

Written by Shumaila Ahmed
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ISLAMABAD: While major exports including textiles, foods, and jewelry earned the country more than \$7 billion during July-November 2012, yet only imports of petroleum and its products caused a flight of \$6.4 billion, which is so precious for the cash-strapped economy of Pakistan at present. According to the latest figures by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), during these five months, imports of petroleum products declined by 1.47 percent to \$4.166 billion, while crude petroleum imports were up by 9.92 percent to \$2.28 billion. The imports of manufactured fertilisers was down by 46.8 percent to \$315.5 million, plastic materials by 16 percent to \$553.33 million, insecticides by 56.4 percent to \$26.78 million, while import of medicinal products was up by 9.88 percent to \$303 million over the corresponding period last year. Machinery imports rose 18.14 percent in July-Nov to \$2.406 billion against \$2.037 billion last year. Of this group, textile machinery import was up by 1.76 percent to \$163.35 million against \$160.52 million in the same period of previous year. Telecom sector import went up by 45.4 percent to \$757.7 million (\$286.3 million spent on mobile phones imports); power generation machinery import increased by 17.75 percent to \$388.3 million; electrical machinery and apparatus import by 6.34 percent to \$298.6 million and construction and mining machinery up by 55.3 percent to \$72.11 million. However, agriculture machinery import dropped by 16 percent to \$54.6 million and import of office machinery decreased by 7.5 percent to \$98.26 million over the same period last year. The economy also spent \$1.86 billion on food imports during the period under review as against \$2.13 billion last year in the comparable period, showing a decline of 12.84 percent. In this group, \$864.3 million were spent on palm oil import, which was 16.6 percent less than last year's \$1.036 billion. Tea imports were up by 4.4 percent to \$147.7 million, spices down by 32 percent to \$30.36 million and milk, cream and food for infant import increased by 17.5 percent to \$65.9 million. According to the PBS figures, during July-Nov 2012-13 imports of completely built-up unit buses, trucks and other heavy vehicles were reduced by a percent to \$50 million, while imports of motor cars were up by 27.3 percent to \$155.8 million. Under the completely knocked down/semi knocked down, imports of buses, trucks and other heavy vehicles surged 23.46 percent to \$70.4 million, while imports of motor cars were down by 14 percent to \$175 million. On the imports of gold, iron and steel scrap, iron and steel, and aluminum, Pakistan spent \$1.29 billion during July-November, 2012, which were 14.38 percent more than last year. Gold worth of \$74.8 million was imported during this period, up 12.52 percent. Total \$290.25 million were spent on iron and steel scrape, while iron and steel worth \$577.85 million were imported during this period. As far as exports statistics are concerned, the PBS data suggested, exports of textiles shot 7.81 percent to \$5.4 billion during the first five months of the current fiscal year from \$5 billion in same period last year. Rice exports dipped by 14.73 percent to \$609.58 million over \$714.86 million recorded in last year. Petroleum and coal exports slid 97.87 percent to \$10.95 million against \$514 million in the corresponding period last year. Cement exports rose by 27.65 percent to \$245.5 million from \$192.3 million earlier. In textiles group, cotton yarn export rose by 37.9 percent to \$896.4 million, cotton cloth by 12.3 percent to \$1.094 billion, tent canvas and tarpaulin by 25.5 percent to \$44 million, readymade garments by 14.26 percent to \$746.6 million, and towels up by 10.98 percent to \$304.4 million during July-Nov 2012-13. On the other hand, knitwear export was down by 2.02 percent to \$881.6 million, bed wear by 9.6 percent to \$729 million, art, silk and synthetic textiles by 18.1 percent to \$182.97 million, and madeup article (excluding towels, bedwear) was up by 2.14 percent to \$243.14 million over the same period last year. Raw cotton export decreased 44.3 percent to

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\$68.83 million. Moreover, the PBS data showed exports of foods also rose 2.35 percent to \$1.61 billion during the period under review. Wheat exports slid 62.7 percent to \$35.1 million and exports of tobacco decreased by 28.5 percent to \$5.6 million. Fish and fish preparations export was up by a little more than half a percent to \$126.4 million, vegetables by 34.1 percent to \$46.7 million, spices 19.3 percent to \$22.37 million and meat and meat preparation export increased by 42 percent to \$102.2 million. Besides, carpets, rugs and mats exports were up by 1.8 percent to \$54.7 million. Exports of leather manufacturers were down by 6.6 percent to \$230.67 million while export of leather tanned was up by 3.78 percent to \$183.2 million over the corresponding period of last year. In the same way, jewellery exports during July-Nov 2012-13 increased by 331 percent to \$1.027 billion, according to data. Gems exports rose 50 percent to \$1.77 million, and furniture exports were up by 21 percent to \$3.27 million.

Courtesy: The News