

Industry asks PC to clarify its role

By Parvaiz Ishfaq Rana

KARACHI, Jan 8: Industry leaders are seeking Planning Commission's (PC) guidance with regard to current and future gas supply situation which has crippled industrial activity and badly affected country's exports.

In a joint representation sent to the commission on Tuesday, industry leaders sought guidance while questioning if the 'Planning Commission has any role in planning and management of gas and other essential utilities' required by the industry and other segments of society.

The stakeholders said that they would like to know whether it is the responsibility of the Planning Commission or SNGPL and SSGCL either to ensure adequate supply of gas to starving industry or declare that for the year 2013 gas would not be available in which case the industry will prepare itself accordingly.

In any case it would be industry's choice to either shift their industries abroad where there is no such problem or make alternate arrangements for the same, they maintained.

"The industry is presently faced with gas outages

throughout Pakistan and even low gas pressure fails to move industry's wheels resulting in total shutdown of production activity for days and weeks," they complained.

The export oriented industry has to struggle to meet production targets for exports and to ensure timely delivery of foreign contracts to retain buyers in tough global market. "But unfortunately, even on facing such a severe shortage of gas which is a national resource the government is still giving residential and commercial gas connections across the country," the leaders complained.

The leaders asked the government to come up with clear cut policy statement on gas usage and its priorities so that the industry could decide for its survival.

Trade bodies who jointly made representation to the Planning Commission included Pakistan Knitwear Sweater Exporters Association (Pak-sea), Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers Association (PHMA), Pakistan Readymade Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PRMEA), Pakistan Bedwear Exporters Association (Pbea) and Value Added Textile Forum.

