

1. What are the main constraints in the conclusion of the Doha round of the WTO? It is often alleged that emerging economies, especially India and China have impeded the process of multilateralism in the WTO. Do you agree and why? (150 words)

Answer:

The Doha Round of WTO negotiations are called Doha Development Round, because when this round started in 2001 at Doha (Qatar), it was decided, under the pressure created by India, China, and Brazil along with other developing countries that this round would take care of special concerns of developing countries while negotiating new issues. The developing countries had expressed many concerns such as market access, subsidies, services, and issues pertaining to earlier Singapore round. The developing countries are not at par with the developed countries so far as overall development, technology, capital and industrialization are concerned. It is therefore, important to appreciate such differences and constraints and give special and differentiated treatment to the developing countries. The developed countries were ready to give such treatment to the least developed economies but they were not ready to give the same to emerging economies like India, China, and Brazil.

The emerging economies, especially India continues to insist that the Doha Development Round needs to be sensitive to the needs of the developing countries. Principally India has agreed to accept one the Singapore issues, viz., trade facilitation, but India wants that its system of keeping food stocks and distributing it to the poor people on subsidy basis should not come under WTO ambit because these systems are meant for welfare and not commercial gains. It is also ready to give market access to agricultural products if the developed nations cut subsidy on their farm products.

Regarding Non-agricultural Market Access (NAMA), the WTO is proceeding towards consensus to adopt Swiss Formula and India is a party to such consensus being reached. India has also sought an observer status on the Singapore issue of government procurement and if it feels that being part of food procurement regulations of the WTO is beneficial for the country, it will go ahead. India, however, is not ready to relent on tariff barriers, such a sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards, labour standards and environmental standards etc. Even in services, India is not ready to relent and open its market as long as the developed countries do not open their services sector for the developing economies. In the Doha round, the developing countries want to save their own interest as do the developed countries. Therefore it is not right to say that India and China have impeded the multilateral body to conclude the round with consensus.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Answer the following Questions

1. There are many challenges in sustainably scaling up renewable energy in India. Analyse. Also, discuss what can be done to address these challenges. (150 words)
2. The policies and indicators introduced by the government, in recent times, to finance urban development in India are keys in addressing the existing challenges. Discuss with special reference to municipal bonds. (150 words)

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