

# E-commerce policy to be aligned with consumer protection rules

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Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and senior officials from Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and Consumer Affairs Ministry held consultations with representatives of top e-commerce companies and consumer rights bodies on Wednesday. The meeting focused on aligning the proposed e-commerce policy with e-commerce rules for consumer protection, sources said.

"The government is likely to put up a draft of the new e-commerce policy that will be aligned with consumer protection rules in about two weeks time," a senior in-

dustry representative, who attended the meeting told *businessline*.

Companies that attend the meeting included Meesho, Flipkart, Reliance, Amazon, Tata, Snapdeal, Shiprocket and Zomato. Representatives from traders body CAIT also attended the consultations. The Secretaries from DPIIT and Consumer Affairs were both present.

## **ENSURING COMPLIANCE**

Discussions took place on issues such as clear distinction between the marketplace and inventory model of e-commerce, ensuring compliance with regulatory measures, achieving inclusive growth by encouraging SMEs to adopt digital technology and enhancing exports through e-commerce, sources added.

No discussions around

FDI in the e-commerce sector took place in the meeting which could indicate that the basic rules around foreign investments would be unchanged, the source added.

"It is remarkable that under the guidance of the Minister and deep efforts made by Consumer Affairs Ministry and DPIIT, a unanimity is arrived between all stakeholders about basic pillars of e-commerce policy and rules," said CAIT Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal.

While FDI is allowed in e-commerce only for the marketplace model where owners cannot sell their own products, there are instances where some companies in the marketplace model have allegedly flouted existing rules to sell their own products on the platform.