

**SHC seeks price fixation formula of POL products**

Sindh High Court (SHC) on Tuesday sought the price fixation formula of petroleum products in the country and issued notices to the federal government on the latest price increase in the products. A division bench of the SHC headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar issued the notices in a petition against the latest price in petroleum products, seeking the reversal of increase in the prices.

The court issued notices to petroleum ministry to submit its reply by May 16, 2019. Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar remarked that petroleum ministry didn't submit the reply when the court had directed it to submit the reply in an identical petition.

The court ordered Additional Attorney General to ensure that petroleum ministry should submit the reply in the next hearing of the case. The petition was submitted by Molvi Iqbal Haider Advocate, who pleaded the court to declare the increase in prices of all petroleum products by up to 9.42% and imposition of tax upon the said increase unjust, unfair, arbitrary and gross violation of Article 4,9, 10, 25 R/w Article 77 of the constitution.

The petitioner contended that latest price hike in the price of petroleum products has triggered of the inflationary trends in the country. Justice Mazhar stated that increase in the price of petroleum products can be a policy matter of the government, at which the petitioner argued that the government could have taken the court into confidence before raising the prices as the court was already hearing the issue.

The petitioner also prayed that the court to declare that increase prices of petroleum products without placing before the Parliament is unjust, unfair and arbitrary and that seems to deprive the chosen representative elected by the people of Pakistan. Thus the increase in petroleum prices has no legal sanctity and unconstitutional, it added.

The petition also requested the court to direct the respondents to submit the formula for increase in the prices before the court, as under what law and authority, the respondents increase the prices of the petroleum products and thereafter, the court may pass appropriate order.

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