

WTO: India faces heat on broken rice export ban

The US, EU, Senegal question its effects on an 'already fragile global market'

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India's recent ban on export of broken rice and imposition of export duties on other non-basmati rice has been criticised at the WTO by members such as the US, the EU and Senegal. The countries raised questions on its adverse effect on an already fragile global market, a Geneva-based trade official said.

"New Delhi clarified that the export prohibition was only on broken rice that is used in India's poultry feed, and in response to a sharp increase in its exports in the recent month which had put pressure in the domestic market," the official said. These concerns were raised at the Committee on Agriculture meeting of WTO on September 14 and 15.



India underlined that curbs were necessitated by food security needs and it will consider requests for exemptions

The restrictions were imposed following concerns of domestic shortage and price rise after the wheat crop production was affected by a strong heat wave.

Domestic shortage

India banned export of broken rice and imposed a 20 per cent duty on export of all varieties of rice, except basmati and parboiled rice, with effect from September 9. Earlier, on May 13, it had banned export of wheat while orders prohibiting exports of wheat flour, *maida*, semolina and wholemeal *aata*

were issued on August 27. The Indian representative argued that members' position on India's food export was contradictory, as one minute they raised concerns on India exporting too much on the one hand and, on the other, were upset about export prohibitions, the official pointed out.

Washington complained that constant changes in India's export policy only posed uncertainties while EU said that although India was entitled to impose export restriction, it also was bound by duty to make a notification.