

'No plan for independent regulator in proposed e-commerce policy'

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The proposed e-commerce policy, which is under formulation, has no provision for setting up of an independent regulator for online retail platforms, a senior official said.

The official also said regarding data related issues, the e-commerce firms have to comply with the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act and the proposed policy will not cover that area.

The proposed national e-commerce policy is in the final stages and no new draft will be issued now for seeking views of stakeholders as that exercise has been completed by the ministry.

"The ministry has to give a presentation of the proposed policy to the prime minister's office. There is no plan to set up any regulator for the sector, at least not in the near future. As of now, it is not on the anvil," the official, who did not wish to be named, said.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on August 2 held a detailed discussion with representatives of e-commerce firms and a domestic traders' body on the proposed policy.

In that meeting, a broad level of consensus emerged among the concerned stakeholders on the proposed policy. Earlier the ministry had issued two draft national e-commerce policies.

The 2019 draft proposed to address six broad areas of the e-commerce ecosystem — infrastructure development, e-commerce marketplaces, regulatory issues, stimulating domestic digital economy and export promotion through e-commerce.

The draft had talked about measures to contain sale of counterfeit products, prohibited items and pirated content; and review of the current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions in the light of the changing digital economy.