

 ISLAMABAD: Large-Scale Manufacturing (LSM) sector contracted and posted a paltry growth of 2.58 per cent in January 2014 from a year ago.

The growth slowed down owing to sluggish output in the eight main categories of industries in the month under review over last year, suggested data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics issued on Monday.

In December 2013, an impressive growth of 13.17pc was recorded.

Major contribution towards positive growth in LSM performance in January 2014 was from textile 0.71pc, food and beverages 9.62pc, fertilisers 5.74pc, iron and steel products 17.38pc, chemicals 13.55pc, wood products 26.86pc and non-metallic mineral products 0.20pc.

Last year, the LSM sector, which accounts for 70pc of industrial production, recorded a positive growth of 3.79pc.

Some sectors, like petroleum products, grew 11.36pc, paper and board 14.45pc, pharmaceuticals 2.45pc, electronics 4.47pc, leather products 15.59pc, non-metallic mineral products 0.20pc, engineering products 19.59pc and automobiles 1.88pc.

In the first seven months of the current year, the LSM grew by 6.05pc in July-January 2014 this year over the corresponding months of last year.

The government had expected that economy would grow by about 4.4pc for the current fiscal year.

Industry specific data showed that many sub-sectors didn't perform well in the month under review.

In electronic and electrical goods, production of refrigerators recorded a growth of 9.75pc; deep-freezers recorded a growth of 105.48pc; air-conditioners 136.79pc; electric meters 174.85pc, switch gears 196.81pc and bicycles 18.07pc.

The production of electric tubes dropped by 100pc; electric bulbs 29.84pc, electric fans 32.89pc; electric motors 16.01pc, electronic transformers 52.22pc; TV sets 5.42pc; generating sets 100pc and storage batteries 15.87pc during the period under review over the same month last year.

The growth was witnessed in case of food, beverages and tobacco. The sector has adjusted weightage of 12.37pc in LSM basket.

But vegetable ghee production decreased by 1.49pc and oil 12.37pc in January 2014 over the last year. However, production of tea (blended) witnessed a growth of 9.50pc.

Another important sector, which provides jobs in large numbers, is the automobile industry. The production of tractors and trucks was up by 56.15pc; buses 200pc; LCVs 10.69pc and motorcycles 4.87 pc during the period month under review.

However, production of tractors was down by 51.82pc; and jeeps and cars 4.38pc in January 2014 over the same month last year.