

# Registration regime for import of computers ready to go live

**CHECKS.** No extension for free imports beyond Oct 31; non-restrictive registration process

**Amiti Sen**  
New Delhi

The Directorate-General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) is gearing up to activate its import management system for registration of laptops, computers, and tablets from November 1 as there may be no further postponement of the government's decision to switch to an authorisation system beyond October 31, according to sources.

However, the registration process will be "simple and non-restrictive" to begin with. Importers will be required to just register on the DGFT's system, specifying the quantity they intend to import, following which they will be issued an import authorisation, an official tracking the matter told *businessline*.

"The industry seems to be aligned with the government's decision to initiate the registration process. As of now, the DGFT is preparing to start the import management system for laptops and computers from November 1. There is no communication from the



**THE SWITCH.** The window for registration will open about ten days prior to the mandated switch to the new system

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) suggesting any postponement," the official said.

**REGISTRATION WINDOW**  
The window for registration of importers will open about ten days prior to the mandated switch to the new system, and the process will not take more than two-three days, the official added.

"Initially, the authorisation will be issued for whatever quantity the industry wants to import. The norm is that once an authorisation is issued, it remains

valid for a year. The DGFT and MeitY can together take a final call on the validity period," the official said.

However, at some point later, if MeitY wants to place quota restrictions, there will be a need to scrutinise the total value of imports, and an authorisation system would need to be put in place, he added.

The DGFT issued a notification on August 3 imposing licensing conditions on import of laptops, tablets, all-in-one PCs, and ultra-small form-factor computers and servers applicable with immediate effect.

MeitY had said the pro-

cess would address India's security concerns as IT hardware items could be bugged. A large part of the \$7-8-billion of laptops, tablets, and computers imported annually into the country comes from China, and this, too, could be monitored.

## LOCAL MANUFACTURE

Imposing licensing curbs could also promote local manufacture of the items, many of which are covered under the Production-Linked Incentive Scheme.

The Centre, however, decided to postpone implementation by about three months, until October 31, following protests by the industry. The US and the EU, too, took up the concerns of their industry with the Commerce and Industry Ministry.

Following extensive discussions between MeitY and the IT hardware industry, it was decided to initially go in for only a simple registration process that would result in the issuance of import authorisation, and will not be a licensing process, which appears restrictive.