

Better ties with India to boost Pak kinnow exports

The improved ties with India can benefit the Pakistani exporters in increasing exports of kinnow from Pakistan to India.

With the shortest land route access from main fruit producing areas of Pakistan and a huge population consuming kinnow, India can be the best market of export for the delicious winter fruit which starts in the first week of April 2013.

Trade can result in a win-win situation for kinnow exporters from Pakistan and consumers of the fruit in India who have to pay \$15 per 10kg for importing kinnows from Australia.

An official of Pakistan horticulture development and export stated that Indians rated Pakistani kinnow equal in value to Australian kinnow. By exporting kinnow to India, exporters can save a big portion of transportation expenditure as compared to other countries.

The export target of kinnow this year is 200,000 ton. Russia, Iran, Indonesia UAE, Ukraine, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, the Netherlands, Kuwait and CIS countries through Afghanistan are also among other kinnow importing countries from Pakistan.

Production estimates for the current season are 1.9 million ton as compared to last year's 1.8 million ton. Only 10% fruit is exported every year.

The reasons include huge post-harvest losses of up to 40% and inability of exporters to maintain quality standards to meet criteria of importing countries and shortage of financial resources.



India trumps Pakistan's Iran rice trade boom with oil rupees

Pakistan exported around 30,000 tonnes of rice, worth \$21 million directly to Iran in the second half of 2012 - a sharp fall from the last 12 months to the end of June 2012, when sales approached 140,000 tonnes, according to the Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP).



Pakistan's rice sales to the UAE, the main shipping route into Iran, also dropped sharply to less than 52,000 tonnes in the second half of 2012, compared to nearly 228,000 tonnes in the previous 12 months, REAP data showed.

Iran relies on imports for about 45% of its annual rice consumption of 2.9 million tonnes, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture data.

India is Tehran's biggest rice supplier but shipments were held up in early 2012 after Iranian buyers defaulted on payments. Many Indian suppliers then stopped sales on credit.

Tightened sanctions on shipping and bank transfers between Iran and India started a boom in Pakistani rice transported across the remote border into Iran by groups based in Quetta, according to the grains traders from Pakistan and India.

Rice flow from India is being routed through Dubai, with wholesalers there taking on the payment risk in return for a higher mark-up. Dubai's role in the India-Iran rice trade has withered since oil pool payments started.

From April 2011 to the end of March 2012, \$821 million of Indian rice was shipped to the United Arab Emirates,

more than anywhere else. But in just nine months from April to December last year Iran imported over \$725 million of Indian rice, up to 20 % in the previous 12 months, while Indian exports to the UAE slumped to \$287 million, as per the official figures.

Excessive Kinnow seeds fail to enter EU market

Harvest Tradings Chief Executive Officer Ahmad Jawad stated that Pakistan is losing the kinnow market in the EU due to excessive seeds, as the buyers seek seed-free fruit for easy eating. Neither the government nor the Pakistan Fruits and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchant Association have taken measures to educate the farmers about the latest techniques for producing fruits.



Pakistani growers should learn from their Turkish counterparts who, with seedless varieties, have managed to do well in the EU markets. Punjab Agriculture Department is considering to launch the seedless variety in Khanewal, which would separate the seedless and conventional production.

Pakistan exports 21,000 MT basmati in March 1st week

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Mr. Jawed Ali Ghori, Chairman Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP)



stated that during this fiscal year during July 2012 to March 2013, Pakistan has exported around 350,000 MT basmati rice and 2.0 million (mMT) non-basmati rice amounting to \$1.164 million.

The total rice exports from Pakistan, including basmati and non-basmati rice during July 2012 to February 2013, has touched more than \$1 billion mark, which in terms of weight stands at 214,2486 MT.

Efforts of the Rice Exports Corporation of Pakistan to boost export of Pakistani rice has started yielding positive results as Tanzania and China have emerged as major Pakistani rice importing countries and a potential market for all varieties of rice.

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Recent rain boon for wheat, other crops

The recent spell of rains would prove beneficial for the wheat crop, which has been cultivated over 20 million acres of land in the country.

Pakistan Agri Fourm chairman Muhammad Ibrahim Mughal stated that the recent rains would increase wheat production by up to 7 to 8 lac tonnes and it would be the equivalent of Rs 10 to 12 billion for farmers.



He further added that the recent rains were not only a good omen for wheat crop, but it would also be beneficial for gram crops, vegetables, fodder, sunflower and Canola. He said that the Punjab Food department should ensure the procurement of 4 million tonnes of wheat.

Ibrahim Mughal urged the Punjab Food department and PASSCO to set up 750 wheat procurement centres, adding that of the total wheat which PASSCO would procure, one million tonne should be sent to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and 0.5 million tonne of wheat should be dispatched to Balochistan and provide wheat to people as per their demands and needs.

He said stern actions should be taken to keep the middlemen in check.

TCP awards 310,000 MT sugar purchase contracts

Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) has awarded purchase contracts for a further quantity of 310,000 metric tonnes (MT) sugar to 69 local sugar mills on the lowest bid price of Rs 52,800 per MT. According to TCP, the tender for purchase of 330,000 MT sugar was floated on December 14, 2012 in pursuance of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC)



decision. In response 71 responsive bids were received for a total quantity of 650,000 MT. Kamaliya Sugar Mills and Huda Sugar Mills offered the lowest rates of Rs 52,800 per PMT for a quantity of 10,000 MT each, which were accepted and the award letters were issued to both mills accordingly.

To complete the procurement of total targeted quantity of 330,000 MT, the rest of the 69 responsive bidders were offered the option of price matching, all of whom consented to match the lowest price of Rs 52,800 PMT for a total quantity of 630,000 MT as against the balance required quantity of 310,000 MT. Hence the purchase contracts were awarded on pro-rata basis to all the 69 sugar mills at the lowest price of Rs 52,800 MT.

Wheat procurement target increased

District Food Controller Sajid Hussain stated that the Food Department had increased the target of wheat procurement by 14% in district Multan.

Talking to sources he said that the Food Department Multan would purchase 2,27,000 metric tonne wheat through 16 purchase centres in the current wheat season, while a wheat purchase target of about 1,99,000 metric tonne was set last year.



Higher freight rates limiting Pakistan's exports

Pakistani fruit and vegetable exporters have accused shipping companies of discrimination, suggesting their Indian counterparts are receiving preferential treatment. Indian exporters are being offered lower freight rates, making products grown in Pakistan uncompetitive in the global market.

Pakistani vegetable exporter Haji Shahjahan stated that a significant variance in freight rates has become most evident since mango, kinnow and potato exports commenced earlier this year. Shahjahan claimed Indian exporters pay US\$1,400 per 40ft container destined for Malaysia, while Pakistani exporters were forced to pay upto US\$2,000 for the same service. He suggested the differen-



tial is about US \$400 for services to the Middle East. Shahjahan believes the monopoly a small number of shipping companies hold in the Pakistan market has given them a free reign to impose higher fixed rates compared to India.

Foreign companies are exploiting Pakistani exporters, thereby forcing them to pay higher freight charges for no fault of theirs.

Pakistan can export food items to South Sudan

State Investment Authority South Sudan Chairperson Joseph Kulang John has urged the rice exporters of Pakistan to establish links with importers of agricultural commodities of his country especially those importing rice to encash upon the huge potential of up to 0.4 million

tons rice market of Pakistan.

He made these observations during his visit to the head office of Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP). He was accompanied by the Director General of South Sudan's Ministry of Finance and Economic Development John Ijiru Lako. Former REAP Vice Chairman Taufiq Ahmad Khan and Pir Nazim Hussain Shah welcomed the distinguished guests and highlighted the efforts made by the Association for enhancing rice exports from Pakistan.

Joseph Kulang John stated that although South Sudan is a new country, it has a sound financial system that allows businessmen to do their businesses in an environment conducive to cooperation with foreign traders. He added that he had seen Pakistani products, especially rice, while Sudan was one country and he used to live in Khartoum.

He further added that South Sudan is an oil-based economy, enriched with natural reserves such as petroleum and others. Being a new country, South Sudan is dependent for its food requirements, with opportunities for exporting food items such as wheat flour, rice, lentils and sugar.

At present Pakistani products are reaching the country through a third party. He said direct links with exporters of rice and other agricultural commodities with his country's importers will help both sides.

South Sudan's State Investment Authority Chairperson said that they were also importing cement for their construction needs. REAP former Vice Chairman Taufiq Ahmad Khan told the visiting guests that their association was the second biggest trade body of the country. Its members were exporting rice to over 100 countries and exports include different varieties such as premium quality Basmati.

Ned-Pak Technical Packaging & Instruments

NEDGLISH was established in 1991 in a small town internationally known for flowers trade, Aalsmeer. They became a major contributor for the long distance

packaging & logistics of fresh produce by reefers from South America to Netherlands.



Ned-Pak, was established in 2011 to export fresh produce by sea instead of by air from Pakistan over long distances. In addition, services commenced in 2012 for the Post Harvest Technology & Solutions in order to support the fresh produce exports for extending the shelf life, as well as to improve the cool chain management & packaging. Products supporting the extension of shelf life, for example specialized bags & cartons, are produced in EU. Supporting materials including temperature data loggers, Anti-sprouting (Ethylene) are inducted to support potatoes, apples, etc. Web shop has become a very important feature providing instruments which are not easily available in Pakistan at one platform.

Successful results on Kinnow have proven shelf life extension for two months in ambient temperature, so the packaging in MAP bags will bring a saving in 2013/14 electricity bill of over US \$20 million. This will make Kinnow more competitive in the International markets. Common people in domestic market will also benefit 20% lower prices.

Mango 2013, likewise, has been targeted with the "Bags & Cartons" project for the long distance exports, with a target of 200 tons and 1000 tons for domestic distribution and network. The open top ledge tray, universally used for a better presentation, will bring savings up to 25% in logistics. It shall make the major Pakistani population enjoy the seasonal fruit of short span to a longer span with 10% lower prices.

Fresha Bags, specially designed for the

domestic kitchen will save 20% of the family budget of a family on the vegetables and fruit along with savings on electric bill.

The wastages which shall be controlled by using this technology can save Pakistan US \$1 Billion for the year 2013, which shall facilitate the buying power of the Pakistani common man.

Food exports increase by 9.22% in 8 months

The food exports of the country during first eight months of current fiscal year (2012-13) increased by 9.22%. The exports of overall food group were recorded at US \$2.963 billion during July-February (2012-13) against the exports of US \$2.713 billion during July-February (2011-12).

According to data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the food exports of the country on a month to month basis also increased by 10.71% during February 2013 against same period of last year, whereas when compared to January 2013, the food exports during February decreased by 20.23%.

The food exports increased from US \$368.456 in February 2012 to \$407.905 in February 2013, while the exports in January 2013 were recorded at \$511.326 million.

The major food items which recorded increase in their exports during the first eight months of current fiscal year include sugar (100%, meat and meat preparations (31.3%), oil seeds, nuts and kernels (25.07%), spices (39.33pc%), vegetables (51.08%, fruits (1.82%) and fish & fish preparation (2.48%).



The overall exports from the country witnessed positive growth of 4.99% increasing from \$15.128 billion during July-February (2012-13) to \$15.883 billion in 2013.

Decrease in Oil & Food stuff imports

Country's oil and edibles import bill has decreased by over 3.44% since August 2012, suggests data issued by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

The import of these two commodities fell to \$14.428bn in July-March 2013, compared to \$14.941bn in 2012. As a result of this decline, overall import during the period under review witnessed a paltry growth.

Food groups emerged second after oil import bill in the period under review, but its bill declined by over 11.91% to \$3.351bn in July-March this year from \$3.804bn over the corresponding period of last year.

Within the food group, import of milk, palm oil, sugar, pulses and all other food items also experienced a decline.

Tea and soyabean oil witnessed an increase during the period under review over last year. Statistics show that oil import bill reached \$11.078bn in July-March 2013 as against \$11.137bn in 2012, indicating a decline of 0.53%.

Furthermore, the import of crude oil also declined by 17.14% to \$4.051bn in July-March 2013 as against \$4.889bn in 2012.

Import of petroleum products increased by 12.47% to \$7.027bn this year as against \$6.248bn last year.

The biggest factor for increase in demand for import of petroleum products was that refineries had not been fully utilising their capacity.

Sindh to reap Bumper Mango Crop

Sindh is likely to reap a bumper mango crop of around 0.4 million tonnes this season, despite losses due to recent rains and hailstorms in some areas.

The Horticulture Institute in Mirpurkhas has estimated the mango



output at 0.4m tonnes against 396,137 tonnes in 2012.

Sources confirmed that despite some loss to the mango clusters in some areas, the crops are in healthy condition and expected to produce quality mangoes.

More growers have adapted to banana and mango cultivation which has of late emerged as major cash fruits being a better choice in terms of income in domestic and foreign markets.

The production of mangoes in the province increased to 396,137 tonnes in 2012 against 391,781 tonnes in 2011.

Mango is grown in all districts except Jacobabad, Kashmore and Qambar Shahdadkot, where the climate is not suitable for the fruit.

Mirpurkhas has the highest mango-growing district area with 12,196 hectares under mango gardens. This is followed by Tando Allahyar with 9,984 hectares.

"Sindhri" being the main mango, is a popular product in the export market and earns a good deal of foreign exchange for the country. It is known for its large size and unique fragrance. Whereas "Langhra" and "Chausna" are the other varieties.

The Crop Protection Department (CPD) has reported no major disease in



mango clusters, except some common diseases such as powdery mildew, emflorance, and didact, which can easily be controlled through proper insect sprays.

Director CPD Bashir Kerio said that the auction of mango gardens in early stages of ripening is a main cause of diseases in the fruit clusters. The contractors buying clusters do not bother spending money on sprays after the sale deal is finalized with the grower. Australian experts are helping mango growers on modern techniques of horticulture on how to check diseases and improve production.

The growers are advised to have regular pruning of thick mango clusters in order to expose the fruit to the sun and fresh air, which has a healthy impact on the fruit.

Meanwhile, the mango growers have had complaints against lack of incentives from the agriculture department which directs all subsidies to the cash cereal crops like wheat, rice and cotton.

The department held a mango exhibition in Dubai last year where Sindhri and other varieties were displayed. The show was the cause of attraction to a huge crowd and thus, yielded a sizeable foreign exchange income.

Low-level investment in agriculture

Over the last five years, the agriculture sector received an impetus from support prices for food crops and removal of discords on water distribution among provinces.

But despite devolution of agriculture to the provincial level effective from FY10, public sector investment in agriculture remained low.

However, the market demands induced both local and foreign private sector investment in food and food processing, beverages, dairy and meat sectors.

For instance, last month, Nestle Pakistan completed a \$104 million new milk powder drying facility in Sheikhpura, Punjab boosting production

by 30,000 tonnes per year.

Executive Vice President of Nestle Joz Lopez, who performed the ground breaking ceremony of the project, told media that Nestle had plans to invest \$50-\$60 million more by December 2013. He said that growth in local demand of processed and packed milk was enough to continue to expand business here.

Public sector investment in agriculture almost always attracts private sector investment as well, said a senior official of Engro Foods, the company that has made multi-billion rupees investment in last few years in food, food processing and dairy sectors.

Over the last few years the private sector has made sizable investment even though no big public sector investment has taken place.

Growth in private sector investment in agriculture had contracted 2.6 % in FY08 but it leapfrogged 15.2% and 11.8% in FY09 and FY10 respectively before moderating to 5.7% in FY11 and showed a decline of 6.1% in FY12, chiefly due to base effect of previous years.



Over the last few years, private sector investment has been utilized for animal husbandry and livestock development, dairy farming, poultry birds-raising, meat processing, preservation of shelf lives of fruits and vegetables, ginning and rice milling, etc. Part of this investment has been made by businessmen-cum-politicians and part of it has come from new entrepreneurs. Foreign agencies like USAID have also sponsored, or cooperated with the initiators of new agricultural development projects. A recent example is that of giving 129 motorbikes to young men in Multan who would be travelling in remotest areas under an artificial insemination project aimed at raising cows and



buffalos, capable of producing more milk. An Australian company is training shepherds in Balochistan for better herding of goats and sheep.

But construction of modern silos for better storage of crops, on-farm water management and development of new high-yield varieties of seeds have not received enough investment, either from the private or the public sector. However, some initiatives have been taken in this regard, particularly in Sindh and Punjab.

Public sector investment in agriculture had shown a huge decline of 43.5% in FY08 but had fallen just 1.5% in FY09. It witnessed an impressive growth of 17.2% in FY10 due to both - base effect and also because of higher spending by the government in relation to rehabilitation of agricultural land and productivity after the July-September 2010 floods. However, in FY11 public sector investment in agriculture sector again fell 3.3%, but rebounded at 4.1% in FY12.

The behaviour of both public and private sector investments in agriculture has been erratic over the last five years.

A cursory look at foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows show that defying the overall trend of decline in FDI in the last five years, inflows in food, food packaging and beverages industries have attracted \$182m in FY09 and have never seen a net decline during FY08-12.

A \$30 million agricultural project in Sindh under a joint venture with Competition Support Fund and a \$40 million crop raising project in Balochistan sponsored by the UAE government are among some of the ongoing efforts for increasing agricultural productivity in provinces.

Punjab has taken lead in this area and

the establishment of five model livestock development farms in the rangelands of Cholistan desert, on the basis of community-participation, which has come up as a landmark project.

The Punjab government has also signed accords with a number of foreign companies from countries such as Australia, Malaysia, USA, UAE, Thailand and Turkey to boost farming outputs and for development of horticulture, dairy and meat sectors. In Sindh sizable local investment has been made in fish farming and meat processing.

In Balochistan, a federally-funded project is underway to run 800 out of the total 1500 tube-wells on solar energy. Moving ahead, Balochistan government is also considering installing 20 solar-powered water boosting pumps across the province.

In their 2013 manifestos, both PPP and PML (N) have laid out clear strategies as to what they will do to promote agriculture if they come to power. All the promises made are by and large practical and well-integrated. PML (N) has vowed to turn agriculture "into a fully viable economic industry by changing the policy framework and terms of trade in favour of the farming community." It has specified a number of proposed measures to realise this objective. And PPP has resolved to set up agricultural markets at tehsil/taluka levels and to start issuing agricultural policy on the eve of every year, wherein support prices of major crops and intended subsidies on farm inputs would be announced.

Poor orchard management

To get excellent results in anything proper management of available resources is imperative. Same is the case with plants, especially fruit trees, which need care at every stage.

Unfortunately, fruit orchards are harshly treated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in general and Peshawar valley, in particular. Regular surveys of the orchards of peach, apricot, plum and pear in the different parts of Peshawar valley show that our orchard owners want to earn more and more at the cost of the health of the fruit

trees. The result is a constant decline of fruit orchards over the last three years.

In most cases, one finds excessive intercropping in the orchards without proper space and ditches for the fruit trees, which often results in excessive moisture in the root zone. This in turn reduces the nutrients available for the trees as they are taken away by intercropping vegetation.

The type of intercropping also matters a lot. In Peshawar valley, mostly vegetables, and in some cases, sugarcane is intercropped and that too in a very injudicious fashion disturbing the physiology and health of fruit plants.

Excessive weeds also make matters worse as they act as harbour for over seasoning pathogens. Even too much application of fungicides does not work as the pathogens get harboured in the weeds and thus escape and attack the plants.

With improper crop husbandry practices, it is not possible to maximise output or improve quality of fruits. To get improved results, it is time our orchard owners strictly follow some of the simple, but important suggestions based on years of experience.

First and foremost, orchards should be completely cleaned of weeds as they harbour over seasoning pathogens and insects, and interfere with physiology and health of the fruit trees by diverting their nutrients.

The choice and management of intercropping crops in the orchard is very important. Crops that take away the nutrients from the soil like sugarcane and cereals should be avoided. It is better to go for vegetables especially leguminous vegetables which add nutrients and increase the fertility of soil and are cash crops.

Proper fertilisation of the fruit orchards is also an important issue. Application of nitrogen and phosphorus to the orchards is a normal practice but very few know the role and importance of potash fertiliser because it is normally ignored.

Along with the recommended doses of nitrogen and phosphorus, potash should be regularly applied as it increases

resistance of the plants towards pathogen's attack while enhancing the quality of the fruit produced.

The irrigation frequency of the fruit trees is a sensitive issue. In the normal practice, fruit trees have no regular schedule for irrigation. Whenever water is available, orchards are irrigated without knowing whether or not trees need to be irrigated.

Before going for irrigation, the roots of at least 25% trees in an orchard should be checked for moisture level. If moisture level is above 80% (root zone wet), plants do not need to be irrigated. In this case, the excessive moisture level creates oxygen deficiency and soil inhabitants start reproducing and feeding on the roots and make them rot.

The roots are then unable to absorb nutrients and the excess water slowly and gradually results in wilting and decline of fruit trees, which farmers normally believe to be due to lack of water.

When moisture level is below 10 percent (root zone almost dry), the plants should be irrigated.

Wheat crop estimates 2013-14

Wheat production pattern is largely driven by the nature of soil, timely availability of key inputs such as irrigation water, seed and fertiliser, future prices of the commodity, weather condition and crop husbandry throughout the growth period of the crop.

Preliminary wheat crop estimates for the current season generated by the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) system of crop monitoring through satellite technology, reveals a bumper harvest. Wheat produc-



tion of 26.3 million tonnes is unprecedented, of which about 75% will be produced in Punjab. Average national yield has been worked out at 2.8 tonnes per hectare, with the highest in Punjab (2.94 tonnes per hectare) and the lowest in Balochistan (2.38 tonnes per hectare).

Wheat production will be 12.5% more than last year, and even higher than the highest production of 25.2 million tonnes achieved in 2010-11. This will not only ensure food security, but also provide over two million tonnes in exportable surpluses with declining world wheat stocks, thus earning foreign exchange. The additional production of two million tonnes of wheat is a great breakthrough in the presence of very precarious balance of production and consumption.

The government has tried to offer a good price to generate better productivity. A lucrative price of Rs 950 per 40kg announced for 2008-09 was retained till 2011-12, when it was further moved up to Rs1,050 per 40 kg due to an escalation in input prices. The main objective of the high support price policy was to achieve domestic food security. For the current wheat crop, the support price has been enhanced to the level of Rs1,200 per 40 kg.

A close look at the analysis carried out by the Agriculture Policy Institute suggested an import parity price of Rs1,717 and Rs1,637 per 40 kg for Punjab and Sindh respectively. The cost of production was worked out at around Rs1,040 per 40 kg.

Cumulative phosphate fertiliser use for the first three months of Rabi season has been reported at 313,000 tonnes; an amount up by 19.7% against the previous Rabi season. Field reports suggested a high usage of certified seed of wheat, and reported shortages in the market due to high demand, in contrast to the last season.

The most crucial input to contemplate any biological activity is water. Since 90% of the wheat crop is irrigated, timely availability of irrigation water remains a decisive factor for realising a good harvest. During the last monsoon, Mangla reservoir remained unfilled at 1,207 feet against 1,210 feet. This translated into

11.3% shortages in Jehlam-Chenab zone for Punjab in the present season. However, the overall irrigation water supply from October to February increased by 1.2 million acre feet, compared to the previous season.

The ongoing season is an appropriate one with regard to receiving rains. It received around 13 rains of varying intensity from December 2012 to March 2013, spread over almost the entire country. This kept moisture available at critical wheat growth stages at all times, and ambient temperature in the cool range, which is required to support a high biological yield of the wheat plant.

A very important factor, among others, is the condition of supplying wheat to the procurement centres in bags, which are issued through involvement of revenue department officials. In this situation, small farmers have no choice but to sell their produce at reduced prices, leaving their profit margin further reduced.

Pakistani resumes seafood-supply to EU after 6 years

The European Union (EU) has decided to resume imports of Pakistani seafood to its markets, hence marking another step forward in improving EU-Pakistan relations as per the EU ambassador.

This decision puts an end to a six year long voluntary ban of exports of seafood products to the EU by the Marine Fisheries Department of Pakistan.

The voluntary ban imposed by the fisheries department was the result of the EU Food and Veterinary Office identifying serious deficiencies in the official control system for seafood, including the traceability and hygiene at various stages of the industrial process.

Commencing from March 2013, two major companies which have been approved by the Marine Fisheries Department will begin exporting the products. Other local companies can then seek to be certified to export seafood to the European bloc, which is Pakistan's largest trading partner.

Mr. Lars-Gunnar Wigemark, the EU Ambassador to Pakistan stated that this is a real breakthrough that should also inspire other industries in Pakistan to increase their exports to EU markets.

He further added that it is the result of the EU and Pakistan's joint efforts to facilitate increased trade by meeting EU product standards. Resuming Pakistani seafood exports to the EU will further promote the already strong bilateral trade relations and support job creation in Pakistan. Thus, when the ban was introduced in 2007, Pakistani seafood exports to EU markets stood at 50 million euro (Rs6.5 billion) per year.

He stated that there was potential for the figure to rise. Trade in fisheries products will also promote trade diversification – exports to Europe have so far remained focused on textiles. ♦

