

RECORDER REPORT

FCCI opposes withdrawal of GIDC Ordinance

FAISALABAD: Gas Infrastructure Development Cess (GIDC) is purely an economic issue which is being unnecessarily exploited for political gains and withdrawal of GIDC ordinance immediately after its promulgation will badly affect the industrial production, said Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) president Syed Zia Alumdar Hussain.

Addressing a meeting of the industrialists directly linked with processing and printing sector, he told that in the wake of acute shortage of gas in the country, previous government had planned to import gas from Iran through Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline and from Turkmenistan through TAPI. “In order to meet the expenses of these projects government had levied GIDC but could not start work on these projects despite of collecting Rs 500 billion from the already over burdened industrial sector”, he added.

He said most of industrialists from Sindh and KP challenged this unjustified and highly controversial cess and got stay orders from the competent courts. However, the industrialists from Punjab were forced to pay approximately Rs 500 billion under this head.

Alumdar told that under this act the government was bound to submit quarterly progress report in gas projects in National Assembly but as physical work was never started hence this report was never submitted in the National Assembly. He termed GIDC as extortion because there was no justification of this cess and on this basis industrialists of Sindh and KP got injunctions from the concerned courts. He further told that present government has tried to settle down this issue through this ordinance which was unnecessary criticized for political motives and government was forced to withdraw it.

He further told that under this act government had only waved off 50 percent dues despite of the fact that there was no justification of this levy.

Meanwhile, vice president Engr Hafiz Ihtasham Javed has termed GIDC ordinance in best national interest and said it is being opposed to inflict colossal loss to the already dwindling economy. He said politicians must segregate economic issues from political matters so that country could make progress through sustained and business friendly economic policies.

Former president Engr Rizwan Ashraf said media should also realise that GIDC had no locus standi and that’s why courts had issued stay order against it. He further said politicising this purely economic issue will not only have negative repercussion on national economy but also foment unemployment in the country. He demanded that government should shun undue pressure and waive off all dues of impugned GIDC.