

# Textile exporters demand withdrawal of recent hike in water tariff

## RECORDER REPORT

KARACHI: Textile exporters have demanded immediate withdrawal of recent hike in water tariff by 9.5 percent for industrial consumers.

They alleged that Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KW&SB) has increased water tariff without consultation of the stakeholders.

In this regard, Chairman Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PHMA), Southern Zone, Aamir Haider Butt has written a letter to Sindh Governor Dr Ishrat-ul-Ebad, calling for immediate withdrawal of the recent hike in water tariff.

KW&SB has raised tariff for industrial consumers from Rs 158 to Rs 173 per thousand gallons without consulting the stakeholders, he said and added "this sudden increase of 9.5 percent in water tariff effective from February 1, 2013 is another

fatal blow to the value added textile sector."

Butt said this was the fourth increase in the KW&SB tariff during the last three years, as previously, in September, 2010 tariff was increased to Rs.119 per thousand gallons and then in September, 2011, with a raise of 81 percent it surged to Rs.215 per thousand gallons.

However, on protest of textile exporters and intervention of Governor Sindh KW&SB reduced it from Rs 215 to Rs.145 per thousand gallons. However, excess amount paid for the bills of September and October, 2011 were not refunded.

After eight months, in July 2012, KW&SB increased tariff by 9 percent to Rs.158 per thousand gallons, he mentioned. Now once again, after a span of seven months, the Board has suddenly announced to increase the tariff by 9.5 percent to Rs.173 per thousand

gallons, he added.

Pakistan's textile industry is already facing several problems and is not able to bear this new increase, he said. Water tariff in Punjab is Rs.53 and Balochistan Rs.52 against Rs.173 per thousand gallons in Sindh, he pointed out.

"We strongly feel that due to improper billing of just 20 percent of supply, KW&SB itself states that it is suffering huge losses while 80 percent of supply is not billed and this burden is being put on the 20 percent consumer paying bills," Butt said.

If proper billing for 100 percent supply and collection of payment is carried out, it will not only be a high profit earning organization, but can reduce its tariff, he added.

Chairman PHMA also demanded a uniform water tariff all over Pakistan to support the ailing textile industry, which is already facing energy crisis.

