

Khartoum, Sudan, December 9 (Infosplusgabon) - Sudan on Saturday decided to freeze imports of at least 19 commodities, under a policy seeking to shrink demand for hard currency

The government has recently been holding meetings, headed by president Omar Bashir, on how to curb demands for foreign currency and to help stop the sharp down fall of the value of the Sudanese currency, the pound, against major international currencies like the dollar.

The ministry of trade has decided to bar the importation of 19 commodities, including meat product, live animal, dairy products (save powered milk and baby powder milk), juice, fruits and vegetable, cacao, spaghettis, oil, artificial flowers, toes and sponge mattresses, among others.

The ministry said the move follows government's efforts to redress the trade balance deficit.

The ministry said the ban is, however, not forever, hinting that if need be one or two commodities might be removed from the ban list.

Sudan bans importation of 19 commodities

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It said the decision is valid from the date of its signing, but cautioned that the status of commodities that have been already shipped and on their way to the country, will be remedied.

Early last month, the government decided to crack down on hard currency black market in Khartoum where the value of the Sudanese pound went down to a record 29 pounds for one US dollar.

The government said this was not the real value of the currency, but a result of hoarding and black marketeering.

An unspecified number of persons involved in hard currency black market were arrested and those who fled the country are being sought.

Early this month, the Sudanese central bank froze dozens of hard currency accounts belonging to persons dealing in hard currency black markets, according to the official media.

But the ministry did not say how much this will spare in hard currency.

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