



PM directs Commerce Division to work out anti-corruption strategy

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Wednesday directed the Commerce Division to work out a comprehensive strategy to check corrupt practices of illegal money transfers and smuggling which are negatively affecting the country's economy.

The direction came from the premier during a special briefing on the performance of Commerce Division in terms of promoting exports from the country. The Adviser to PM on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood was also present.

Pakistan's exports entered negative growth during the past couple of months despite doling out of billions of cash subsidies and many other incentives. The division apparently seems least effective in promoting exports from the country.

An official announcement issued here said the prime minister in his remarks said that promoting trade and facilitating business community, especially the overseas Pakistanis who wanted to invest in various conventional and non-conventional sectors of the economy, was among the priority areas for the government.

Khan said that the existing structures would be reviewed to ensure seamless facilitation of prospective investors. The prime minister also observed that there was a need to review the criteria of appointment and assessing performance of the trade officers so as to ensure that business community is properly facilitated, investment potential and the trade targets achieved.

Currently, the government is spending approximately Rs2 billion per annum on salaries and perks of these officers posted in different countries. However, it is hard to justify their contribution in prompting exports from the country.

Secretary Commerce Muhammad Younas Dagha made a detailed presentation about the functions of the ministry and its attached departments.

While briefing about the current situation of imports and exports of the country, Dagha proposed policy initiatives and various short-term and medium-to-long term measures aimed at promoting trade activities and realising export potential of the country.

Published in Dawn, August 30th, 2018