

Cotton production falls to 8.6m bales

MULTAN: Cotton production fell by 20.12 per cent to 8.6 million bales till January 15 this season against 10.7m bales in the same period last year, the Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) said on Tuesday.

In its fortnightly report, the PCGA noted that the production of cotton bales went down by 2.153m in the current season.

The country is likely to miss the target of 9.5m bales.

According to the PCGA figures till Feb 15, Punjab suffered cotton production losses by up to 22.7pc, followed by Sindh with 16.3.

Punjab produced 5.074m bales against last year's 6.5m bales, highlighting a shortfall of 1.5m bales.

Sindh produced 3.5m bales against last year's 4.2m bales, with a shortfall of 0.7m bales.

Till February 15, ginning factories produced 8.5m bales during the current season.

Textile sector and exporters purchased 7.8m bales and 5.9m bales, respectively.

Total 71 factories remained functional in Sindh and Punjab. Of these, 62 units are in Punjab and nine in Sindh.

Last year during this period 102 factories were functional.

The unsold stock available with the ginning factories is 694,717 bales which was 1.3m bales during the last year.

This year's stock is 47.4 per cent less as compared to last year. The shortfall of phutti (seed cotton) is 11.9pc.

Cotton analyst Naseem Usman said the government must ensure provision of quality cotton seed to farmers for next crop otherwise the situation will be much worse.

`It is being expected that sowing process in lower Sindh will partially begin in March.

Unfortunately so far no proper working has been done by the government institutions for the provision of good quality seed to farmers,` he added.

He said that cultivation of sugar in cotton sowing area is another major factor which is affecting production.