

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

A separate Department of Commerce was first created in the Government of India in 1921. Earlier, the subject under the Department were dealt with by the Department of Commerce and Industry (set-up in 1905). In 1937, when the Department of Industries and Labour was bifurcated into the Department of Communications and the Department of Labour, the Department of Commerce also took over certain subjects pertaining to Industries. These subjects were, however, transferred in 1943 to the newly created Department of Industries and Civil Supplies.

2. After independence, the Department of Commerce was redesignated as the Ministry of Commerce and was placed along with the Ministry of Industries and Supplies under the charge of a Cabinet Minister. The two Ministries were amalgamated in February, 1951 to form the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. This arrangement continued for about five years when in September, 1956, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry was split into two separate Ministries, viz. the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Industries and the Ministry of Heavy Industries. The two Ministries were again merged in April, 1957 to form the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The new Ministry also took over the work connected with most of the public undertakings previously dealt with in the Ministry of Production, which was abolished in 1957. In 1958, the Department of Company Law Administration was transferred from the Ministry of Finance to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry which was subsequently reorganised into three Departments, viz. Industry, Commerce and Company Law Administration.

3. With the formation of new Central Cabinet in April, 1962, some of the Ministries of Government of India were reorganised. The subject 'Heavy Industries' was taken away from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Ministry was reconstituted into the following three Departments:-

- (a) Department of International Trade;
- (b) Department of Industry; and
- (c) Department of Company Law Administration.

4. In July, 1963, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry was bifurcated into the Ministry of International Trade and the Ministry of Industry (Department of Industry and Department of Company Law Administration). The Ministry of International Trade took over all subjects under the Department of International Trade. In June, 1964, the Ministry was redesignated as Ministry of Commerce.

5. In February, 1969, the Ministry's designation was changed as 'Ministry of Foreign Trade and Supply' with two Departments, namely:-

- (a) Department of Foreign Trade; and
- (b) Department of Supply.

6. In November, 1969, the Department of Supply was separated and the Department of Foreign Trade was redesignated as Ministry of Foreign Trade.

7. In February, 1973, the Ministry was again redesignated as Ministry of Commerce and the Department of Internal Trade added to it. The Ministry had two Departments under its control at that time, namely:-

- (a) Department of Foreign Trade; and
- (b) Department of Internal Trade.

8. In January, 1974, the Department of Foreign Trade under the Ministry of Commerce was bifurcated into two separate Departments, namely:-

- (a) Department of Foreign Trade; and
- (b) Department of Export Production.

The third Department viz., the Department of Internal Trade remained unchanged.

9. In accordance with the change in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, made effective from 11th October, 1974, the Department of Internal Trade which was a part of this Ministry was transferred to the charge of reorganised Ministry of Industry and Civil Supplies consequently structuring the Ministry consisting of the following two Departments: -

- (a) Department of Foreign Trade; and
- (b) Department of Export Production.

10. In March, 1976, this Ministry was further reorganised and one more Department, namely, the Department of Textiles was added to the charge of this Ministry. In pursuance of a further change to the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, in June, 1977, this Ministry consisting of three Departments at that time was restructured as a single organisational entity as Ministry of Commerce with a Department of Textiles within the Ministry.

11. Consequent upon further change to the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, in November, 1977, all functions being dealt with in the Department of Textiles were transferred to the charge of Ministry of Industry (Department of Industrial Development) and from out of textile items, only the export activities in respect of textiles, jute, handicrafts, etc. remained under the charge of this Ministry.

12. As a result of change in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules made effective from 9th February, 1978 this Ministry was reorganised with the nomenclature "Ministry of Commerce, Civil Supplies and Cooperation" consisting of the following two Departments:-

- (a) Department of Commerce; and
- (b) Department of Civil Supplies & Cooperation.

13. As mentioned in para 11 above, the work relating to the Textile Department, with the exception of exports, continued to remain under the charge of the Department of Industrial Development till a full-fledged Department of Textiles was revived in April, 1980 in the Ministry of Commerce. In accordance with the Government of India (Allocation of Business - 141st Amendment) Rules, dated 24th April, 1980, the work relating to the development of textile industry was retransferred from the Ministry of Industry to the newly created Department of Textiles in the Ministry of Commerce and the organisational structure of this Ministry at that time consisted of the following three departments:-

- (a) Department of Commerce;
- (b) Department of Civil Supplies; and
- (c) Department of Textiles.

14. In July, 1980, the erstwhile Ministry of Commerce and Civil Supplies was further restructured organisationally vide Government of India (Allocation of Business - 144th Amendment) Rules, with the nomenclature of "Ministry of Commerce" consisting of the following two Departments:-

- (a) Department of Commerce; and
- (b) Department of Textiles.

15. In accordance with the change in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, made effective from 4th January, 1985, the Department of Supply was also brought under this Ministry. The Ministry of Commerce then comprised of the following three Departments:-

- (a) Department of Commerce;
- (b) Department of Textiles; and
- (c) Department of Supply.

16. In accordance with the change in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules made effective from 15th November, 1985, an independent Ministry of Textiles was created. The Ministry of Commerce then consisted of the following Departments:-

- (a) Department of Commerce; and
- (b) Department of Supply.

17. In accordance with the change in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules made effective from 15th October, 1999 this Ministry was reorganised with the nomenclature of "Ministry of Commerce & Industry" consisting of the following four Departments:-

- (a) Department of Commerce;
- (b) Department of Industrial Development;
- (c) Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion; and
- (d) Department of Supply.

18. In accordance with the change in the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, made effective from 3rd April, 2000 Ministry of Commerce & Industry consisted of the following three Departments:-

- (a) Department of Commerce;
- (b) Department of industrial Policy & Promotion; and
- (c) Department of Supply.

19. In August 2000, the Department of Supply was abolished. The work relating to purchase and inspection of stores for Central Government Ministries/Department. Cadre Management of Indian Supply Service and Indian Inspection Service and administration of DGS&D was placed under the charge of Department of Commerce. With this change the Ministry of Commerce & Industry consisted of the following two Departments;

- i) Department of Commerce.
- ii) Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion.

20. The Union Cabinet on 12th April 2017 gave its approval for setting up of a Special Purpose Vehicle to be called Government e-Marketplace (GeM SPV) as the National Public Procurement Portal as Section 8 Company. The Board of Directors of GeM SPV comprise 7 Directors with 2 Directors from the Department of Commerce, 1 from Department of Expenditure, 1 from Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, 2 independent Director who would be persons of eminence and the CEO of GeM. The Chairperson of the Board of Directors is Secretary, Department of Commerce. GeM SPV has 66 permanent positions manned by Government officers on deputation through Central Staffing Scheme/ Search cum Selection/ Open advertisement and professionals hired from the market at prevailing market rates in order to have domain expertise in Information Technology, Data & Business Analytics, e-Commerce, marketing, legal etc.

21. The Union Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 12th April 2017 gave its approval for closure of DGS&D by 31.10.2017. The closure of DGS&D was effected on 31.10.2017.

22. In pursuance of Cabinet Secretariat's Notification dated 07.07.2017, a new Division i.e. Logistics Division has been created in Department of Commerce.

23. In pursuance of Cabinet Secretariat's notification dated 07.05.2018, the Directorate General of Anti-dumping & Allied Duties(DGAD) has been restructured

as Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), under Department of Commerce.

24. Department of Commerce is functionally organized into the following 10 Divisions:

1. International Trade Policy Division
2. Foreign Trade Territorial Division
3. Export Products Division
4. Export Industries Division
5. Export Services Division
6. Economic Division
7. Administration & General Service Division
8. Finance Division
9. Supply Division
10. Logistics Division