

Abstract

India's stance at the WTO has undergone a sea change since the beginning of the Uruguay Round of the multilateral trade negotiations. This paper attempts to trace the shifting coordinates of India's position at the WTO. By focusing on three specific areas of negotiations, namely agriculture, services and TRIPS, the paper presents a political economy analysis of how India's stance at the WTO has evolved over time and what have been the underlying key drivers, both domestic and international, responsible for this shifting position. This paper shows that while domestic drivers have played the critical role in shaping India's stance at the WTO, the role of economic diplomacy cannot be ignored either. The paper concludes that India's heightened profile at the WTO at the present juncture, along with its economic success and material capability, presents an unprecedented opportunity to use the platform of WTO negotiations as a major foreign policy instrument to play a constructive leadership role.

Speaker's Profile

Professor Amit Shovon Ray is Professor of Economics at the Centre for International Trade and Development, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He was educated at Presidency College, Calcutta and at the University of Oxford. Presently, he is on leave from JNU on an invitation to hold a Chair (Chair Professor of Trade, Technology and Competitiveness) at ICRIER.

Professor Ray has held research and teaching positions at premier Universities and Institutions in India and abroad, including Oxford University Institute of Economics and Statistics, International Food Policy Research Institute (Washington DC), Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi), University of Calcutta (Kolkata) and Indian Institute of Technology (Delhi).

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Professor Ray is a development economist and has researched on issues of technology and R&D, globalization and economic reforms, intellectual property rights, FDI, trade in services, pharmaceutical industry, and health care. He has published extensively, nationally and internationally and has presented his research at seminars and conferences in different parts of the world – Brazil, Canada, China, India, Pakistan, Spain, South Africa, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, UK, USA.