July 13, 2026

DGFT

FTP prohibits imports of goods produced using forced labor

DGFT Notification No. 23/2026-27 inserts FTP para 2.20B, prohibiting imports of goods produced using forced labor; HBP para 2.50A sets DGFT's inquiry procedure.

THE DIRECTORATE GENERAL of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, issued Notification No. 23/2026-27, S.O. 3879(E), dated July 13, 2026. It was published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii), No. 3716, dated July 14, 2026. The Central Government made it under section 3 read with section 5 of the Foreign Trade (Development & Regulation) Act, 1992, and paragraphs 1.02 and 2.01 of the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023. In the Gazette's English text, it inserts a new para 2.20B in the FTP "with immediate effect". It is issued with the approval of the Minister of Commerce & Industry and signed by Lav Agarwal, Director General of Foreign Trade & Addl. Secy., under F. No. K-31013/1/2026-DIR NAFTA-Part(4).

KEY FACTS

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Notification No. 23/2026-27, S.O. 3879(E)

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Para 2.20B, "Prohibition of import of goods produced using forced labour", reads: "The import of goods produced, wholly or in part, using forced labour is prohibited." The Central Government may, from time to time, notify the goods whose import shall be prohibited under the para, having regard to such inquiry or other material as it considers appropriate. The procedure for DGFT's inquiry into the use of forced labor in producing such goods is prescribed in the Handbook of Procedures (HBP), 2023. The notification also adds para 11.64 to Chapter 11 of the FTP: "Forced Labour" means "all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily, as defined under the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)." Its statement of effect says the amendment enables the Central Government to impose prohibitions, wherever considered necessary, on products relating to forced labor, "in addition to products of prison labour".

A companion document of the same date inserts para 2.50A, "Procedure for determination of use of forced labour in the production of imported goods", in the HBP 2023. DGFT lists it as Public Notice No. 21/2026-27; the Gazette printed it as a notification under F. No. K-31013/1/2026-DIR NAFTA-Part(4)/[E-46765], in Part I, Section 1, No. 206, dated July 14, 2026. It is issued under paragraph 1.03 read with 2.04 of the FTP 2023. DGFT may start an inquiry on its own (suo motu), or on receipt of any information or complaint supported by credible material, to find out whether any goods imported into India have been produced, wholly or in part, using forced labor. For the inquiry, DGFT may seek information, documents or clarifications from importers, exporters, manufacturers or any other person or authority; consult the relevant ministries, departments or agencies, or other stakeholders; and obtain information or technical inputs from any domestic or international organization, governmental authority or expert body. When the inquiry is complete, DGFT prepares a report of its findings and may make recommendations to the Central Government, including for prohibiting the import of the goods under the Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992 and the FTP 2023.

DGFT's own copy of the notification, which leaves the S.O. number blank, gives a different start and wording: para 2.20B applies "after the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this

Notification in the Official Gazette", as the Hindi text in the same Gazette issue also says, and covers goods "produced or manufactured, wholly or in part, through the use of forced labour". DGFT's consolidated FTP Chapter 2 of July 30, 2026 carries that wording and gives no start date.

Neither document names any goods. As of October 28, 2026, DGFT's list of notifications shows none listing goods under para 2.20B; its newest entry is Notification No. 45/2026-27 of October 19, 2026. The two documents set no time limit for an inquiry and no format for a complaint, give no step for the importer to answer DGFT's findings, and do not mention checks by customs at import.

Issued by	Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
Document	Notification No. 23/2026-27, S.O. 3879(E)
Dated	July 13, 2026
Published	Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (ii), No. 3716, July 14, 2026
Inserts	Para 2.20B (prohibition of import of goods produced using forced labor) and para 11.64 (definition of "Forced Labour") in the Foreign Trade Policy 2023
Applies to	Imports of goods produced, wholly or in part, using forced labor
Takes effect	"With immediate effect" in the Gazette's English text; 30 days after Gazette publication in DGFT's own copy and the Gazette's Hindi text
Goods listed	None; the Central Government may notify the goods from time to time
Forced labor defined (para 11.64)	As in the ILO "Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)": all work or service exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty, for which the person has not offered himself voluntarily
Inquiry procedure	HBP para 2.50A, DGFT Public Notice No. 21/2026-27, July 13, 2026; in the Gazette as a notification under F. No. K-31013/1/2026-DIR NAFTA-Part(4)/[E-46765], Part I, Section 1, No. 206, July 14, 2026
Inquiry may start	On DGFT's own motion (suo motu), or on information or a complaint supported by credible material
Outcome of an inquiry	A DGFT report of findings, with possible recommendations to the Central Government, including prohibition of import
Notifications listing goods	None on DGFT's list of notifications as of October 28, 2026 (newest: No. 45/2026-27, October 19, 2026)

Legal basis	Section 3 read with section 5, Foreign Trade (Development & Regulation) Act, 1992; paragraphs 1.02 and 2.01, Foreign Trade Policy 2023
File number	F. No. K-31013/1/2026-DIR NAFTA-Part(4)
Signed by	Lav Agarwal, Director General of Foreign Trade & Addl. Secy.

The notification (PDF, 702 KB)

Source: Gazette of India, CG-DL-E-16072026-274548.

Checked against the official copy on October 20, 2026.

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