

## **Biratnagar becomes largest export gateway of the country**

Biratnagar Customs Office became the largest export gateway of the country in the first eight months of FY 2017/18, a recent trade data published by the Department of Customs shows.

Nepal exported goods worth Rs 16.33 billion through the customs point the first eight months of the last fiscal year - 30.58 percent of the country's total exports. Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) Customs Office, which was the country's largest gateway in the review period of FY2016/17, stood in the second position with total exports of Rs 14.75 billion or 27.62 percent of the total exports, the data shows.

In the first eight months of FY2016/17, TIA Customs Office saw exports worth Rs 13.97 billion, or 29.04 percent of total exports, compared to Rs 13.93 billion, or 28.95 percent of total exports, through Biratnagar Customs Office.

According to the data, total worth of goods handled by Biratnagar Customs Office increased year-on-year by 17.2 percent in the first eight months of FY2017/18.

The country exported goods worth Rs 53.42 billion in the first eight months of FY2017/18 - a rise of 10.96 percent more than the previous fiscal year, the data shows. Total export in the same period of FY2016/17 through 16 customs offices across the country was worth Rs 48.14 billion. The customs offices -- Jaleshwar, Kanchanpur and Siraha - did not see any export at all in the review period.

Meanwhile, the country's import and export ratio in the first eight months of FY 2017/18 stood at a record 14.4:1 which means Nepal imports 14.4 times of what it exports. Total exports increased by a whopping 22.28 percent to Rs 767 billion in the first eight months of 2016/17. According to the data, Nepal had imported goods worth Rs 627 billion in the first eight months of FY 2016/17.

Revenue Secretary Shishir Dhungana said that exports via Biratnagar Customs Office is increasing as the eastern city has seen improvement in infrastructure like road networks in recent years. "It is natural for exporters to choose easier route," he added.

Dhungana also said that both agro and non-agro products have been exported via Biratnagar Customs Office in huge quantity "Export of products like corrugated sheets and cardamom

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increased significantly," he added. "However, what matters most is the volume of exports, not from where the goods are being an exporter."

Source : My Republica, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018