

No licence factor in new policy for laptop imports

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New Delhi: A new regime for laptop imports without a licensing framework is set to be announced on Thursday by the government, where emphasis will be on sourcing from trusted locations, with incentives for those making locally or using India as an export base, according to sources.

The government, however, is clear that India's policies on the matter are WTO compliant and there are no deviations from commitments made under the global trade body. "... We are very clear and determined that we want an absolutely trusted supply chain for the Indian digital ecosystem,

especially when we are just going to take off (as a consumption market) and the entire internet is going to be built on servers, clouds and data centres," an official said, while responding to a question on US and Korea raising concerns over any type of import restrictions.

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"Ensuring security and trust are not in contravention to trade agreements or commitments... (and) India wants to build a trusted digital backbone and ecosystem, and on that, there is zero compromise," the official added.

Sources said the government has been mindful of

the concerns raised by the laptop and server industry around a previously-proposed licensing regime, and is clearly not going for any mandated restrictions on the movement of devices. The new import management system has been made by factoring in industry inputs, with the broader contours being worked upon by the commerce as well as IT & electronics ministries.

Companies such as Apple, Samsung and other global players had voiced concerns after the government had spoken about import restrictions and a license regime through a new policy on August 1. Companies had said the move would disrupt supplies and push prices up.