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Textile exporters decry govt's apathy **Demand opening of LCs, release of sales tax refunds**

KARACHI: Representatives of value-added textile associations on Monday expressed dismay over government's inaction over the difficulties faced by the textile sector.

"The value-added textile exporters are deeply shocked and totally disappointed with the sitting government for its inattention, non-seriousness, indecisiveness and lack of vision to take the country out of the worst economic crisis," said Jawed Bilwani, Chairman Pakistan Apparel Forum, while addressing a joint press conference. They complained that due to the non-opening of letters of credit (LCs), they were unable to import necessary raw material and accessories worth as low as \$5,000.

As a result, they were facing significant delays and disruptions in fulfilling their export orders, with each consignment valuing at \$500,000. Some of their orders had also been cancelled because of that.

Bilwani said that it was ironic that the exporters who earned dollars for the country had been kept in the third place by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), while sectors which spent the most foreign exchange were placed on first and second places.

The central bank had recently asked banks to prioritise items for imports under a list given by the SBP. Food and energy were listed as the top priority items.

"During its nine-month tenure, the performance of the sitting government has been very poor. The two finance ministers appointed during this period also failed to address and resolve the ongoing crisis," he remarked.

It was highly unfortunate that neither the prime minister nor the finance minister had time to meet the exporters, Bilwani added.

Towel Manufacturers Association Chairman Tahir Jahangir raised the issue of delay in the payment of sales tax refund claims of textile manufacturers.