

Gas supply to textile sector: textile, petroleum ministries fail to devise mechanism

TAHIR AMIN ISLAMABAD (January 05, 2013) : The Ministry of Textile Industry and Petroleum and Natural Resources have failed in devising a mechanism for provision of gas to textile industry, which has been suspended for the last one month. Well-placed sources told *Business Recorder*

that a meeting was held in the Ministry of Textile Industry under the chairmanship of Makhdoom Shahabuddin, federal Minister for Textile, here on Friday in which possibilities of gas provision were discussed. The meeting was attended by Secretary Petroleum Dr Waqar Masood, Chairman National Assembly's Standing Committee on Textile Akram Ansari and Secretary Textile Shahid Rasheed. Textile Ministry demanded that 30 MMCF gas should be provide to sizing and processing textile units in Faisalabad, which have no other alternative to operate. There are about 250 sizing and processing units, which needed 30 MMCF gas for operation. This quantity of gas is required for giving direct heat to these units and it is indispensable. Secretary Petroleum said that Advisor to Prime Minister on Petroleum and Natural Resources Dr Asim Hussain was not present in the meeting, so he himself was not in a position to take unilateral decision. The meeting now would be held on Tuesday where Advisor to PM on Petroleum would also participate to find a solution and ensure gas supply to processing and sizing textile industry. Talking to

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Ashraf Rizwan, vice chairman All Pakistan Textile Processing Mills Association (APTPMA) said that Dr Asim visited Faisalabad on December 22 last year and announced that gas supply to be ensured to the industry. However, even after the passage of two weeks, gas supply has not been restored to the industry, incurring million of loss to the industry per day. Textile industry has the potential to generate \$25 billion export, however due to the prevailing energy crisis, it is not possible, he maintained. According to Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) officials, currently there is 1620 MMCF gas in the system against 1738 MMCF last year ie shortage of 118 MMCF gas in the system. Work on different projects is underway and 750 MMCF gas would be added to the system next year. Currently gas supply has been suspended to all industries in Punjab, SNGPL officials maintained. The National Assembly Standing Committee on Textile Thursday expressed deep concern over the continuous suspension of gas supply to textile sector especially in Punjab, which is not only affecting exporters, but are also creating a sense of insecurity among employees. The committee observed that some of the units in the textile sector like sizing and processing cannot be run without gas and urged that at least 50 percent of their demanded capacity should be provided to them.

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