

## **Textile Industry Coping with Power Crisis in Pakistan**

The textile industry has claimed a major part in the economy of Pakistan for several decades. It is the largest manufacturing industry in Pakistan and provides work for almost 30% of the country's work force. Pakistan is the fourth largest country in the world that produces cotton and then the consequential products ranging from clothing to home linens and numerous other products utilized in daily life. But this capacity has been paralyzed lately due to power cuts and major shifts in the power costs.

The industry has seen many ups and downs during these last many decades. The energy crisis in Pakistan has also affected the textile industry like the rest of the walks of life in Pakistan. Hundreds of people have lost their jobs as many factories, looms and production units closed down. The textile industry has lost an estimated one third production capability as compared to the start of the new millennium.

The most damage was done to small business owners, looms and production units. The individuals working on daily wages suffered a lot and have also added to the unemployment figures which have already been on a rise in recent years. When the looms are shut down due to power outage, there is no work; hence no wages.

The power crisis was never resolved and still goes on, forcing many of the surviving units to work far less than their actual capacity. It has been the survival of the fittest.

In the beginning of the power crisis, the manufacturers were forced to make use of the alternate sources for producing energy to meet the deadlines and achieve their targets. But that could not prove to be a long term solution. The alternate energy sources, such as diesel and other fuel run generators were a total loss due to their high prices and heavy consumption.

Now the only survivors are the bigger factories that have their own energy generating units. They have managed to retain their international orders and clients after heavily investing in their own energy production at the earnest, which has been a major setback for them too. Although, the government has taken some initiatives to supply the manufacturers with uninterrupted power supply, yet it is not enough.

The need of the hour is to deal with this issue on emergency basis. The power costs need to be adjusted, as they are far higher than the costs in the countries competing us in this regard. The hopes are shifted to new power plants, which are estimated to lower the energy costs after they become functional.

With these advancements the supply needs to be more consistent, to retain the constant production. Even then, it's a long way to win back the confidence of the clients and reassure them an incessant supply on time and as per their requirements. The statistics for this year so far,

do not show much progress in manufacturing or exports which mean the struggling industries are still far from recovering.