

### **PM approves dissolution of SNGPL, SSGCL BoDs**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Imran Khan in principal approved dissolution of the Boards of Directors (BoDs) of two state-run gas utilities i.e. SNGPL and SSGCL.

The decision apparently taken for being unable to foresee the gas shortage and not informing the government in time regarding the malfunctioning of gas compressors that pump natural gas to up country.

However, the final decision of BoDs' dissolution of these gas companies would be taken after the approval from the cabinet in its upcoming meeting. As per rules and procedures, approval from the cabinet is mandatory for taking such decisions.

Interestingly, the dissolution of their boards were on the cards, as last month Minister for Energy (Petroleum Division) Ghulam Sarwar Khan told a news conference that the government had decided to reconstitute BoDs of state-run oil and gas companies on top of changing their chairmen and CEOs in the next 100 days, in a bid to purge them of politically motivated appointments.

He said, "There are 14 companies under the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) that are registered under the Companies Act. The previous government reconstituted their boards in 2017 and those appointments were political."

The government has already reconstituted the boards of six companies in its first 100 days that including Pakistan State Oil (PSO), Pak-Arab Refinery Limited (PARCO), Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), Government Holding (Private) Limited (GHPL), Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation (PMDC) and Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL). "In next 100 days, we would reconstitute the boards of remaining eight companies and they would also get new chairmen and CEOs. There would be no political interference in their appointments and would be purely professional," the minister said.

If the decision was finalised from the cabinet, the government would then reconstitute the BoDs of these companies with the representation of the all provinces, as earlier, the appointment of members were skewed towards Punjab and Sindh while other two provinces were almost neglected to give them representation on their boards.

It is worth mentioning that on Wednesday in an emergency meeting, Prime Minister Imran Khan had taken serious note of the gas shortage in the system and ordered the Petroleum Division to hold inquiry against the MDs of both the utilities and give the report in 72 hours.

Israr Khan