

Import curbs on 351 defence items for Make-in-India boost

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NEW DELHI: After two negative arms imports or “positive indigenisation” lists that progressively ban imports of 209 weapon systems, platforms and ammunition for the armed forces, the defence ministry has notified another such list for 351 subsystems and components.

Issued by the department of defence production as part of the effort to minimise imports by defence PSUs, the list contains 351 imported items that will be indigenised over the next three years as well as 2,500 items that have already been indigenised, officials said on Wednesday.

“This Aatmanirbhar (self-reliance) initiative will save foreign exchange approximately equivalent to Rs 3,000 crore every year. The identified sub-systems, assemblies and components will only be procured from Indian industry after the timelines indicated in the list,” an official said.

As per the notification, import restrictions on 172 sub-systems and components will come into force by December 2022, followed by another 89 by December 2023 and 90 by December 2024. The list ranges from laser warning sensors, high-pressure check valves and beacon receivers to various types of antennas, cables, sockets and voltage control oscillators.

The first “positive indigenisation list” in August last year progressively banned imports of 101 items in the 2020-2025 timeframe in a bid to boost domestic defence production and exports. The second in May this year similarly identified 108 items for the December 2021-December 2025 time-frame.

The two lists identified only some fully-formed major weapon systems and platforms, ranging from missile destroyers, transport aircraft, light combat helicopters, wheeled armoured fighting vehicles and conventional diesel-electric submarines to next-generation corvettes, single-engine light helicopters and AEW&C (airborne early warning and control) systems.