

## Pakistan's strong participation in Heimtextil 2026 reflects growing export potential-TMA



**KARACHI:** Chairman Towel Manufacturers Association of Pakistan (TMA), Ather Bari, has lauded Pakistan's strong participation in Heimtextil 2026, being held from 13–16 January 2026, noting that a total of 284 Pakistani companies are representing the country at this prestigious global exhibition.

He highlighted that out of these, 77 exhibitors belong to the towel industry, accounting for 27 percent of the total participants, reflecting the sector's significant contribution toward strengthening Pakistan's exports.

Bari emphasized that the towel industry is a 100 percent export-oriented sector, consistently playing a crucial role in generating foreign exchange and supporting the national economy. He stated that Pakistan's private sector continues to demonstrate resilience, commitment, and leadership in driving export growth despite challenging economic conditions.

Chairman TMA expressed his sincere appreciation for the commendable support extended by Collector Customs Sadia Shiraz, Additional Collector Customs Rizwan Mehmood, and the Karachi Airport Customs team for their exceptional facilitation to TMA members participating in Heimtextil 2026. Their proactive assistance greatly helped exporters in ensuring smooth participation.

Ather Bari reiterated that exporters require consistent, pro-business, and supportive government policies to enhance competitiveness and sustain long-term growth. He urged the government to prioritize ease of doing business, eliminate unnecessary procedural hurdles, and ensure that exporters are fully equipped to compete on an equal footing with regional economies.

He further stressed the urgent need to fully operationalise the EXIM Bank of Pakistan, enabling 90–95 percent shipment coverage and competitive insurance rates comparable to regional countries, to provide exporters with the financial security and confidence necessary to expand Pakistan's global market presence.

In light of the 8.7 percent decline in national exports during the first half of the current fiscal year, Chairman TMA cautioned that immediate corrective measures are indispensable. Aligning with the Prime Minister's vision for export-led economic revival, he emphasized the urgent need to restore the Final Tax Regime (FTR) at 1 percent, including for indirect exporters, to ensure predictability, transparency, and simplified compliance, particularly benefiting SMEs and enabling them to concentrate on export growth.

He also underscored the high cost of energy as a major challenge, stressing the need to restore Regionally Competitive Energy Tariffs (RCET) to bring Pakistan at par with India, Bangladesh, Vietnam, and China.

He further advocated concessional financing for renewable energy solutions, particularly solar, to stabilize production costs and ensure long-term sustainability.

Chairman Bari highlighted the pressing need for a one-window compliance system to eliminate overlapping federal and provincial regulatory requirements. He proposed a uniform 0.03% turnover-based labour compliance framework covering SESSI and EOBI & other levies, modelled after Bangladesh's successful system, ensuring both ease for exporters and guaranteed labour welfare funding. Centralized issuance of health insurance and EOBI cards, reduced inspections, and streamlined processes would significantly strengthen the Ease of Doing Business environment in Pakistan.

He also urged the Government to immediately announce the long-awaited Textile Policy 2025–30 and reinstate the Duty Drawback on Local Taxes & Levies (DLTL) scheme, which has remained discontinued since June 30, 2021, to help offset the indirect taxes burdening exporters—estimated at around 12 percent.

Reaffirming TMA’s commitment, Chairman Ather Bari stated that the Association stands fully aligned with the Government to support policy reforms that enhance exports, address refund backlogs including manual cases, restore competitiveness, generate employment, and boost national economic stability. He expressed gratitude to the Honourable Prime Minister for prioritizing the export sector and adopting a reform-driven approach aimed at sustainable economic progress.—PR