

## **MoC suggests abolition of cross-subsidy on electricity**

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The Ministry of Commerce (MoC) has proposed abolition of cross-subsidy on electricity to save the industry from its negative impact in the form of increase in "cost of doing business", MoC Secretary Mohammad Younas Dagha disclosed here Friday.

"Why the industry should be burdened by subsidizing electricity for domestic and other consumers," Dagha remarked while talking to businessmen at Site Association of Industry (SAI). He added that the ministry would request the new government to take the decision in this regard.

About the performance of export sector, Dagha noted that the country's exports would settle at \$ 23.4 billion at the end of current financial year, remarkably registering over 14 percent growth to \$20.4 billion previous year and attributed the growth in exports to export-oriented measures, especially Export Package.

He pointed out that export proceeds maintained a falling trend in the first three years of the last government, dropping by 18 percent. This situation has turned into a grave challenge for the country on the external front. Dagha says in the forth year, high office of the government was sensitized about the performance of the export sector, which resulted in a package for the export sector of the country. "This package came in view of high cost of electricity, gas as well as rupee value against dollar," he maintained.

The top official of the MoC informed traders about the National Tariff Policy, which seeks to streamline the multiple tariffs concerning the trade and industry. "This policy would facilitate the business community and would ease "doing of business."

He added that the MoC would try to get this policy approved as soon as the new government assumes the office.

Dagha also briefed traders about Strategic Trade Framework 2018-19 that he said would set the directions for the trade and business sectors on long-term basis. "This policy would be uploaded in the official web site of the ministry to solicit the views of the stakeholders before its approval from the government", he stated.

About utilization of Export Development Fund (ED) in Karachi, Dagha informed the business community that its utilization has crossed manifold what Karachi contributed in it annually.

"We initiated development projects worth Rs.20 billion, which is much higher to Rs.2 billion that Karachi's industry contributes in it annually," he said.

Dagha also informed about the image building project of the ministry and said that ministry considered "image" one of factors in cost of doing business. "Unless image of the country as a whole and our exports in general was not improved, no tangible results could be achieved," he maintained.