



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Perunthalaivar Kamarajar"

World Trade Organization (WTO)

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Why in news?

The **World Trade Organization (WTO)** celebrated its 30th anniversary on January 4, 2025.

The WTO was established in 1995 following the Marrakesh Agreement, which concluded the Uruguay Round of negotiations (1986-94) under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

It succeeded GATT, which had been governing global trade since 1948.

Key Points about WTO:

- **Mission:** The WTO is the only international body dedicated to the rules of trade between nations, with the goal of ensuring trade flows as smoothly, predictably, and freely as possible.
- **Key Bodies:**
 - **Ministerial Conference (MC):** The highest decision-making body.
 - **Dispute Settlement Body (DSB):** Handles trade disputes among member nations.
- **Membership:** The WTO has 166 members, representing about 98% of world trade.
- **Headquarters:** Located in Geneva, Switzerland.

Key Agreements of the WTO:

1. **Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS):** Prohibits discrimination against foreign products or restrictions that violate WTO principles, such as local content requirements.
2. **Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS):** Deals with trade disputes related to intellectual property rights.
3. **Agreement on Agriculture (AoA):** Focuses on liberalizing agricultural trade, including market access and domestic support for agricultural producers.
4. **Other Agreements:**
 - **Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS):** Related to food safety and animal and plant health standards.
 - **General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS):** Aims to liberalize trade in services.
 - **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT):** Still an important foundation for trade principles.

The WTO plays a crucial role in facilitating global trade and resolving disputes, with its agreements affecting various sectors, including agriculture, intellectual property, and services.