

S. Korea sees growth in capital goods, raw materials exports

SEOUL, Dec. 16 (Xinhua) -- South Korean economy has seen a continued growth in exports of capital goods and raw materials over the past decade that offset a reduction in consumer goods, a government report showed Sunday.

According to the Ministry of Knowledge Economy, the proportion of capital goods exports to the total posted 48.7 percent in 2011, up from 41.6 percent in 2001. The portion for raw materials such as steel and chemical products increased from 29.1 percent to 36.3 percent over the cited period, but the one for consumer goods such as electronics and automobiles decreased from 29.2 percent to 14.9 percent.

The ministry attributed such change to the country's industrial structure acceleration from light industry to heavy chemical industry as well as to an expansion of production in overseas factories that caused an increase in exports of parts and equipments.

Shipments of parts and components reached 255.3 billion U.S. dollars in 2011, more than four times from 61.98 billion dollars in 2001, according to the ministry.

Exports to China, South Korea's No.1 trading partner, showed the proportion of capital goods and raw materials increasing over the past decade. General machinery exports to China jumped 910 million dollars in 2001 to 4.12 billion dollars in 2011, with those for steel products rising from 910 million dollars to 8.24 billion dollars over the same period. Shipments of oil products surged 1.01 billion dollars to 15.08 billion dollars over the cited period, with the figure for petrochemical products advancing from 1.03 billion dollars to 4.95 billion dollars.

Meanwhile, an expansion of overseas production caused growth in exports of related parts and components, the ministry said.

The proportion of car production in overseas plants by local automakers accounted for a mere 3.3 percent of the total in 2001, but the figure surged to 40.3 percent in 2011. In line with the change, auto parts exports jumped from 2.22 billion dollars in 2001 to 23.08 billion dollars in 2011.

The expansion in overseas production tended to boost exports in related parts, reducing negative impact on the overall exports, but further growth of production in overseas plants would drive down export momentum due to the expected growth in overseas procurement of related parts, the ministry cautioned.