

Business Standard

DPIIT officials, top e-tailers meet to discuss e-commerce policy

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Shreya Nandi | New Delhi January 18, 2022 Last Updated at 23:06 IST



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Officials from the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on Tuesday virtually met those from top e-commerce companies including Amazon and Flipkart, trade bodies such as the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), among others to discuss the proposed e-commerce policy and varied issues.

CAIT Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal, who attended the meeting, called for an “unambiguous” e-commerce policy setting up a regulatory authority in the e-tail space. He flagged violations of foreign direct investment (FDI) laws by foreign-funded companies and called for mandatory registration of each commerce entity operating business activities, mandatory and strict KYC norms for the sellers and a clear distinction between marketplace and inventory model of e-commerce platforms.

DPIIT is holding inter-ministerial consultations for the national e-commerce policy that will spell out the responsibilities of marketplaces, sellers, and ensure that consumers are able to take an informed decision before buying a product.

Senior officials from Tata Group, Reliance, Snapdeal, Udaan, Pepperfry, Retailers Association of India, Laghu Udyog Bharati, Federation of Small Industries (FISME) were present at the meeting.

An official present at the meeting said various challenges were flagged such as matters relating to GST or what makes for essential and non-essential items for swift movement of goods during curfews or mini-lockdowns.

“It is surprising that on one hand they (traders bodies) were talking about having a level playing field, but on the other they said there should be a differentiation between foreign-funded marketplace and inventory model,” the official said, requesting anonymity.

“None of the e-commerce companies refuted the charges made by the CAIT and other associations,” CAIT said in an official statement.