

PBIF chief says export industry of Sialkot should be bailed out

KARACHI: President of Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum, Mian Zahid Hussain, has said that the export industry of Sialkot should be bailed out as it is facing some serious issues.

Foreign buyers have withheld payments while refunds are stuck which have resulted in serious liquidity crunch for a number of industries, including apparel, sports goods, gloves, surgical instruments, leather garments and hosiery industries, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain warned that the volume of exports from Sialkot could drop by almost one billion dollars if its problems were ignored by the authorities.

Talking to the exporters from Sialkot, the veteran business leader said that the government should save hundreds of small and medium industrial units from closure and thousands of people from unemployment by restoring the zero-rating facility for the above-mentioned sectors.

He noted that exports and remittances were already declining therefore the matters contributing to further drop should be taken seriously or the government would miss its export target of 25 billion dollars by a wide margin.

He also warned that exports from Sialkot could fall by over 35 percent as foreign buyers had not yet paid for the merchandise shipped to them during the months of January, February and March.

Presently, the export industry had been facing hardships in paying utility bills and salaries.

Discontinuation of the zero-rating facility had only contributed to problems, liquidity issues and corruption. Therefore, the decision should be reversed in the national interest as no one would be interested in establishing new industrial units while the survival of the existing units remained at stake, he said.