

Thailand, Indonesia raise concerns at WTO on India's quality control delay

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Thailand and Indonesia have raised concerns at the World Trade Organization (WTO) about alleged delays and non-transparency in granting of standard marks and certifications by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), required to conform to India's quality control orders (QCOs) for a number of items, and said that these were acting as import restrictions and trade barriers.

The concerns were raised at a recent meeting of the WTO's Goods Council.

India assured that it would try to sort out the issues through bilateral meetings as it was committed to facilitating international trade while ensuring the quality of products, a Geneva-based official told *businessline*.

Thailand said the items most affected due to the delays were copper, wooden



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boards and tires. It pointed out that despite Thai manufacturers sticking to the given procedures and making all payments on time, the BIS had not conducted compulsory on-site inspections as required, the official said.

A request was made by Thailand asking India to either postpone or withdraw the measures that had been put in place till its agencies were in a position to ensure timely processing of all im-

porters and manufacturers.

Indonesia, too, raised concerns on India's QCO resulting in trade barriers for Indonesian products, such as spun yarn and fabrics, plywood and wooden shutters, footwear, medical textiles.

It said that the QCO made compliance with BIS standards mandatory and it led to lengthy and non-transparent certification processes, as well as uncertainty. It asked India to work collaboratively to resolve these issues.

In its response, India said it was committed to facilitating international trade but also had to guarantee that the quality of products sold in its market ensured protection of human animal and plant health and life, protection of consumers and prevention of deceptive practices.

India said it would hold bilateral meetings with both Thailand and Indonesia to resolve the matter, the official added.