

Government urged to ensure SMEs representation in committee

SIALKOT: Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRGMEA) has urged the government to ensure maximum representation of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the textile committee for formulation of next five-year policy.

Talking to APP on Thursday, PRGMEA Chief Coordinator Ijaz A Khokhar said that Sialkot has become the fourth largest producer of readymade garments and sportswear, particularly in martial arts uniforms, but excluded from representation in the textile committee.

Special incentive was announced in the previous textile policy, but the businessmen were not provided the same for the promotion of value-addition of textile sector, he said.

"We request the prime minister to look into the matter and ensure the representation of SMEs in the committee, enabling them to play their role in the formulation of the new textile policy."

He said exports of the value-added garment sector grew 11.22 percent in 2017/18 despite internal and external challenges.

The sector was a major taxpayer, the largest employment generator in the entire textile chain and exports goods worth up to \$5.5 billion, he added.

Khokhar urged the government to take immediate steps for discouraging exports of raw materials and encourage export of value-added products.

The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) should facilitate the

value-added textile exporters by allowing and giving directives to the authorised dealers to make import advance payments against irrevocable letters of credit (LCs) up to 100 percent of the value of the goods and up to \$10,000 per invoice for the import of all eligible items without the requirement of LC or bank guarantee from the supplier abroad, he added.

The government should announce a clear policy for the clearance of all pending refund claims of exporters, he said.

"Indeed China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is mega project, which has opened not only fundamentals of industrial cooperation between the two friendly countries, but has also paved the way for new vistas of economic stability, industrial growth and development in Pakistan," Khokhar said.

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