

GeM's Country of Origin Flag

Why in news?

The government made it mandatory for sellers on the GeM portal to clarify the country of origin of their goods when registering new products.

What is the GeM portal?

- Government e-Marketplace (GeM) is the Commerce Ministry's online marketplace.
- It procures goods and services by various Ministries and government bodies.
- Products sold on the portal range from stationery used by government officials to medical products that are used on patients.

What does this decision mean?

- The GeM portal will now have the '**country of origin**' flag for their products.
- The portal already has a '**Make in India**' filter.
- Therefore, the government offices can ascertain which products have a higher content of indigenously produced raw materials.
- This would help them choose products that meet the 'minimum 50% local content' criterion when selecting bidders for their tenders.
- The portal now allows buyers to reserve a bid for Class I local suppliers, or suppliers of those goods with more than 50% local content.
- For bids below Rs 200 crore, only Class I and Class II (those with more than 20% local content) are eligible.

Why this decision was taken?

- The decision comes in the backdrop of the government's **push for Aatmanirbhar Bharat**.
- [Aatmanirbhar Bharat intends to promote self-reliance by boosting the use of locally produced goods.]
- The decision also follows the **clashes between the troops of India and China** in Galwan Valley.
- This prompted several government departments to launch an offensive against imports from China.
- The Confederation of All India Traders is pushing for a country of origin tag

in the private e-commerce firms.

What would be the impact?

- Over the time, the use of imported goods in government offices and facilities may be filtered out, as the following are combined,
 1. Announcement of the 'country of origin' of the products sold on the GeM portal,
 2. Make in India campaign &
 3. A push for Aatmanirbhar Bharat.
- This might provide an opportunity to Indian manufacturers across industries to push their products in government facilities.

Source: The Indian Express

