**Trade Development Authority of Pakistan**

Ministry of Commerce, Government of Pakistan

**FAISALABAD**

**Subject: WEBINAR ON “CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE TIME OF COVID-19”**

Karachi: Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) conducted a webinar on “Challenges and Opportunities in the Time of COVID-19” on 19th January, 2021. Textile and Leather Division, TDAP Karachi welcomed the participants and speakers and thanked them for taking time out of their busy schedules.

The primary aim of the webinar was to disseminate information to the business community especially, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) how to navigate effectively and to explore new ways and employ new techniques & methods in the time of pandemic. In this connection, TDAP invited Mr. Zafar Iqbal Sarwar, a well-known industrialist from textile sector and Dr. Yasir Nawab from National Textile University, Faisalabad as speakers in order to have informed from academic as well as business side.

Mr. Zafar Iqbal took a full view of the textile sector pre-COVID and after-COVID situation. He discussed at length the policy support provided by the government during strict lockdown and various schemes and fiscal cushion given by the State Bank of Pakistan. He also discussed structural issues like low yield of cotton and shortage of skilled human resources etc. that could hit the textile sector despite increase in the exports.

Dr. Yasir Nawab stressed on the establishment of knowledge based industry, switching over to manmade fibers in addition to the dependency on natural fibers, technology upgradation because the existing machinery/technology is almost obsolete, importance of FDI which is almost negligible in textile sector. According to Dr. Yasir, COVID-19 provided us a chance to revive and enhance our exports and in this connection he highlighted the potential textile products like technical textiles etc. as well as potential markets that need to be explored. From the platform of National Textile University, Dr. Yasir offered Training of Human Resources, Product Development and Feasibility studies for the new proposed projects.

Webinar was well attended by the business community especially from Faisalabad, Sialkot, Multan, Gujranwala and Lahore.