

WITH ONLINE MONITORING SYSTEM GOING LIVE...

PC imports turn a trickle in Nov

Inbound shipments drop on monthly and yearly bases

ASIT RANJAN MISHRA
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After the government's online monitoring system for the import of electronic hardware items went live on November 1, inbound shipments of laptops and tablets slipped in November to a nine-month low at \$225 million, contracting 17.15 per cent year-on-year.

This decline was primarily driven by reduced imports from Singapore (down 43.7 per cent), Hong Kong (down 27.4 per cent), and China (down 14 per cent), according to the data released by the commerce department. China accounts for approximately 83 per cent of such imports.

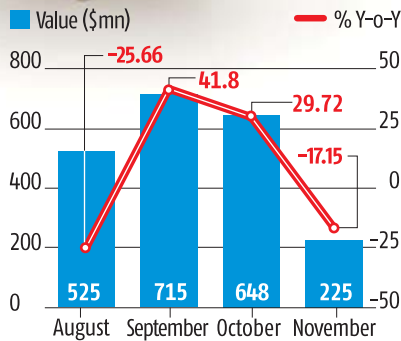
In addition to personal computers, another significant item on the IT hardware import monitoring list — data processing units or servers — saw a contraction of 31.8 per cent in inbound shipments at \$140.2 million in November. Imports from major sources, such as China and the US fell by 8.8 per cent and 3.6 per cent, respectively.

On August 3 last year, the Centre announced plans to categorise products in the information technology hardware segment, such as laptops, tablets, all-in-one personal computers, ultra-small form factor computers, and servers, under the "restricted" label. Following this, the import of laptops and tablets shot up in



TAKING STOCK

Import of laptops and tablets after the government announced new measures in 2023



Source: Commerce department

September (by 41.8 per cent) and October (by 29.7 per cent) amid fear of licensing requirements. However, the government deferred the implementation until November 1 after the industry expressed serious concerns over the decision, which was originally aimed at reducing import dependence on China and ensuring a trusted supply chain.

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PC imports...

In a further step-down, the government announced that it would not restrict the import of such electronic products from any territory, while also introducing a new contactless import authorisation system.

With the import monitoring system now in place, the government is able to collect data about specific products coming in from different sources.

India's key trading partners have expressed concerns over the online monitoring system at the World Trade Organization. US Trade Representative Katherine Tai raised the issue last week during the India-US Trade Policy Forum (TPF), which she co-chaired with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. Tai commended India for implementing the import management system in a facilitative manner that has so far minimised the impact on trade, and urged India to ensure that the end-to-end online system currently in operation and related policies do not restrict trade going forward. Tai later told reporters that she stressed the need for India keeping the country, as well as relevant stakeholders informed about its plan for the import monitoring system for laptops, tablets, and select IT hardware. India has already said that the

system has been put into place until September 2024.

Akasa Air...

Air India Express, SpiceJet, and Akasa Air, which operate 32 B737 MAX8 aircraft, were ordered by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to inspect their planes' emergency exits, with all checks completed satisfactorily.

When asked about any concerns following the January 5 Alaska Airlines incident, Dube was clear: "No. We don't have any concerns with that. We do not fly the MAX 9. We fly the MAX 8 (and MAX 8-200)... We are highly confident in what we are flying."

He noted that only 1 per cent of planes built by Boeing and Airbus have door plugs. "That is a modification. One is that we don't have the MAX 9 (which has door plugs). Two is that we don't intend on getting any non-standard modifications done. A MAX 8 is a MAX 8 and that is what we get. When it is a MAX 10, it is going to be a normal MAX 10 with no door plugs," he added.

In 2021, Akasa Air initially ordered 72 MAX planes from Boeing and then expanded the order to 76 in 2023. Of these, 22 have been delivered, with the remaining 54 due by mid-2027.

Akasa Air's latest order is the third major aircraft order by an Indian aviation firm in the past 12 months. In June 2023, IndiGo

