		Resource Person at UNESCAP/ITC Training Programme on "WTO Accession of Afghanistan: Lessons from Recent Accessions and their Development and Business Implications".	24 August	New Delhi
		Interactive session with members of the Federation of AP Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FAPCCI)	14 September	Hyderabad, AP

	Participating Faculty	Outreach Activity/Topic	Date	Location
		Chaired session on "Implications & Mitigating the Impact of NTBs: Ways forward" at the Capacity Building Programme on Implications of NTBs on Textiles & Clothing Exports of India organized by the Textiles Committee	25 September	New Delhi
		Panellist at seminar on "Trade and Technology Dimensions of Energy Use and Climate Change" organized by The Energy Research Institute.	29 September	New Delhi
5.	**Dr Murali Kallumal**	Presented papers on: "Agricultural Trade from South-Asia and the impact of SPS Measures: A Case Study European Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF)"; and "Trade Creation and Trade-Diversion in the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement: A Sector Specific Analysis" at the International Conference on Public Policy and Governance 2012 organised by the Indian Institute of Science and the Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore	4-6 September	Bangalore
6.	**Dr Sachin Kumar Sharma**	Presented a paper on: "Doha Negotiations and Domestic Support to Agriculture Sector in USA" at the International Conference on Public Policy and Governance 2012 organised by the Indian Institute of Science and the Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore	4-6 September	Bangalore

News Roundup

TRADE FIGURES

1. India records highest growth rate of exports among all major trading countries in 2011

India has overtaken China in exports growth rate recording an increase of 16.1% in 2011, topping the list of all major trading countries in the world according to the World Trade Report 2012. In 2011, world merchandise trade volume grew by 5%, while "Asia's 6.6% increase led all regions", the report said.

In 2010, China topped the list with shipment growth rate of 28.4% while India recorded an increase of 22%. According to experts like Mr K.T. Chacko, Director, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), the Indian government and exporters' endeavour of diversification of export markets especially to the Middle East, South East Asia and China have benefitted the country's shipments.

The European Union tops the chart in commercial services exports with $789 billion worth of shipments or 24.8% of the world total. It was followed by the US ($578 billion, 18.2%), China ($182 billion, 5.7%), India ($148 billion, 4.7%) and Japan ($143 billion, 4.5 %). The EU is also the leading importer of commercial services ($639 billion, 21.1% of the world total), followed by the US ($391 billion, 12.9%), China ($236 billion, 7.8%), Japan ($165 billion, 5.4%) and India ($130 billion, 4.3%).

PTI (29 July 2012)

2. Trade data for the period June- August 2012

June 2012:

With the slowdown in the US, Euro zone, China and Japan continuing, Indian exports have come under tremendous pressure for the second consecutive month with shipments declining by 5.45% in June to $25 billion. Handicrafts, jute, tea and cashew accompanied by coffee were some of the items hit by the decline in exports. Similarly, imports also witnessed a sharp fall of 13.46 % at $35.37 billion against $40.8 billion in June 2011, resulting in a narrowing of the trade deficit to $10.3 billion for the month.

The decline in the country's shipments comes amid India's economic growth slipping to a nine-year low of 6.5 % in 2011-12, and subdued industrial output in the first two months of the current fiscal. "The contraction in global demand and deceleration in manufacturing are primary reasons for decline in exports," President of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), Rafique Ahmed, said in a statement.

According to official data released by the Commerce Ministry, exports during the April-June quarter of 2012-13 dipped by 1.7 % to $75.2 billion, from $76.5 billion in the same period last fiscal. Trade deficit during the quarter stood at $40 billion.

Top exporting commodities during the April-June quarter included rice, which increased by 104 %, iron ore (40 %), oil meal (38 %) and spices (35 %). In value terms, exports of petroleum products ($12.9 billion), engineering goods ($14.6 billion), gems and jewellery ($10 billion) and pharmaceutical and readymade garments showed strong growth. Imports of petroleum products touched $41.5 billion during April-June 2012. Other importing sectors which registered growth include gems and silver ($9.4 billion), machinery ($8.5 billion) and electronics ($7.1 billion).

The Hindu (1 August 2012)

July 2012:

Severe sluggishness in demand in Europe hit India's merchandise exports, which fell for the third consecutive month this financial year. Compared with $26.3 billion in the corresponding period last year, exports fell 14.8 % to $22.4 billion in July. This was the steepest fall in 35 months (exports had declined 23.59% in August 2009). Imports, too, contracted for the third consecutive month, falling 7.78 % to $37.9 billion, against $41.1 billion in July last year. Crude oil imports fell 5.52 % to $12.22 billion, while non-oil imports declined 8.57 % to $25.70 billion, indicating a sluggish industrial scenario in the domestic economy.

As the fall in exports was more than that in imports, the trade deficit widened to $15.5 billion in July, against $11.08 billion in the corresponding month last year. The trade deficit for the April-July period stood at $55.5 billion, against $60.9 in the year-ago period. Last month, Commerce Secretary S. R. Rao had said the crisis in Europe was affecting India's external trade, and the current global outlook was contributing to woes.

Business Standard (4 September 2012)

August 2012:

India's merchandise exports continued to fall in August for the fourth straight month on waning global demand, and its trade deficit widened according to official data released. Exports contracted 9.7% in August to $22.3 billion (around ₹1.2 trillion today) and imports shrank 5.08% to $38 billion, leaving a trade deficit of $15.7 billion during the month, the commerce department said. The fall in exports of engineering goods in August had been expected because of depressed global market conditions, according to Aman Chadha, Chairman of lobby group Engineering Export Promotion Council of India. Engineering exports declined 9.7% in August to $4.67 billion. A recovery in merchandise exports is now expected as the US market is stabilizing, Commerce Secretary S. R. Rao said. In the five months to August, exports shrank 5.96% to $120 billion, while imports contracted 6.2% to $191.1 billion. The trade deficit declined to $71.1 billion from $76.2 billion a year ago.

Mint (14 September 2012)

3. India's commercial services exports growth slows down: WTO

India's commercial services exports grew by 6 % in the first quarter of 2012, down sharply from 27 % in the year-ago period, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and UNCTAD have said in a report. However, this was much better than the worldwide commercial services exports growth rate of 3 % in the quarter ended March 31, 2012.

According to experts, the growth rate declined largely because of global economic slowdown and the country needs to focus on increasing its global competitiveness in the commercial services exports, which mostly includes software services in case of India. In the previous quarter, October-December 2011, India's commercial services exports had declined by 5 %, but managed to return to positive trajectory in Q1 of 2012. "Economic slump in the US and Europe is the main reason for this low growth. The other reason include countries like China and Philippines are emerging as stronger players in the services sector," Rakesh Joshi, an international trade expert with Indian Institute of Foreign Trade said.

India's commercial services imports grew by 5 % in the first quarter of 2012, down from 14 % in the year-ago period, the report said. According to the RBI data, the country's services exports declined marginally by 3.3 % to USD 22.54 billion in the first two months of this fiscal. The services exports during April-May 2011 were at $23.3 billion.

Export earnings were also affected as the information technology companies, which accounts for a major chunk in the services export, had to offer discounts to their clients due to rupee depreciation, an expert said. The rupee has fallen by around 20 % against the US dollar from a year ago.

PTI (15 July 2012)

FOREIGN TRADE POLICY/STRATEGY

4. Centre readies plan to revive exports

The government is asking exporters to fill the gap created by the exit of Chinese players from the lower-end of the manufacturing space, while readying measures, including an end to the "stop-and-go" policy on export of value-added farm commodities and minerals and a more flexible regime for special economic zones to reverse the trend of falling shipments from the country.

Commerce Secretary S. R. Rao said that the government was gearing up for competition from China, especially in the Asean region, to capture a bigger share of the construction and project exports pie and may offer lines of credit to push the cause of the local industry. Asean and China, along with Africa and Latin America, have been identified as key focus areas for development of new markets and reduce the reliance on traditional areas such as Europe and the US, which are in a prolonged period of economic downturn.

Rao identified pharmaceuticals, auto, leather, gems and jewellery and agriculture as "clear winners" and said the government would look to boost exports by positioning them in a more attractive manner. He also indicated that engineering goods and project exports could be among sectors that are in line to get cheaper credit on the lines of textiles and handicrafts, which are getting 2% interest subsidy.

Times of India (12 September 2012)

5. Government to boost export credit

More export sectors may soon get access to cheaper credit, with the commerce department planning to expand the list of beneficiaries under the interest subvention scheme as a measure to boost sagging exports. Under the scheme, re-introduced in June this year, PSBs offer loans at 2% discount to exporters of toys, sports goods, processed agricultural products, ready-made garments, handicrafts, handloom and micro SMEs. "The commerce minister may also meet the finance minister to take up the issue of availability of cheap and adequate credit to exporters," a senior commerce department official said.

The move to extend this scheme to more sectors follows the Commerce Minister's meeting with export promotion councils and leading exporters to discuss ways to stem the fall in export growth. Exports shrank 5.06% in the first four months of the current fiscal. Exporters say an important reason for the stall in growth is a gradual decline in export credit as a percentage of net bank credit and also as a percentage of exports.

Leading export organisations such as FICCI, CII and FIEO say lowering interest rates can revive exports; but the Reserve Bank has, so far, refrained from doing so because of worries over inflation. With demand shrinking in the West, especially in the European Union, exporters say lower cost of credit is vital for competitiveness. While it is not difficult to get banks to implement the interest subvention scheme, making a larger quantum of credit available to exporters is a bigger problem, the official added.

The government is also mulling a greater flow of credit for exporters by allowing banks with significant presence abroad, and foreign currency deposits available, to arrange for borrowings abroad or to seek lines of credit from foreign banks. The decision was recently taken by the Department of Financial Services under the Finance Ministry.

"The government is looking at various measures for extending easy loans to the exporting community. We are looking at a liberalised regime of export credit in foreign currency. There is going to be greater synergy within banks, so that exports do not get adversely affected," said Anup K. Pujari, Director General of Foreign Trade. While the compounded annual growth rate of export credit during 2001-11 was 13.45%, export growth in these 10 years had been at a CAGR of 19.11%. Export credit as a percentage of total exports fell from 19.8% in 2008 to 13.4% in 2011, according to Reserve Bank data.

As a short-term measure to halt a sharp slide in shipments the government has also planned to make finance available in foreign exchange by banks to exporters through other smaller banks that do not have forex liquidity available. Only those larger banks with substantial overseas presence will be eligible to arrange credit for Indian exporters. Such extra lending by bigger banks to smaller ones would not exceed a mark-up of 10 basis points. It will ensure flow of credit to micro and small-sector exporters. Besides short-term credit, the government has also planned to direct banks to provide term loans for modernisation and equipment financing, setting up of units for exports and for project exports.

Economic Times (4 July 2012); *Business Standard* (9 August 2012); *Economic Times* (28 August 2012)

6. Grading system for foreign importers soon

The Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) is developing a grading system known as the modified scorecard system to rate foreign importers based on their payment track record. This is aimed to protect exporters taking a calculated risk while shipping goods overseas. ECGC is a government-owned enterprise that provides export credit insurance facilities to exporters and banks in India to deal with payment defaults by foreign importers. "We have involved 14 agencies to rate around 90,000 active buyers around the world based on their financial strength and repayment history," N. Shankar, Chairman and Managing Director of ECGC, said at a meeting organized by industry lobby Confederation of Indian Industry. ECGC will provide information free to all exporters purchasing insurance cover from it. Indian exporters are increasingly facing defaults by overseas buyers even as several developed economies slow. In 2011-12, ECGC paid a total ₹713 crore in claim settlements to banks and exporters, out of which the direct payments to banks were around ₹600 crore, on account of defaults by importers, Shankar added.

The highest settlements were in sectors such as agricultural products, gems and jewellery, readymade garments, cotton and engineering goods.

Geographically, the highest payments were for exports to the US, UK, Germany, United Arab Emirates and Italy. Shankar anticipates higher payments in 2011-12 because of the impact of the continuing euro zone crisis.

Mint (29 August 2012)

7. E-payment of customs duty

The government has decided to make e-payment mandatory for importers registered under 'Accredited Clients Programme' and those paying customs duty of ₹1 lakh or more per bill of entry. The trade facilitation measure, aimed at further reducing the transaction cost of importers, will come into effect from 17 September 2012.

According to a Finance Ministry statement, the Central Board of Excise & Customs (CBEC) has already instructed all Chief Commissioners of Customs to give wide publicity to this measure to enable trade and industry to be ready for the switch-over in duty payment mode in case any change in their software or any internal procedure for effecting e-payment is required. While e-payment is advantageous to both the trade as well as the government, it affords taxpayers the facility of making payments from their own offices on a 24x7 basis and also facilitates quicker release of cargo. As for the government, it ensures immediate collection of taxes and error-free data relating to tax payments.

E-payment facility at customs locations was introduced in 2007, and is available through more than one authorised bank at all major customs locations having ICES (Indian Customs EDI System) facility. The ICES facility, designed to exchange/transact customs clearance related information electronically using EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) is now operational at 103 major customs locations handling nearly 98% of the country's international trade.

Hindu (8 September 2012)

BILATERALS

8. India- ASEAN

India seeks early conclusion of trade deal with Asean

India has sought the early conclusion of a free trade pact in services and investments between Asia's third largest economy and the 10-member high-growth Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean). The move will lead to further economic integration between the two regions, which have a combined population of about 1.8 billion, "a market with resource and demand", Foreign Minister S.M. Krishna said in his remarks to a round-table of the Asean-India networks of policy research groups.

The round-table is one of many events being held in the run-up to a commemorative India-Asean summit on 20-21 December in New Delhi to mark two decades of apex-level ties between the two. Krishna noted that India's trade with the Asean, which groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam, crossed the $70 billion (around ₹4 trillion) target set for 2011. Recalling that India and Asean had signed a free trade agreement (FTA) in goods in 2009, Krishna said, "We would now like to see the early finalization of the Asean-India FTA in investment and services."

Trade with India constituted just 2.9% of Asean's overall global trade, said Nyan Lynn, Deputy Secretary General (political security community), Asean secretariat. He called on India to support and participate in Asean's plans to improve connectivity in South-East Asia and South Asia. Referring to an Asian Development Bank estimate, Lynn said Asian nations need to invest $3 trillion in overall infrastructure development between 2010 and 2020.

India is already in talks with Myanmar and Thailand for a trilateral highway. During a visit to India in January, Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra suggested maritime links between Chennai in southern India and Thailand through the Dawei seaport in Myanmar.

India and Asean established preliminary ties in 1992—around the time India launched its "Look East" policy aimed at forging stronger ties with the fast growing economies of South-East Asia. India was upgraded to a full dialogue partner of Asean in 1995, and in 2002, India and Asean held their first summit-level interaction.

Mint (7 August 2012)

9. Asia edges towards giant free trade zone

Recently, leaders of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) have made overtures to India to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) that Asean members have agreed to pursue. At the conclusion of their last summit meeting in Indonesia, the leaders agreed that RCEP would be an Asean-led process under which Asean would "engage interested Asean free trade agreement (FTA) partners in establishing a RCEP agreement and, subsequently, with other external economic partners". The proposal could transform the region -- containing around 3.5 billion people -- into an integrated market with a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of $23 trillion, a third of the world's current annual GDP. ASEAN already has five separate FTAs governing economic cooperation with the six partner countries: India, Japan, China, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. The pact will aim to eliminate trade barriers, create a liberal investment environment and protect intellectual property rights, according to the negotiation guidelines.

RCEP is aimed at establishing the centrality of Asean in the economic dynamics of Asia. For more than 15 years, since the decision by Asean member states to create an FTA, the grouping has sought to position itself as the hub in the Asian region. In order to realize this objective, the grouping adopted a carefully crafted two-pronged strategy. The first was to engage in a process of regional economic integration, the culmination of which will be the formation of FTAs with all the countries in its immediate neighbourhood; India, Japan, China, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. But the level of economic integration was not even. While with China, Korea, Australia and New Zealand, integration was fairly deep for it included not only the goods sector, but services and investment as well. With India and Japan, the integration was rather shallow: very little progress beyond a FTA in goods has been achieved.

For RCEP to materialize, several challenges will have to be overcome. The most significant being the proposed trilateral free trade agreement between China, Japan and Korea (CJK-FTA). The CJK-FTA will be the third largest FTA next to only the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) and the European Union (EU), and which according to some estimates, would cover a population of 1.5 billion and would represent 70% of the Asian economic aggregate. If CJK-FTA does proceed quickly, the future of RCEP could be uncertain.

On the other hand, a successful RCEP could deal a body-blow to a more comprehensive regional economic integration that the East Asia Summit (EAS) members had initiated towards the middle of the past decade. This grouping, which brings the Asean members together with the “plus-6 countries”, viz. India, Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan and Korea had agreed to forge a Comprehensive Economic Partnership for East Asia (CEPEA). The feasibility study for CEPEA was concluded in 2009 and this proposal was immediately accepted by the leaders in their summit the same year.

When it was mooted, CEPEA could have made a significant impact on at least three counts. The first was that it brought together some of the most rapidly expanding economies, which had considerable presence in the global economy. Just less than one-third of the global merchandise trade was being conducted by countries supporting CEPEA. In the commercial services trade, the share of these countries was consistently rising, aided by the performance of two of the largest countries in the developing world, viz. China and India. In terms of foreign direct investment, the Asean+6 members accounted for more than one-fifth of the inflows and were contributing more than one-sixth of the total outflows. A second factor that made CEPEA important was that forging of close ties between the strong and resilient economies could have given the global economy a much needed support, using which it could have overcome the weaknesses that it faces. A third factor was that CEPEA was truly the “second-best” solution to further the process of global economic integration, given that the “best solution” provided by the World Trade Organization (WTO) was headed nowhere. In the decade-long pursuit for finding multilateral solutions for economic integration between its member states, WTO has witnessed disagreements galore. CEPEA could have provided the much needed signal that countries can and do negotiate to further their economic engagements.

Despite its pluses, CEPEA has remained in the back-burner. With the impending threat of the region being sliced out into overlapping and competing FTAs, leaders of the member countries must take effective steps to implement CEPEA.

Mint (13 August 2012)*; Agence France Presse* (31 August 2012)

10. India- Chile

Chile and India will begin negotiations on a free trade agreement at the end of the year, Chilean Foreign Minister Alfredo Moreno said. This will "include not only goods, but also services, investment and all the control elements, such as tariff barriers."Chile aims to be the first South American country to have a free trade agreement with India, a market of more than 1.2 billion people. The two countries agreed to launch the talks while Moreno was in New Delhi for a meeting with his counterpart, Anand Sharma. A free trade agreement would replace a partial agreement reached in 2007.

Chilean exports to India grew by 45% in the first half of 2012 to reach $1.36 billion. Imports from India rose 29% in the same period to reach $310 million.

Agence France Presse (14 August 2012)

11. India-China

Indian exports to China fell by 8 % or $12.9 billion in July — the biggest decline in Chinese imports from any major country — further widening an already record trade deficit that has increasingly strained trade ties. Imports fell 3.3 % to $26.6 billion, taking India’s deficit to $13.7 billion. According to some analysts, the deficit is expected to soar to $60 billion this financial year.

Officials said the fall was largely on account of the steep decline in the export of iron ore following recent bans. Iron ore, which is by far India’s biggest export product to China, fell by almost 50 % in the first six months of this year to $3.3 billion, down from $6 billion in the same period last year. Indian imports of Chinese machinery and of power and telecom equipment have been another major driver of trade.

Bilateral trade between India and China reached a record $73.9 billion last year, with the imbalance widening to $27 billion.

With India looking to improve the nature of trade and restrict exports of ores and raw materials, officials said the need to identify competitive products as new drivers of the trade relationship had become paramount. With costs of products rising in China, the government is leaving no stone unturned to grab the opportunity of entering the Chinese market in full force. India presented a roadmap for its companies, seeking access in China for information technology and pharmaceutical products during a crucial meeting of a Joint Economic Group on August 27. But, Indian IT and pharmaceutical companies continue to face serious hurdles during the process of official registration, and in getting Chinese companies to buy their services and products, said a source, adding that Indian pharmaceutical companies have to wait for four to five years for registration of their drugs in China.

India and China have agreed to establish a joint working group to address all trade-related issues, including the widening trade balance between the countries. The decision was taken at a meeting between trade minister Anand Sharma and his Chinese counterpart Chen Deming at the Joint Economic Group meeting. The group, which will include officials from the two countries, will submit its report within 90 days, Sharma told reporters. It will also look into issues such as the reconciliation and collection of trade data. Sharma said the group will continue to work on trade and investment matters after submitting its recommendations.

The two neighbours also agreed to work on a five-year economic cooperation plan —a suggestion made by Deming. “We have identified the focal points, the nodal authorities who will be working together to put this development plan on India-China economic cooperation,” Sharma said. India has invited Chinese firms to participate in its proposed national investment and manufacturing zones. “The response has been positive and encouraging,” he said. India plans to establish these zones to boost manufacturing to around 16% of gross domestic product now to 25% in the next 10 years.

Bilateral trade in 2011-12 was $75.5 billion, of which India’s export to China was $17.9 billion and import was $57.6 billion. While Chinese exports to India mainly consists of manufactured items required for India’s ever-expanding telecom, power and manufacturing industries, India exports raw materials and intermediary products. The top five items of import from China are electrical machinery and equipment ($11.9 billion), mechanical machinery and appliances ($7.7 billion), project goods ($ 3.2 billion), organic chemicals ($3.85 billion) and iron and steel ($2 billion). In the last couple of years, import of power and telecommunication equipment has seen a huge rise. India’s main items of export to China include petroleum products, gems and jewellery, transport equipment, other raw materials and machinery.

“India is not unique in facing challenges of a widening trade deficit with China. Many other major economies are in a similar situation. This is what makes the prospect of enhancing India’s exports to China more challenging, as other countries are also making efforts to penetrate the Chinese market. Further, the pattern of exports to any country cannot be changed within an extremely short time horizon,” said Abhijit Das, Head, Centre for WTO Studies, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade.

Business Standard (16 July 2012)*; Hindu* (11 August 2012)*; Times of India* (17 August 2012)*; Mint* (28 August 2012)

12. India- Mauritius

India and Mauritius agreed to fast track the negotiations for the proposed preferential trade agreement (PTA) to deepen economic engagement between the two countries. In his meeting with Mauritius Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade Arvin Bolle, Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma said the bilateral ties have shown a healthy upward trajectory. However, said there still exists potential for diversifying commercial exchanges. Under PTA, both the sides would reduce duties on certain agreed products.

In a press briefing, Mauritius expressed keen interest in commencing negotiations for a free trade agreement with India in order to enhance economic ties between the two countries. Earlier this year, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the two nations for consolidation of textile and clothing industry and transfer of technology. The pact also envisaged enhancing trade and economic relations in the sphere of textiles, clothing and fashion industries. The release, quoting Sharma, said huge opportunities existed for cooperation in sectors like agro-processing, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, seafood, automobile parts, tourism and IT.

Bilateral trade between India and Mauritius stood at $1.39 billion in 2011. Besides petroleum products, India mainly exports cotton, pharmaceuticals, cereals, carpets, electrical machinery and apparel to the island nation. India is also a major supplier of cotton to Mauritius' textile industry. Imports include iron and steel, optical, photographic and precision instruments and aluminium articles. Mauritius is the largest source of FDI into India.

PTI (6 July 2012)

13. India-Pakistan

Pakistan has agreed to stick to the deadline of removing import ban on all products from India and giving it the most favoured nation or MFN status by the year-end subject to the condition that India reduces duties on about 200 items of interest to the country that includes key textile and farm products. The commerce secretaries, who concluded their two-day meet in Islamabad in September, agreed to allow most goods to be traded through the Wagah-Attari land route--an issue being pushed by India. Indian Commerce Secretary S. R. Rao and his Pakistani counterpart Munir Qureshi also signed three agreements for cooperation in customs matters, redressal of trade grievances and conforming to quality standards to remove non-tariff barriers. Civil aviation ministry officials from both countries also discussed ways to ensure better air connectivity between the two capitals.

Earlier in September an agreement was signed by External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna and Pakistan Interior Minister Rehman Malik after the conclusion of the Foreign Minister-level engagement. This new visa regime — the first major overhaul since 1974 — in particular eases travel restrictions for businessmen and introduces a new category of group tourism. Besides, persons aged above 65 will be issued visa on arrival. The regime also mandates a time frame for issuing visas. From the earlier indefinite time taken to issue a visa, the two missions have now been tied down to a 45-day period for deciding on an application. Visas will continue to be city-specific, but now in place of three cities, applicants can hope to visit five in one visit. And now visitors can enter and exit the country from different checkpoints and change the mode of travel. Earlier, the port of entry and exit had to be the same, and the mode of transport could not be changed.

In another move towards complete normalisation of ties with Pakistan, India has allowed FDI from Pakistan in all sectors, barring defence, space and atomic energy. The fresh commitments are of significance as it would further lower trade barriers that have been already brought down considerably following a slew of measures taken by both after the ice-breaking meeting between commerce secretaries in April last year.

Removal of restrictions on trade through land route will give a big boost to exports from India as Pakistan allows only 137 products to be brought in from the land route forcing most Indian exports to be sent through the sea route linking Mumbai with Karachi that increases costs. "We are willing to bring down our sensitive list for Pakistan under Safta by another 30% (approximately 200 items) and include all items of interest to them like yarn and fruits as soon as it allows our goods to be exported through the land route," a government official said, adding that it has to be, of course, followed by an extension of the MFN status by Pakistan.

Rao said a joint working group on electricity between the two countries had met twice. The group is discussing the possibility of linking a grid in Amritsar with one in Lahore. India will transfer 500MW electricity from its northern grid to Pakistan. However, it will take more than a year for this proposal to fructify after the agreement as transmission lines would have to be laid across the border so that both countries could tap into each other's grid in case of a shortfall. A joint working group on petroleum held discussions and officials said New Delhi impressed upon Islamabad the idea of using India as a transit point to transport imported gas from Bombay High to Bhatinda. From there, gas could be transported to various parts of Pakistan through pipelines.

In a previous round of talks held in Islamabad held in June, the Indian side had offered a range of products, including pet coke, sulphur, bitumen, lubricants as per quality requirements of Pakistan. The meeting also discussed the possibility of import of petroleum, oil and lubricant (POL) products from India and specifications for furnace oil, diesel, Jet-I and petro. It was decided that before operationalising formal trade in petroleum products, harmonisation and recognition of standards/procedures and the regulatory framework needed to be examined in detail. Both sides felt that banking services should be enhanced to facilitate business through letters of credit.

It was felt that the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) certificate recognition system be made online; multi-city and multiple entry non-reporting visas for businessmen on both sides be introduced and warehousing and tankage facilities with infrastructure facilities such as cranes, fork lifts and other machinery be set up at the Wagah border.

Another significant decision taken by the Foreign Ministers pertained to the cross-Line of Control (LoC) confidence-building measures. The cross-LoC travel will be expanded to include visits for tourism and pilgrimage. Such visits to designated sites will initially be from the Chakoti-Uri and Rawalakot-Poonch crossing points. Both sides also agreed to extend assistance to valid entry permit-holders to cross the

LoC in emergency situations on crossing as well as non-crossing days.

Hindu (16 July 2012); *Hindu Business Line* (1 August 2012); *Hindustan Times* (2 August 2012); *Business Standard* (30 August 2012); *Mint* (4 September 2012); *Economic Times* (21 September 2012)

14. India-SAFTA

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) members – India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Afghanistan – already have a Free Trade Agreement (the Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area or SAFTA) on trade in goods. Talks are now on SAARC Agreement on Trade in Services (SATIS), as the members have realised that they can reap more benefits only if SAFTA is expanded by including trade in services as well as investment, the sources said. With India recently notifying its decision to permit foreign direct investment (FDI) from Pakistan, the talks have gained a new lease of life.

The scheduling commitments (the extent of opening up various service sectors for investment; and keeping out some sensitive sectors, like space and atomic energy) were to be finalised in September. The minimum that one can expect is the basic commitments given by SAARC member countries at the World Trade Organisation-level by adding to that in some sectors, SATIS can also go beyond what has been committed at the WTO.

Significantly, around 55 % of the value added to South Asia's GDP was on account of services. However, India's strength in the sector, including a high number of skilled professionals, is seen as a threat by other South Asian countries. The other SAARC countries fear that opening up their services market would result in a huge influx of Indian service professionals in IT/ITeS, banking, accountancy, engineering, consulting and telecom.

Hindu Business Line (9 August 2012)

15. India- Sri Lanka

The agenda for the Commerce and Industry Minister Anand Sharma's three-day trip to Colombo in August was to work towards not only enhancing economic co-operation by doubling bilateral trade to $9 billion by 2017, but also for the early conclusion of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). At present, bilateral trade stands at $4.5 billion. CEPA is aimed at liberalising trade in services and investments by updating existing agreements on investment protection and avoidance of double taxation.

But later in the month Sri Lanka apparently informed Indian authorities it was not keen on having a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with India, as it feared granting more Indian access to its markets would destroy that country's domestic industry. However, it has made its own set of fresh demands to consider under the FTA, which is under operation since March 2000. The Sri Lankan government refused to resume talks on CEPA even though the mandate to upgrade the FTA to CEPA was formally agreed in June 2010 during the visit of their President Mahinda Rajapaksa. While the FTA is only on goods, the CEPA will entail trade in goods, services and investment. Apparently, the Trade and Economic Relations Committee headed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has given the mandate of closing the talks within the next three months.

During Minister Sharma's visit to Sri Lanka, over 108 Indian companies had showcased a wide range of products and services, including automobile, engineering, infrastructure, tourism, food processing, ICT, financial services, pharmaceuticals and education. Indian and Sri Lankan business leaders had identified sectors where they could forge stronger ties for mutual benefit, the leading trade chamber, Ceylon Chamber of Commerce said. The Indian and Lankan business CEOs forum had been held on the sidelines of the three day 'India Show' aimed at boosting trade ties. Opportunities in apparel, tourism, power, energy and education have been identified as potential sectors, the chamber said.

The promotion of tourism through increasing air links between the two countries was also discussed, it said adding more frequent flights would be beneficial. The CEOs from the Indian side pointed out on the need to streamline investment procedures. It was felt the Indian side was more keen in the mid-segment tourist hotels in Sri Lanka than undertaking investments in the luxury hotels sector. India also agreed to invest in hotel training schools in Sri Lanka to help the Island nation meet manpower requirement for over 35,000 additional hotel rooms in the Island nation.

Discussions were also held on tapping Sri Lanka's potential for generating 40,000 MW of wind power. The potential to export power to India during the off peak hours was looked into, the chamber said. The possibility of Indian investment in the proposed under sea transmission linkages in Sri Lanka was discussed on the occasion. Indian education institutes are being encouraged to set up business in Sri Lanka. Both sides underscored the importance of a flexible visa regime and relaxing some of the existing conditions.

Under the proposed CEPA deal, India has offered additional concessions on garment quota of 8 million pieces. Besides, the 3 million pieces granted at zero duty earlier under the FTA, India has now agreed to allow another 3 million pieces more at zero duty and additional 2 million at 75 % margin of preference. India has already removed port entry restrictions and conditions of sourcing fabrics from it. Officials also said that a “fear psychosis” has emerged within some quarters in Sri Lanka of over dependence on Indian market that indirectly gives India the power to have its say on their political matters. On the other hand, Sri Lanka has made a list demands from India in terms of barter deals and tariff free quota free (TFQF) access for its textiles, which has not been agreed by India.

Ironically, Sri Lanka was the first such country that had signed a FTA with India. The India-Sri Lanka FTA was signed on December 1998, which has been in operation since March 2000. Negotiations for CEPA were started in February 2005 and concluded in July 2008, after 13 difficult rounds. However, the Agreement could not be signed then on account of some reservations expressed by Sri Lankan government. Sri Lanka is currently the largest trading partner of India in South Asia.

The bilateral trade for 2011 stood at $5.16 billion compared to $3.63 billion in 2010, with exports at $4.44 billion and imports at $0.71 billion. Presently, India enjoys a trade surplus of $3.72 billion with Sri Lanka. Both sides have set a target of achieving bilateral trade worth $10 billion by 2015. India is the largest foreign investor in Sri Lanka contributing $110 million out of total $ 516 million received by Sri Lanka. Some of the main Indian companies that have invested there are IOC, TATA, CEAT, Nicolas Piramal, Ashok Leyland, SBI, ICICI Bank, AXIS Bank, LIC and Jet Airways among others.

Hindu (1 August 2012)*; PTI* (6 August 2012) *and Business Standard* (24 August 2012)

16. India- Switzerland

The FTA between India and Switzerland is likely to be inked this year, hopes Linus von Castelmur, Ambassador of Switzerland to India and Bhutan.

While attending a CII seminar Castelmur pointed out that currently the bilateral trade between the two countries stands at around $5 billion. "Once the FTA is through, it will boost the trade. We are targeting a total trade of around $7billion- $8 billion by 2015," he added. India mostly exports basic chemicals, agricultural products, jewellery and services to Switzerland; while imports for India consist of pharmaceutical products, machinery and jewellery.

Times of India (4 August 2012)

17. India-West Africa

India has set a target of $40 billion trade turnover with the West African nations from the present $20 billion. Mr Sharma, along with Ghana’s Trade and Industry Minister Hanna Tetteh, inaugurated the “India Show” that was organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in partnership with Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Mr Sharma said that India had also set a target of $90 billion trade with Africa by 2015. The total trade between India and Africa was around $50 billion till last year. India and African financial institutions have already signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to promote finance, trade and investment flows. The bilateral trade between India and Ghana is expected to touch $1 billion by 2013.

Hindu (10 July 2012)

WTO DISPUTES

18. India-US Trade Disputes

After many years, the world’s oldest and largest democracies, India and the US, have locked horns in an unprecedented manner over a series of trade disputes that have left a question mark on trade relations between the countries. The imbroglio, on issues such as poultry exports, duty on steel rods and professional visa fees, has seen both approach the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) to put an end to the bitter dispute. By asking for a dispute panel to be set up, India is indicating that it has failed to resolve the issue via consultations with the United States.

At the end of August, the DSB set up a panel at India’s request over the US imposition of countervailing duties (CVD) on certain hot-rolled carbon steel flat products from India. The US had blocked the initial request by India for WTO judges to investigate the legality of American countervailing duties on some Indian steel products. India complained at the Geneva-based WTO on April 24, saying U.S. anti-subsidy duties on certain hot-rolled carbon- steel flat products violate global trade rules. New Delhi argued that the measure was inconsistent with several provisions of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and the GATT 1994.

India is contesting the US conclusion that Indian steel producers received subsidy on iron ore purchased from a state-owned company. Members which reserved their third-party rights were the EU, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Turkey and Australia. India acknowledged at the meeting that every WTO member has a right to levy countervailing duties, but this right can be exercised only within the framework of the Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures and the GATT 1994. Steel exports by leading Indian manufacturers (Jindal and Tata) have been rendered uncompetitive in the US because of the CVD imposed there. According to India, provisional CVD measures imposed by the US on 20 April 2001 were made final after the US conducted a sunset review, with effect from December 3, 2001. The US extended these measures for a further five years. The duty was fixed at 102.7%, according to a notification submitted by the US to the WTO.

India is also considering seeking consultations with the US under the aegis of WTO on visa fee hike for professionals, which it says discriminates against Indian software companies that send employees to US on short-term contracts. Earlier in March, Washington had dragged New Delhi to the global trade body against India's ban on imports of certain American farm products, including poultry meat and eggs. The US had termed the ban as unjustified health-safety worries.

However, some experts believe the dispute between the two nations is about more than what meets the eye. Others feel the situation is normal, one akin to any between strong trading partners. Some trade analysts view the recent trade disputes as indirect fallout of the Doha round of global trade talks, stalled for more than a decade. Manoj Pant, professor at the Centre for International Trade and Development Jawaharlal Nehru University, believes the tensions are part of the continuing dispute in WTO meetings in which demands for a cut in duties and non-tariff barriers in developed countries, particularly the demand for reduction in agricultural subsidies, have been getting support.

Reuters (13 July 2012)*; Bloomberg* (23 July 2012)*; Business Standard* (2 August 2012)*; Business Line* (26 August 2012)*; PTI* (23 September 2012)

ALSO IN THE PRESS…

19. RBI says India's import cover reserves may fall further

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Executive Director D. K. Mohanty said that the country's import cover reserves might fall further this financial year in the absence of capital inflows. At the end of March, India's foreign currency reserves were at about seven months of import cover according to data from the central bank.

The official said financing current account deficit was becoming a problem since capital was not flowing in for a number of reasons. He pointed out the import cover had shrunk sharply from 14 months in the pre-crisis high growth phase to nine months in the post-crisis period and to seven months in 2011-12. He said apart from monetary factors, issues like infrastructural bottlenecks and policy uncertainties were also contributing to the current domestic growth slowdown. Speaking on how interest rates could be brought down, Mohanty said inflation needed to be controlled. He said it was important to go back to the fiscal consolidation path "to enable monetary policy to do what it is supposed to be doing".

Business Standard (29 August 2012)

20. Patents and public health

On 14 September, the Chennai-based Intellectual Property Appellate Board (IPAB) which is responsible for hearing appeals on patent applications, rejected a petition by German pharma major Bayer AG, seeking a stay on an order of India's Controller of Patents granting a compulsory licence (CL) to Indian generic drug maker Natco Pharma Limited, for a drug used to treat liver and kidney cancer.

James Love, director of Knowledge Ecology International (KEI), said in a statement, "It is important that the US and German governments, and the European Commission, resist the temptation to interfere with the Indian legal system while this matter is litigated," Love said. "What is at stake is nothing less than the right to live. The decision is also a test of the 2001 WTO Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health, which says that WTO Members should implement their patent laws "in a manner supportive of WTO members' right to protect public health and, in particular, to promote access to medicines for all." KEI, an international non-governmental group, has been working on the access to medicines movement for more than 20 years. TRIPS is the WTO's Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

Another significant case was the Delhi High Court ruling involving Cipla, another Indian generic drug maker, and two pharma multinationals, namely Swiss drug maker F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd. and the New York-based OSI Pharmaceuticals Inc. In this case, Cipla was being accused of infringing Roche's patent on cancer drug Tarceva, which Cipla sells under the brand name Erlocip. The Delhi High Court in its order on 7 September held that Roche's patent on the drug is valid. However, it also said that Cipla did not infringe Roche's patent as it has been selling the polymorph B (variant of the basic drug compound) form of the drug which is known as erlotinib in generic terms. Roche's Tarceva is priced at ₹140,000 ($2,533) for a month's supply, though it has discount schemes to make the drug more affordable for poorer people, the newspaper said, while Cipla's version is priced at ₹25,000.

India's rising global presence in the pharmaceutical industry is often associated with its booming technology sector. But in many poor countries, India has become a leading supplier of affordable HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis medications and is the second leading provider of medicines distributed by UNICEF in the developing world. India provides half the world with AIDS medication, most of it in the generic form. Various developing countries, and now even developed ones, depend on India for low-cost, quality drugs, hence the country's nickname, "pharmacy to the world".

Another landmark case is the patent case involving Swiss drug major Novartis AG which is pitted against the Government of India, Indian generic drug manufacturers (Natco, Cipla, Hetero, Ranbaxy) and the Cancer Patients Aid Association (CAPA). Novartis is challenging the denial of patents to its blood cancer drug called by its brand name Glivec in India (Gleevec in the US). The legal dispute in the Glivec case centres around a provision of India's 2005 patent law, called Section 3(d), which states that "the mere discovery of a new form of a known substance which does not result in the enhancement of the known efficacy of that substance or the mere discovery of any new property or new use for a known substance or the mere use of a known process, machine or apparatus unless such known process results in a new product or employs at least one new reactant." The dispute brings to the fore a fundamental question: what is an "invention"? Or more precisely, how much innovation is required to obtain a patent in India?

The ongoing case in India's highest court is the final act in a legal battle that has been going on since 2006 when Novartis unsuccessfully pitched for a patent for Glivec. The case has already moved through various rungs of India's legal system including the IPAB and is now in the country's top court.

Will India strike the balance between patents, patients and profits? It is hard to predict. The ongoing cases raise fundamental questions about the definition of "invention", what qualifies for a patent under India's intellectual property regime and the challenges of striking a balance between public and private interests in an emerging economic power, where, paradoxically, the vast majority are still not covered by health insurance and where most people have to pay for their own treatment.

In 1970, the Indian government disallowed the patenting of drugs, paving the way for Indian pharmaceutical companies to freely produce medicines pioneered by foreign drug companies at a fraction of the cost. Today, India's pharmaceutical industry is worth $10 billion a year and is one of the nation's largest sectors. The price of HIV/AIDS treatment, a first-line combination of stavudine, lamivudine, and nevirapine, which cost patients $10,000 a year in 2000, now sells for $150 worldwide, due primarily to Indian companies' low cost manufacturing. This rush of cheap drugs, which are also produced in the US and Europe, now provides medication for 80% of the 6 million people receiving treatment in the developing world today, according to Médicins Sans Frontières.

In 2005, as a requirement of admission into the WTO and signing of TRIPS agreement, India re-enacted patent protections for intellectual property, which included medicines. The Indian patent law, however, set the bar much higher than in the U.S. "India has time and again really expressed a strong preference for public health concerns over private patent rights," says Shamnad Basheer, a professor of intellectual property law at the National University of Juridical Sciences in Calcutta. Earlier this year, the Indian patent office reasserted its preference for generic competition, stating that if a patented drug in the Indian marketplace is not made widely available at a reasonable price, then generic manufacturers are entitled to make their own versions of the drug and pay a royalty to the patent holder.

The Doha round gave a large degree of flexibility to governments to decide what kind of innovation was patentable, what should be the criteria included in 'novelty', what constituted an 'inventive step', and so on. There was another important clause from the Doha Declaration: "Each member has the right to grant compulsory licence and the freedom to determine the grounds upon which such licences are granted." The government was, thus, able to legitimately award Natco Pharma a compulsory licensing deal that made it possible for the company to sell Bayer's anti-cancer drug, Nexavar, used in the treatment of liver and kidney cancer, for ₹8,880, versus ₹2.8 lakh under Bayer.

In their pursuit of intellectual property enforcement agenda, MNC drug companies normally want injunctions passed against generic firms. In such cases in the past, courts have considered the impact on access to treatment and balanced intellectual property with health, before ordering an injunction. The Cipla court case was being watched worldwide as it involved interpretation of stricter drug patent protection rules introduced by India in 2005 to comply with WTO regulations. India is the world's leading exporter and manufacturer of non-branded medicines and medical charities have expressed concern that compliance with WTO trade rules could reduce the country's role as a supplier of cheap medicines.

Times of India (1 August 2012)*; Time* (21 August 2012)*; AFP* (9 September 2012)*; Business Standard* (6 September 2012)*; Economic Times* (16 September 2012)*; Intellectual Property Watch* (18 September 2012)

21. US, EU, Japan pile pressure to remove local content clause

India's major trade partners - the US, EU and Japan - have stepped up pressure to remove local content requirement clause in the ambitious national solar mission (JNSSM) project and manufacture of certain electronic products. However, New Delhi is preparing to defend its policies strongly at the WTO right till the dispute panel level.

The US, EU and Japan recently asked for a special meeting of the Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMs) Committee of the WTO to address concerns on domestic content requirement or compulsory local-sourcing clause in some policy measures in India, Brazil, Indonesia and Russia. India's decision to grant preference to domestically manufactured electronic products on security grounds, taken earlier this year, and the 30% mandatory domestic sourcing requirement in the JNSSM were strongly criticised by the three members. India maintained that security issues are sacrosanct for all WTO members, and a detailed discussion was not possible since these issues are sensitive and confidential and are dealt on the basis of advice from security agencies. The EU asked for a timeline on when detailed guidelines of the IT policy was expected, but India refused to give any date.

The TRIMs Agreement does not allow any member to impose sourcing restrictions without ample justification. New Delhi is now waiting for the next TRIMs Committee meeting to see what the US, EU and Japan plan to do on the matter.

Economic Times (20 July 2012)

22. WTO sets date for MC9 meeting in Bali, Indonesia

The Indonesian island of Bali is to be the venue of the ninth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC9) in the first week in December 2013. It was decided by the WTO General Council meeting in Geneva on 25-26 July. Representatives from Indonesia said that in the face of the global economic crisis the inter-ministerial meeting could galvanise and strengthen international trade. It could also help relaunch negotiations on the stalled Doha round, which focus on dismantling obstacles to trade for poor nations, Indonesia said.

The Doha round of global trade talks began in 2001 but have been dogged by disagreement, including how much the US and the EU should reduce farm aid and the extent to which emerging market giants such as India and China should cut tariffs on industrial products. The Ministerial Conference is the highest decision-making body of the WTO and meets approximately every two years. The last one was held in Geneva in December 2012.

AFP (28 July 2012)

Forthcoming Events (October – December 2012)

S.No.	Events	Partner Institution	Proposed Dates
1	Workshop on Impact of WTO on the State Economy for Officers of Government of Odisha.	XIM, Bhubaneswar	5 - 6 October
2	Stakeholder Consultations on Remanufactured Goods and Expansion of Product Coverage of Information Technology Agreement (ITA) in Bangalore and New Delhi	Department of Commerce, GoI	10 - 11 October
3	Seminar on International Trade & WTO Issues of Interest to Mizoram	ATI, Aizawl	8 – 9 November
4	Workshop on WTO Dispute Settlement	ACWL/ICTSD/WTO	26 - 30 November

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Printed and published on behalf of Centre for WTO Studies at
M/s Image Print, Kirti Nagar, New Delhi- 110015.