

# Talks to begin on IT hardware import system's continuance

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With the deadline for it two months away, the Ministries of Commerce, and Electronics and Information Technology will start discussions on the future of India's import-management system (IMS) for laptops and other computer-hardware products.

The IMS was rolled out two years ago — in November 2023 — to track the inbound shipments of seven computer-hardware products, including laptops, tablets, and all-in-one personal computers. The system is in place till December 31. The government had then said the monitoring system was launched to promote manufacturing information-technology (IT) hardware products at home and reduce dependence on other countries, especially China. A decision will be taken, depending on how much production is happening under the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for IT hardware, since at least two global majors are planning to begin manufacturing in India in April 2025. For India, another crucial

factor will be to take into account the United States' (US) reservation about the system. Since its announcement, India has been facing pressure to keep America as well as relevant stakeholders informed about New Delhi's plan on the import-monitoring system. The US is monitoring India's laptop import and is engaging with India on these concerns. This assumes even more significance now, considering that India and the US are "very close" to a deal, although discussion on issues related to non-tariff barriers is on.

"The electronics ministry is anchoring the system and its policy inputs are the most important because it is the line ministry. As of now, there is no indication of change in policy stance," a senior government official told *Business Standard*.

"We are watching all the developments — what is happening on the domestic front and how imports are faring. All these factors will be taken into consideration before taking a final decision," the official said, adding that the government was approaching this in a "fair and balanced" manner.