

◆ Proposed gas price hike to disrupt economy and perturb masses ◆

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RECORDER REPORT

KARACHI: President Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum (PBIF), Mian Zahid Hussain on Tuesday said that proposed gas price hike will damage the masses and economic activities. Prime Minister Imran Khan should reject OGRA's proposal to hike the gas price by 47 percent for SNGPL and 28 percent for SSGC, he said.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that the government has already increased gas tariff by 133 percent therefore another hike cannot be justified.

He said that an upward revision in gas tariff will also increase the tariff of electricity. He pointed out that the government has increased prices of petroleum products, medicine, edibles while the currency has been devalued therefore the masses should not be burdened through another hike in gas prices.

He noted that losses of gas companies and thefts have reached billions of rupees while inefficiency and mismanagement have plagued these utilities.

These companies should introduce reforms to reduce losses and stop punishing honest customers for their own shortcomings.

Mian Zahid Hussain said that frequent price increase is not a sustainable solution for the problems confronting SSGS and SNGPL, therefore, the distribution companies should try to put their own house in order.

He said that the government should give target to reduce theft, line losses and operational costs to the management of gas companies and their success should be determined in light of the results.

The latest proposal, if accepted will jack up the monthly bill of people using 50 cubic meters of gas by Rs515 while those using 100 cubic meter of gas monthly will have to pay an additional amount of Rs 1500.