

US trade deficit shrinks sharply in Nov

AFP, Washington

The US trade deficit shrank sharply in November to the smallest gap in nearly a year as imports fell more than exports, government data released Wednesday showed.

The trade gap narrowed to \$39.0 billion from a revised \$42.2 billion in October, a 7.7 percent decline month-over-month, the Commerce Department said.

Lower prices for crude oil and petroleum imports factored into the stronger-than-expected narrowing of the gap, which analysts had expected to come in at \$41.8 billion.

The department's prior October estimate was \$43.4 billion.

In November, exports of goods and services fell to \$196.4 billion, a decrease of \$2.0 billion, or 1.0 percent, from October.

Imports dropped by a hefty \$5.2 billion (2.2 percent), to \$235.4 billion.

Imports of petroleum products plunged 11.8 percent to \$23.1 billion amid a sharp fall in global crude oil prices.

The United States paid on average \$82.95 a barrel for crude in November,

which currently is trading below \$50 a barrel.

At the same time, US exports of oil products, backed by a boom in natural gas from shale production, leaped by 5.4 percent, driving the US oil trade deficit down 25 percent to \$11.4 billion, its lowest level in almost 11 years.

The year-end holiday shopping season that began in November brought a record \$48.5 billion in goods imports.

The politically sensitive goods trade gap with China narrowed by 8.0 percent to \$29.9 billion as imports from the world's second-largest economy fell.

With the European Union, the goods shortfall fell 7.1 percent to \$11.8 billion.

In the first 11 months of the year, the overall US trade deficit rose \$22.3 billion, or 5.1 percent, from the same period in 2013.

"A strong dollar should continue to boost imports of cheaper foreign goods; though we will have to wait and see if the deflationary effects of dollar appreciation will cause domestic companies to cut prices," said Jay Morelock of FTN Financial.

European airlines cannot keep up: Qatar Air chief

AFP, Doha

Qatar Airways chief Akbar Al-Baker boasted Wednesday that European carriers "cannot keep up" with competition from Gulf carriers, as his fast-growing airline welcomed the first Airbus A350-900.

Doha-based Qatar Airways, along with Dubai's Emirates and Abu Dhabi's Etihad are "the fastest growing carriers," Baker told a press conference in Doha.

"This is why we are creating a lot of concern for the European airlines who cannot keep up. We in the Gulf are leading the aviation industry today," he said.

Qatar Airways revealed in Doha Wednesday the world's first Airbus A350-900 commercial jet, little more than a week before the plane makes its maiden flight -- from Doha to Frankfurt.

Baker pledged to expand the service soon to other European cities and New York.

The three Gulf carriers have snatched a sizable share of the long-haul travel sector, turning their home cities into major hubs on routes to Asia and Australasia.

They are major clients of aircraft manufacturers, with extensive lists of orders from

Boeing and Airbus.

In November, Baker took a swipe at legacy carriers, accusing them of being "inefficient" and protected by EU policies.

The A350-900 (extra wide body) is the newest model to roll off the European jet maker's production line and is the first entirely new plane to be showcased by one of the world's two biggest aircraft makers since Boeing unveiled its "Dreamliner" four years ago.

Its makers claim the plane's design is revolutionary, because of its fuel efficiency and relative quietness, and will be the last completely new commercial airliner developed over the next two decades.

Hailing the commercial airliner as a "majestic masterpiece" and the aviation "design of the decade", Baker said it would soon be rolled out beyond Germany.

Qatar Airways, which will be the only airline to fly A350s for the foreseeable future, has bought 80 of the planes and Baker told AFP that he expected "aircraft number eight" would be the one used for the New York route.

All 80 planes will have been received by Qatar Airways by the 2020s.

Prime Bank's new DMD

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Md Golan Rabbani has joined Prime Bank as deputy managing director, the bank said in a statement yesterday.

Rabbani worked as Al-Arafah Islami Bank's deputy managing director before joining Prime Bank.

Rabbani began his banking career with the then Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha in 1977, and later worked with Al Baraka Bank.



South Bangla Bank appoints new DMD

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Md Shaukat Ali has joined South Bangla Agriculture and Commerce Bank as deputy managing director, the bank said in a statement yesterday.

He served as general manager at Sonali Bank prior to the new position, it said. Ali started his banking career as a probationary officer with Sonali Bank in 1980.



Shaibal Saha, senior deputy general manager for marketing and sales of Crown Cement, poses with top performing dealers of the company during a recent trip to China, organised by the company as a reward for good sales performance.

India not planning further curbs on gold imports

REUTERS, New Delhi

India is not planning to impose any further curbs on gold imports as the current account deficit is under control, Trade Secretary Rajeev Kher said on Wednesday.

The south Asian country has imported 7 tonnes of gold so far in January, while 39 tonnes of gold was imported in December, Kher told reporters.

India's gold imports in November reached 151.58 tonnes, according to data provided by India's trade ministry, marking a 38 percent increase from 109.55 tonnes in October.

On Nov. 28, India scrapped a rule mandating traders to export 20 percent of all gold imported into the country, in a surprise move that aimed to cut smuggling and raise legal shipments into the world's second-biggest consumer of the metal after China.



Abdus Sabur Khan, chairman of Opsonin Pharma, attends the company's annual sales conference at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka yesterday. Abdur Rouf Khan, managing director, was also present.

Italy jobless at a new record high

AFP, Milan

Italy's unemployment rate hit a new record high in November, increasing pressure on Matteo Renzi as he struggles to implement reforms aimed at easing a downturn in the eurozone's third largest economy.

The jobless rate rose to 13.4 percent in November, up 0.2 percentage points from October, data from the national statistics institute (ISTAT) showed on Wednesday.

Youth unemployment also hit a record high, climbing to 43.9 percent, up 0.6 percentage points on a month earlier and 2.4 percentage points on a year.

The figures were just the latest bad news to hit Italy, which is battling to pull itself clear of the longest economic downturn since the Second World War. Italy's relentless downturn is fuelling criticism of Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, whose efforts to rekindle growth have led to clashes with the unions.

He was accused on the weekend of

trying to push through measures it was claimed could lead to the annulment of a former premier Silvio Berlusconi's 2012 tax fraud conviction.

Renzi later said the tax law reform would be put on hold until Berlusconi, 78, has finished serving his community sentence.

But suspicions lingered that the premier was looking to favour Berlusconi in the hope of securing the billionaire's support for future reforms.

The bill presented included a measure that would ease or scrap punishment for those convicted of tax crimes where the amount in question was only a small percentage of their total taxable income.

Critics fear such a measure could see Berlusconi return to the political scene in a bid to seek protection from his other legal woes, including charges that he bribed a senator to swap sides in parliament and paid off a pimp to give false testimony about prostitutes his parties.

Matarbari power project appoints consultant

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The project at Matarbari in Maheshkhali upazila under Cox's Bazar will cost Tk 35,984 crore, of which Tk 28,939 crore will be provided by the Japan International Cooperation Agency in loans.

The government already signed its first loan agreement with Jica worth \$400 million in June last year.

Some 1,500 acres of land have already been acquired, with a project consultant to be appointed shortly.

Kei Toyama, senior representative of Jica, said the Matarbari project is the flagship of the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt initiative.

The project involves constructing two 600mw power plants adopting the state-of-the-art technologies that will enable thermal efficiency of 45 percent and drive down carbon dioxide and other pollutants way below those in many developed countries, he said.

The Jica high official however expressed concern about the slow progress with regards to compensation: so far, less than 10 percent of the affected people have been compensated.

"I would like to request all the ministries and authorities concerned to make concerted efforts to expedite the process and gain support from local people so that the project will be completed in a timely and sustainable manner."

It is planned that the deep sea port will be completed by 2019 and the 1,200mw power plants will be in full operation by 2022. But both Hamid and Power Secretary Monowar Islam urged the companies to construct the first unit of the projects by 2018.

Md Abul Quasem, managing director of CPGCBL, said the Matarbari project would be the nucleus of the country's power system and the gateway of all coal-based power projects in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is going for coal-based power projects amid shortages of gas, said Shahinul Islam Khan, chairman of the Bangladesh Power Development Board, adding that 32 percent of the population still do not have grid power connection.

Cotton use to grow 4pc on higher demand: EIU

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China has now dramatically slashed its non-tariff import levels as the country grapples with its burdensome stockpiles.

"We expect strong consumption growth in India, as well as in smaller consumers, such as Bangladesh and Vietnam," said EIU.

Cotton's low price will make it attractive compared to synthetic alternatives in the short term.

"We expect consumption growth to slow slightly in 2015-16, to just below 3 percent, but note that there remain downside risks to these forecasts given the textile sector's exposure to global macroeconomic trends," the EIU said.

Bangladesh imports woven fabrics worth more than \$5 billion a year mainly from India and China as the local weavers can only supply 40 percent of the fabrics to the garment makers, Alamin said.

"The local weavers cannot supply an adequate quantity of fabric to the garment makers due to lower investment in the sub-sector as the investors require higher capital."

সীমিত
আর্মি স্কুল অব ফিজিক্যাল ট্রেনিং এন্ড স্পোর্টস
(এএসপিটিএস) ঢাকা সেনানিবাস
দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
অর্থ বছর ২০১৪-২০১৫ইং

সূত্রঃ	তারিখঃ
১। দফতরের নাম	ঃ কমান্ড্যান্ট, এএসপিটিএস, ঢাকা সেনানিবাস।
২। কাজের নাম	ঃ ২০১৪-২০১৫ অর্থ বৎসরে সেনাবাহিনী আরচ্যারী জীড়া দলের জীড়া সামগ্রী ক্রয় বাবদ।
৩। দরপত্র বিক্রয় মূল্য	ঃ টাকা ৭৫০.০০ (সাতশত পঞ্চাশ) নগদ প্রদানপূর্বক আর্মি স্পোর্টস কমপ্লেক্স প্রযুক্তেঃ এএসপিটিএস এর অফিস হতে ক্রয় করা যাবে।
৪। জামানতের পরিমাণ	ঃ দরপত্র প্রদানকালে মোট টাকার ২.৫% টেন্ডার নিরাপত্তা জামানত হিসাবে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের তফসীলভুক্ত যে কোন বাণিজ্যিক ব্যাংক হতে ইস্যুকৃত "অবিনিময়" ব্যাংক ড্রফট/পে-অর্ডার "কমান্ড্যান্ট, এএসপিটিএস" এর অনুকূলে জমা করতে হবে। এই ক্ষেত্রে চেক গ্রহণযোগ্য হবে না। জামানত বিহীন দরপত্র তাৎক্ষণিকভাবে বাতিল করে দেয়া হবে।
৫। দরপত্র ক্রয়ের আবেদনপত্রের সঙ্গে দাখিলযোগ্য সনদপত্রাদি	ঃ ক। সিডিউলে বর্ণিত দ্রব্যের একক মূল্য এবং মোট মূল্য সম্বলিত স্বাক্ষরিত অফার (সকল মূল্য বাংলাদেশী টাকায় উল্লেখ আবশ্যিক)। খ। বৈধ ট্রেড লাইসেন্স (সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি)। গ। বৈধ টিআইএন সনদপত্র (ফর্মের ট্যান্সের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি)। ঘ। প্রস্তুতকারী কর্তৃক অথরাইজেশনপত্র (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে)। ঙ। কারিগরী তথ্য (প্রযোজ্য ক্ষেত্রে)। চ। সরবরাহকারী কর্তৃক গত ০২ বৎসরে একই ধরনের দ্রব্য সামগ্রী কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে সরবরাহ করে থাকলে সেই বিষয়ে সনদপত্র। ছ। ইতিপূর্বে বিদেশ থেকে আমদানিকৃত চালান এবং কাষ্টম পরিশোধকৃত ভাউচারের সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি।
৬। দরপত্র বিক্রয় শুরু ও শেষ তারিখ	ঃ জাতীয় পত্রিকায় দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশের দিন হতে ১৪ জানুয়ারি ২০১৫ তারিখ ১৪০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
৭। দরপত্র দাখিলের শেষ তারিখ	ঃ ১৫ জানুয়ারি ২০১৫ তারিখ ১১০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত এবং উল্লেখিত সময়ের পরে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
৮। দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান	ঃ ক। আর্মি স্পোর্টস কমপ্লেক্স প্রযুক্তেঃ এএসপিটিএস, ঢাকা সেনানিবাস। খ। সভাপতি ক্রয় কমিটি বরাবর দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।
৯। দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ	ঃ ১৫ জানুয়ারি ২০১৫ তারিখ ১১৩০ ঘটিকায় সকল দরদাতাদের উপস্থিতিতে দরপত্র বাস্তব খোলা হবে।
১০। কাজ শেষ করার তারিখ	ঃ কার্যাদেশ প্রদানের দিন হতে দেশীয় জীড়া সামগ্রী সরবরাহের ক্ষেত্রে ৩০ দিন (এক মাস) এবং বিদেশ হতে আমদানির ক্ষেত্রে ৬০ দিন (০২ মাস)।
১১। অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী	ঃ দরপত্র তফসীলে বর্ণিত বিষয়সমূহ যথাযথভাবে পালনপূর্বক দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে।

বিঃ দ্রঃ কর্তৃপক্ষ কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে দরপত্রে উল্লেখিত দ্রব্যসামগ্রী/সরঞ্জামাদির পরিমাণ কমানো/বাড়ানো এবং যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ কিংবা বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

আইএসপিআর/সেনা/২০১৪/৩০২১
৩০/১২/১৪
জিডি-১৮

কমান্ড্যান্ট
এএসপিটিএস
ঢাকা সেনানিবাস

Rice bran oil raises hopes for cuts in imports

FROM PAGE B1

OCI entered this segment of cooking oil market through toll manufacturing in 2012, when only EOIL and Rashid Oil Mills had started extracting oil by using locally available rice bran. Now, there are around eight firms, including Bangladesh Edible Oil Ltd.

City Group of Industries, a leading cooking oil processor and marketer, is also set to make its entry to this segment of cooking oil.

Biswajit Das, general manager of City Group, said the company has already set up machinery for the plant.

"The number of health conscious buyers is rising by the day -- that's why we are going for rice bran oil."

The existing players too have expanded their production capacity on the back of the rising popularity.

EOIL, now listed on the bourses, increased its processing capacity last year and began production of its expanded unit in November last year. Currently, its total production capacity stands at 48 tonnes a day.

Islam said the company now produces around 40 tonnes of rice bran oil a day.

Stocks depressed by political nerves

FROM PAGE B1

Investors concentrated on large-cap shares, IDLC Investments said. Of the top ten most liquid stocks, five were large-cap.

Turnover, the most important indicator of the market, declined 6.8 percent to Tk 298 crore compared to the previous day.

A total of 0.82 lakh trades were executed with 7.09 crore shares and mutual fund units changing hands on the Dhaka bourse.

Gainers took a strong lead over losers by 148 to 120, while 43 remained unchanged

at the DSE floor that traded 311 issues.

Among the major sectors, pharma lost 0.24 percent, telecoms 0.64 percent, and tannery 0.17 percent.

Lafarge Surma featured in the most traded stocks chart with 12.73 lakh shares worth Tk 18 crore changing hands, followed by Desco, MJL Bangladesh and Beximco Pharma.

Altex Industries was the highest gainer of the day, posting a 10.07 percent gain, while Northern Jute Manufacturing Company was the worst loser, falling 8.29 percent.