

Govt hikes import duties on 19 items to check CAD, rupee fall

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government on Wednesday raised import duties on 19 items, including jet fuel and air conditioners, as it looks to check the widening current account deficit resulting from high crude oil prices and the rupee dipping to a historic low.

The enhanced duty rates, which will make these imported goods expensive, will come into effect from midnight of September 26-27, said a Government statement.

"The total value of imports of these items in the year 2017-18 was about ₹86,000 crore," the statement said.

"The central Government has taken tariff measures, by way of increase in the basic customs duty, to curb import of certain imported items. These

changes aim at narrowing the current account deficit (CAD). In all the customs duty has been increased on 19 items," it said.

The import duty on air conditioners, household refrigerators and washing machines (less than 10 kg) doubled to 20 per cent. The basic customs duty on compressors, speakers and footwears raised to 10 per cent, 15 per cent and 25 per cent respectively.

The duty on radial car tyres raised from 10 per cent to 15 per cent while for cut and polished diamonds, semi-processed diamonds, lab grown diamonds, coloured gem stones the import hiked from 5 per cent to 7.5 per cent.

The articles of jewellery, goldsmith and silver wares will now attract a duty of 20 per cent, up from 15 per cent earlier.