

Exporters demand restoration of zero-rated status

KARACHI: Leaders of five export-oriented industries on Saturday demanded immediate restoration of zero-rated facility under SRO 1125 and withdrawal of 17 per cent sales tax on all exports that was imposed in Budget 2019-20.

A protest rally which culminated at the Karachi Press Club (KPC) saw industrial workers carrying banners and wearing black bands on their arms, demanding continuation of the zero-rated status for exports.

Protests were also held in Faisalabad, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Multan and Gujarat.

Speaking at the KPC, business leader Zubair Motiwala said that representative bodies of the five sectors textile, leather, carpets, sports good and surgical instruments will continue to protest on daily basis. If the government does not pay attention to our grievances, the industries would be left with no choice but to observe 'NoExport Days' as a sign of protest and eventually shutdown industries.

Other business leaders present on the occasion included Shabir Ahmed, Jawed Bilwani, Saleem Parakh, Jawed Akhtar, Rafiq Godial, Muslim Mohammadi, Sheikh Shafiq, Shujat Ali, Naim Kohkar, Aslam Karsaz and FPCCI VicePresident Muslim Mohammadi.

Calling it the 'IMF Budget', the leaders alleged that the budget was a planned conspiracy to destroy the entire export industry.

They recalled previous governments imposed 1-2pc sales tax on the five zero-rated export sectors. The imposition of 17pc tax by the sitting government is a bomb which will destroy entire value-added exports and result in mass scale unemployment in the country, they claimed.

The leaders alleged that this was being done in order to hide the inefficiency of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) which has badly failed to broaden tax net.

By Parvaiz Ishfaq Rana