LAHORE: Industrialists know that sustained power supply is only possible if they pay the actual cost of production, said Gohar Ejaz, group leader of All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (Aptma). &#65533; &#65533;We (industrialists) are devising ways to improve efficiencies to offset the increasing power tariff,&#65533; he said.Aptma was informed that the industrial tariffs would go up, he said, adding that the government planned to add low-cost electricity in the system in the medium-term to bring tariffs down. &#65533; &#65533;We are ready to bear the pain caused by increasing power tariffs if the government delivers on its promise to reduce them after three years,&#65533; said Ejaz.He said Aptma has decided to set up coal-based power plants at Gadani to meet the power needs of the textile sector. The electricity would be wheeled through the system of National Transmission and Despatch Company Limited. &#65533; The government has approved this plan, he said, adding the association is expected to supply power to its members at half the current rates within 30 months. The current power tariff has factored in the cost of inefficiencies such as power theft and line losses, he said. Traders are not happy with the increase in power tariff, he added. &#65533; If sustained supplies were ensured then they would have saved a lot of money that a shopkeeper spent on expensive diesel-run small generators, said Anser Butt, chairman of Qaumi Tajir Ittehad Lahore. &#65533; He said small shopkeepers would be affected by this hike. Traders would give the government six months to eliminate power theft and ensure full payment of billed amount to reduce the power production cost, he added. &#65533; SM Tanveer, chairman of Punjab Industrial Estates Development Company said high power tariffs would compel the industry to improve efficiencies. He said 90 percent of the industry and commercial enterprises are operating without any energy audit. Those &#65533; which have undergone the energy audit &#65533; have succeeded in saving 10 to 20 percent of power by adjusting their power procedures, he added. &#65533; Tanveer said electronic surveillance could avert power theft and ensure standard production procedures. He hailed the direction of the new power policy. However, he linked the policy&#65533;s success with its timely implementation. A power sector expert Mohsin Syed said that the present government had lowered the electricity production cost by preferring power produced with minimum cost.

Courtesy: &#65533; The News