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## Pakistan Customs Uncovers Massive Luxury Car Scam

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A recent audit by Pakistan's Directorate General of Customs Post Clearance Audit (PCA) has exposed what is being described as the largest trade-based money laundering case in the nation's history. The extensive 127-page report, covering December 2024 to March 2025, has uncovered large-scale under-invoicing and tax evasion in the import of luxury vehicles through the country's faceless clearance system.

According to the findings, importers manipulated customs declarations to drastically undervalue high-end vehicles, evading billions in duties and taxes. Among the most glaring

cases was the import of a 2023 Toyota Land Cruiser, which has a market value of over Rs10 million but was cleared through customs at a declared value of just Rs17,635. The report strongly suggests this was done with the collusion of customs officers.

The audit reviewed 1,335 imported vehicles and found significant discrepancies between declared and actual values. While importers claimed a total import value of Rs670 million, the real worth was assessed at more than Rs7.25 billion. In many cases, the declared value was over Rs1 million less per vehicle than market estimates.

As a result of this manipulation, only Rs1.29 billion in customs duties and taxes were paid. The audit estimates that Rs18.78 billion in duties were illegally evaded.

In addition, the PCA report raised serious concerns about the method of payment. Not a single importer could produce documentation proving that payments for these luxury vehicles were made via legitimate banking channels from abroad. This has triggered suspicions that transactions were facilitated through illegal hawala or hundi systems, both of which are often linked to money laundering and informal cross-border financing networks.

The audit has sparked calls for deeper investigations, with growing pressure on authorities to identify and prosecute not only the importers but also any customs officials involved in enabling the fraud.

The scandal highlights major flaws in Pakistan's automated clearance infrastructure, raising questions about oversight and accountability in high-value import transactions. As the case unfolds, it is likely to draw significant public and legal scrutiny, with potential implications for trade policy and enforcement reforms.