

# Govt issues draft rules to make ecommerce more accountable

The government has rolled out draft guidelines for e-commerce platforms, mandating self-regulatory measures to protect consumers from fraudulent practices amid the fast-growing digital shopping landscape in India.

The draft guidelines, titled 'Ecommerce-Principles and Guidelines for Self-Governance', have been prepared by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) under the Food and Consumer Affairs Ministry's supervision, seeking stakeholder comments by February 15.

"...the rise of e-commerce has introduced new challenges, particularly in terms of consumer protection and trust. The importance of clear and effective rules and norms

for self-governance in e-commerce cannot be further emphasised in this context," the draft stated.

The framework introduces three-phase principles covering pre-transaction, contract formation, and post-transaction stages for ecommerce operations.

Under pre-transaction requirements, platforms must conduct thorough KYC of business partners, especially third-party sellers. The guidelines man-

date detailed product listings including title, seller contact details, identification number, and supporting media to help consumers assess product utility and features.

For imported goods, plat-

forms must display importer, packer, and seller details prominently. During contract formation, platforms must record consumer consent, enable transaction review, and maintain transparent policies for cancellation, returns, and refunds.

Complete transaction records must be maintained and made accessible to consumers as per applicable laws. The guidelines mandate diverse payment options including credit/debit cards, mobile payments, e-wallets, and bank transfers, with full disclosure of processing charges.

Platforms must implement secure payment systems with encryption and two-factor authentication. For recurring payments, the draft requires clear disclosure of duration, intervals, and amounts, along with simple opt-out procedures.

Cash-on-delivery refunds must be processed as per consumer preference. **PTI**



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