

By Our Correspondent

Textile industry demands resumption of oil supply

LAHORE: The Ministry of Energy should take immediate measures to ensure the resumption of furnace oil supply, which has been suspended for the past several weeks, said All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (Aptma) Punjab Chairman Adil Bashir.

In a statement addressed to Federal Energy Minister Omar Ayub Khan on Monday, Bashir stressed that a smooth and uninterrupted supply of furnace oil to the textile industry was of paramount importance.

“The industry is heavily dependent on heavy fuel oil not only for operating captive power plants but also for running steam boilers required for different manufacturing processes such as dyeing, drying and heating,” he said.

Bashir added that the cost of fuel had to be paid in advance to oil marketing companies (OMCs) but they had still halted supplies for the last several weeks without a genuine reason.

He pointed out that oil was a critical and essential input and delay in furnace oil supply had adversely affected operations of the textile sector, which resumed work just last month after several weeks due to the Covid-19-induced lockdown. He stressed that the industry’s only demand from oil companies was that they should supply the oil for which payment had been made in advance. “Our exports plunged 64% in April and 36% in May 2020 compared to the corresponding months of preceding year,” he noted.

At this critical juncture, the textile industry could not afford obstacles to the manufacturing process such as unavailability of fuel, he said.

“Unavailability of furnace oil will exacerbate Pakistan’s economic woes,” Bashir voiced fear, adding that the present oil crisis would have a negative impact on exports and the economy.