

Govt lists principles of e-comm policy, industry still not satisfied

Asmita Dey & Dipak Dash | TNN

New Delhi: The government on Wednesday shared the broad contours of the National e-Commerce Policy that seeks to draw a clear distinction between the marketplace and warehousing-based model or web-store. Besides, the marketplace will be responsible for any negligence or wrongdoings of sellers in product delivery or sale of defective items.

Listing out the six core principles, the government also said that there needs to be fairness in algorithms which enable ranking of goods and services, while providing a similar treatment and accessibility of logistics services and payment gateways.

PROTECTING CONSUMERS

Highlights of E-Comm Policy

- Drawing distinction between marketplace and warehousing-based model
- Marketplaces to be responsible for any negligence or wrongdoings of sellers
- Ensuring fairness in algorithms which enable ranking of goods and services
- Platforms need to be responsible for protecting consumers from fake reviews



Several elements have already been notified.

Further, the platforms need to be responsible in protecting consumers from fake re-

views as fall-back liability will be on marketplaces.

Following a meeting of companies with commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal, who also handles the consumer affairs portfolio, government officials said that there was “total consensus” with industry, while company representatives told **TOI** that the policy and the e-commerce consumer protection rules, which will be notified soon, will complement each other and there will be no overlap.

Not all companies are, however, content with the outcome of the meeting. “It seems like the authorities have already got a fix on the policy and it was just a meeting to notify

us that they will be out soon. Nobody raised any concerns today because it was not the right forum to do so,” said an e-commerce company.

“We are still very concerned about the fallback liability clauses that are part of e-commerce rules,” an executive with an e-tail company said, adding that the marketplace has little control over the goods offered by a seller. “Can a food delivery app be held responsible for poor quality food served by a restaurant?” he said.

Amazon, Flipkart, the Tata Group, Reliance, Meesho, Zomato, Shiprocket and traders’ organisation Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) attended the meeting.