

PM for 'out-of-box' solution to energy crisis

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday directed the authorities concerned to find an "out-of-the-box" solution to the energy crisis without putting any additional burden on the common man.

"As years of corruption and inefficiency have weakened the foundation of the system, the emergency situation required out-of-box measures," the prime minister said.

The prime minister expressed these views while presiding over a meeting held here to review measures being taken for improving the efficiency of the state-owned institutions.

Minister for Energy Umar Ayub Khan, Minister for Planning Asad Umar, Minister for Privatisation Mohammad Soomro, Minister for Aviation Ghulam Sarwar Khan, Adviser on Finance Dr Abdul Hafeez Sheikh, Adviser on Commerce Abdul Razak Dawood, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Petroleum Nadeem Babar and senior government officers attended the meeting.

PM Khan alleged that the previous Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government had inked faulty and costly international agreements that caused huge surge in circular debt in the power sector.

He directed that an emergency programme be devised for redressal of the energy and petroleum sectors' challenges, ensuring that the process of the system's reformation put minimum burden on the common man.

"The common man would not be made to bear the brunt of an inefficient and corrupt system, enforced for years and was not delivering," he added.

The prime minister was apprised on the administrative reforms in the auxiliary institutions of the ministries of petroleum and energy during the last 18 months, increase in revenue and the measures taken to improve the overall performance of these institutions.

The participants of the meeting were briefed on the problems being faced by the ministries of petroleum and energy as well as the proposals currently under consideration to address these issues.

PM Khan said the present government was taking measures to tackle the challenges faced by the energy sector on an emergency basis. "The present government, despite inheriting grave administrative and financial challenges in the energy sector, has been striving from the very first day to save the masses from the burden of these problems," he added.

He emphasised the need for addressing the challenges of the energy sector through emergency measures and called for running an awareness campaign to take the people into confidence on the measures being taken by the government to overcome the energy crisis and to bring the elements involved in electricity and gas thefts to justice, with the help of people.

Talking about reforms in the current administrative structure, he said that since changes at the administration level alone would not be enough in the current situation, they would have to hire the services of best professionals and technical experts at every level in the ministries of petroleum and energy so that best human resources could be utilised to address the problems.

The meeting proposed handing over policy, regulation, implementation, and the matters relating to finance and administration in the ministries to the people having expertise in different sectors so that every office holder could fulfil his responsibilities in a best way while living within his jurisdiction.

PM Khan directed that the performance of every head of institution be linked with the achievement of targets so that the performance could be reviewed on the basis of target achievement within the stipulated time.