

\$27 million knitwear exports at stake: PHMA seeks SNGPL's support to achieve export target

The value-added knitwear industry, which was already finding it hard to operate smoothly due to multiple reasons, had another deadly blow as the Sui Northern Gas Pipe Line (SNGPL) authorities are creating hurdles in the way of the largest foreign exchange earning sector of the country.

Pakistan Hosiery Manufactures & Exporters Association (PHMA) Chairman, Adil Butt stated that the SNGPL, instead of facilitating the industry to achieve the PTI government ambitious export target of \$27 billion by June 30, 2019, is creating hurdles to provide smooth supply of gas to the knitwear units in Punjab.

He said that the knitwear manufacturer, providing dying services to more than 25 garment units, with total export of over \$27 million, has been complaining of low gas pressure to the authorities concerned for the last two years.

The knitwear manufacturer had applied just for a transfer of the gas connection to avoid extremely low gas pressure. The industry had fulfilled all legal formalities while feasibility report was completed and technical survey had also been conducted and the gas utility company had approved the reconnection of gas supply from other location, yet the authorities are using delaying tactics to issue the gas supply from the new sight.

He said that it is good that the government is committed to strengthen national economy and introduce new reforms in economy and trying to facilitate the export-oriented textile industry. He said that owing to the prudent policies of incumbent government, the country's exports witnessed an increase of \$1 billion in the past six months, urging the SNGPL authorities to also support this national cause instead of creating obstacles.

Adil Butt observed that the government was taking practical steps for economic revival through facilitation to the industry but the wide scale mismanagement of the SNGPL is yielding negative impact on the national economy and hurting industrial investment of billions of dollars, which was being sinking.

He pointed out that the gas utility was intentionally creating hurdles in smooth running of the textile industry by minimizing the gas pressure.

PHMA chairman was critical of the SNGPL for failing to implement the decision of the government to fully support the textile industry on energy supply in the larger economic interest of the country. According to him, the SNGPL has not only negated the spirit of the government but also made a mockery of the situation by using delaying tactics for smooth gas supply to the industry.

Adil Butt said that the gas utility seems to stay calm and composed of all the hue and cry from the stakeholders. It is the fact that in the current global scenario and stiff international competition, exporters are struggling hard day and night, despite heavy odds against them battling to toe the line

and meet their export commitments with stringent demands from their foreign buyers. But unfortunately, it seems that the SNGPL does not care as to how important it is for the exporters to earn the much needed foreign exchange for the nation.

Especially, exporters of textile are facing a lot of problems, because they are not able to produce and export textile products in the given time frame.

Adil Butt urged the ministry for petroleum and natural resources to intervene and direct the SNGPL to implement the government decision immediately in letter and spirit to avert production, employment and export losses.

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