

FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES

Lecture-29



National Schedules of Concessions

The process of negotiation on the schedule of concession, which forms an integral part of the Agreement, commenced in 1993. For this purpose, the Inter Governmental Group on Trade Liberalization (IGG) was set up. The IGG met on six occasions in various capitals. At the sixth meeting held in Katmandu on 20th and 21st April 1995, the delegations held intensive rounds of bilateral and multilateral negotiations and agreed on the National Schedule of concessions to be granted by individual member states to other member states under the SAPTA Agreement.

Four rounds of trade negotiations were concluded under SAPTA covering over 5000 commodities. Each Round contributed to an incremental trend in the product coverage and the deepening of tariff concessions over previous Rounds.

During the first and the second rounds, trade negotiations were conducted on a product by product basis. In the third and the fourth rounds, negotiations were conducted on chapter wise.

Maintenance of SAPTA Concession

the Agreement on the South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) which was implemented with effect from 1st January 2006 will supersede the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA). On the issue of maintaining SAPTA concessions for LDCs, the Committee agreed that once the Non-LDCs member states complete the Trade Liberalization Programme (TLP) for LDC member states, SAPTA concessions would cease for LDC member states. However, if any item on which SAPTA concessions are available to LDC, appear in the sensitive lists of non-LDC, they shall maintain the same level of concession through derogation. The Committee has further agreed that if the items under TLP enjoy tariff preferences under SAPTA, the Non-LDCs shall reduce their tariff on those items to a rate not higher than the rate applicable for LDCs under SAPTA on the date agreed for base rate for TLP. It was also agreed at the first SAFTA Ministerial Council Meeting held in April that LDCs should also maintain concessions under SAPTA for Non LDCs until the completion of TLP irrespective of whether the products are in the sensitive lists or not.