

World Trade Organization in different perspectives

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The culmination of the Uruguay round of trade negotiation gave birth to the World Trade Organization (WTO). On the same occasion, it was also decided and mandated by the member countries involved in the process that all the agreements incorporated into the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT) and the agreements emerging from the round of final negotiation were to be carried forward by the WTO for their proper execution. The establishment of the WTO and the mandates given to it as solely discharger institution on international trade created a colossal debate in the international communities worldwide. The communities opposing trade liberalization and globalization took the WTO as an instrument enabling the monopoly of corporate power to maximize the profit from the exploitation of out of third world countries and their people. Soon after its establishment, the proponents of the WTO and its opponents especially the developing countries and international communities started combating each other. As has been raised earlier the WTO has integrated a huge number of agreements under its constituency to implement them. Amongst them, some of the agreements are destroying the life and livelihood of the people and the nations especially the developing countries. Those are known as Agreement on Agriculture (AOA), Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measure (SPS), Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and General Agreement on Trade in Service (GATS).

Regarding the establishment of WTO, there has been a fundamentally question raised that is whether the WTO existed for the people? The answer is no. The reason for this 'no' is because this institution came into existence not for the benefit of the people but for profit. It is dominated overwhelmingly by the Multinational Companies (MNCs), which all over the world have been plundering the natural resources to maximize profits. The main institutional motto of WTO is to help promote the neo-liberalism, which has been the major threat of the working class people.

An authority at WTO soon after its establishment, disclosed his dissatisfaction over the involvement of the MNCs on the matters of WTO that if there were no enormous pressures from the City Bank and the American Express there would have been no service department at WTO, no Uruguay round and finally no WTO. What does it mean? It is clear that many such Multinational Companies including mentioned above ones put so much pressure for creating the WTO and they were able to bring their agenda inside the WTO frame work. Therefore, we have to look at on those perspectives while analyzing the agenda that the WTO is carrying forward. This is another aspect that needs to be analyzed in depth and length.

Another aspect that should also not be left out to mention here is the fact that the WTO has met severe encounters by the people's movements around the world whether it is in Seattle or Geneva or in Cancun and almost at the same level the third world governments are also resisting it by disagreeing on the way it performs it works and the double standards it has shown towards the developing countries. It has been the facts that out of the five meetings convened after the WTO's existence, two have been completely failed. And no one knows what would happen in future.

In international level, there are basically four different positions that could be perceived in regard to assessing at the WTO. A section of global community has fully backed and affirmed the globalization process and wants to intensify it as soon as possible. It has faith into the WTO that it is the reality of today's contemporary socio-economy of the World. In fact, this section of the international community is the proponent of this institution and says that the WTO has been the reality of the present world every one should follow it up. Theoretically, it is more of a rightist position and reactionary philosophy. A large section of people in the world that claims itself more radical than others wants WTO to be junked and destroyed. This group has carried out a series of campaign for destroying it. This group stands on a radical position. There are still two other groups that have kept their stand differently. The first group wants changes WTO mechanism. They want reforms in working style, decision making process and organizational reforms inside the WTO. According to them WTO should be transparent in decision making process. This group can be called and generally known as reformist group in the international community.

On the other hand, a group of strong mass organizations mainly the peasants and small producers worldwide have kept their stand more critical towards WTO. They strongly say that WTO should be out of agriculture. This approach is important as the battle inside the WTO has been going on the agricultural issues. The agriculture, for most of the people in developing countries, has been as important for their life and livelihood. Agriculture for the people of those countries has become the tradition and culture as the majority of the people are depending on agriculture. The agricultural trade has severely affected the national economy and also the day to day peasants' livelihood. Therefore, the call for "WTO out of agriculture" is quite practical as agriculture has never been a part of the then GATT. It has been introduced in the frame work of the WTO only during the Uruguay round. In addition to the Agreement on Agriculture, the agreement on Trade Related Aspect of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) has really impaired the agriculture and food security globally.

WTO as an organization is claimed to be more democratic and transparent in the decision making process. It is also said that the decisions inside the organization are made through consensus. However, contrary to this claim, in practice, it has been seen time and again that big super powers have entirely dominated the

whole process in their favor. The voice of the representatives of the developing countries is totally ignored. The participants of the Third World countries have been so ineffective that sometimes they even do not know what agenda they are talking on. The whole decision making processes are dominated by the US and the countries of EU. They are not able to put forward their views and idea in an effective ways. As a result those countries are unable to protecting their rights and interests. Developing countries are compelled by developed countries to speak in their favor in WTO. If they deny doing so they are threatened for not giving them further foreign assistances. Developed countries have been able to impose too high tariff rate over the importation of the products of the developing countries by getting undue advantage of the terrification process.

Anyway the WTO, which is in these days considered as the most powerful institution in the world in the sense that it has created a great impact on national economic mostly in developing countries. It has been a most influential institutional body of modern imperialist globalization forces through which the industrial countries namely the G 8 countries are grabbing the natural resources and wealth of underdeveloped countries. On the other hand profit oriented giant Multinational Corporation's (MNCs) interest are protected through the WTO mechanisms.