

Notifications Relating to Tobacco Products

1st – 31st May 2024

Under the WTO's Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, member states, for valid reasons, are allowed to regulate markets, protect their consumers, and preserve their natural resources, using tools such as rules for product weight, size, or packaging; ingredient or identity standards; shelf-life restrictions; and import testing and certification procedures.

However, often, these measures result in perceived discrimination against imports in order to protect domestic industries.

The TBT Agreement seeks to ensure that standards, technical regulations, and conformity assessment procedures are nondiscriminatory and are applied on a nondiscriminatory basis.

This Newsletter captures NTBs notified by WTO members and its relevance to Tobacco products for the month of May 2024. It also highlights the potential impact of these NTBs on India's exports.

TBT Notifications Issued by WTO Member Countries

During May 2024, the various WTO Member countries issued 274 TBT notifications. Only two of these notifications are relevant to tobacco.

Country-wise Break-up of NTB Notifications

Review of TBT notifications relating to tobacco products for the month of May 2024: The Philippines issued one notification, and Egypt issued one notification. See Figure 1 for the distribution of TBT notifications against tobacco products.

Potential Impact of TBT Notifications on Tobacco Products

A review of data relating to India's export of the one product against which Notifications have been issued reveals that India does not export the product to the Philippines and Egypt. Therefore, there will be no impact of this Notification on India's exports.

A description of products and the Notifications issued is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Details of Notifications

Sl. No.	Notifying Member	Distribution date	Document symbol	Description	HS code(s)	India's Exports of the product to issuing country (Year 2022) Value in US \$ Million)	Notifying Member country's World Import in 2022 (Value in US\$ Million)
1	Philippines	24-05-2024	G/TBT/N/PHL/332/Corr.1	G/TBT/N/PHL/332 duplicates G/TBT/N/PHL/331. Therefore, G/TBT/N/PHL/332 is null and void.	2404	0	0
2	Egypt	29-05-2024	G/TBT/N/EGY/1/Add.25	This addendum concerns the notification of the Ministerial Decree No. 143 /2024 (1 page, in Arabic) that gives the producers and importers a six-month transitional period to abide by the Egyptian Standards ES 718,612 for "Blended Tobacco for Cigarettes". It should be noted that the Ministerial Decree No.130/2005 (11 pages, in Arabic) which was formerly notified in G/TBT/N/EGY/1 dated 14 December 2005 and the Ministerial Decree No. 1001/2017 (2 pages, in Arabic) which was formerly notified in G/TBT/N/EGY/1/Add.3 dated 10 January 2018 mandated among others the earlier versions of this Standard.	2403	0	54.81