

RLNG estimated to push power generation up 30 percent

KARACHI: Use of re-gasified liquefied natural gas (RLNG) is estimated to propel power generation by more than 30 percent to 125 billion units by the current yearend over four years back, official data showed on Friday.

Total power generation was 96 billion units in 2014. Power generation increased to 98 billion units, up 2.49 percent since the start of LNG for power generation in the first quarter of 2015.

In 2016, electricity generation grew 6.04 percent to 104 billion units. As more RLNG-based plants started coming online couple with diversion of RLNG to existing thermal electric plants, power generation climbed 9.67 percent to 114 billion units in 2017.

The Ministry of Energy (Power Division) estimated energy generation and supply at around 125 billion units by the yearend.

Currently, the re-gasification capacity of the two existing floating storage re-gasification to re-gasify LNG is over 1.2 billion cubic feet/day (bcfd).

Introduction of RLNG has brought a sea change in power generation scenario of the country. Of around 10,000 megawatts power added to the national grid during the past four years, RLNG-based electricity generation enjoys a lion's share of 6,745MW. Power sector became the largest consumer of gas, followed by the residential sector.

Power sector, including captive power plants, remained the main consumer of gas, accounting for around 42 percent share in 2017, followed by residential and fertiliser sectors with share of 21 percent each.

Following introduction of RLNG, power generation from relatively cheap natural gas more than doubled during the 2015-2017 period. The available gas-based power generation was 4,350MW in 2015 that swelled to 11,095MW by mid-2018 as RLNG gave an impetus to ailing power sector.

In 2017, the power sector consumed the highest volume of 1.18 bcfd of natural gas while the residential sector consumed 0.796 bcfd of natural gas.

Power generation and supply reached to 20,685MW by the end of the fiscal year 2018. Power generation and supply was around 15,000MW in 2015. Supply and demand gap remained around 2,000 to 3,000MW.

Power generation plants, including Bhikki, Haveli Bahadur Shah, Balloki, Halmore, Orient, Rousch, Kapco, Saif and Sapphire, consumed about two-third of all RLNG in the previous fiscal year, while remaining quantity was supplied to fertiliser plants, industrial, commercial and transport sectors.

Share of power sector in oil consumption during the last fiscal decreased to 26 percent from 33 percent a year ago.

Gas is relatively a cheaper source of energy because of its competitive rates as well as high efficiency. It is an economical and efficient fuel as compared to other fossil fuels.

Natural gas supplies now contribute about 47 percent in total primary energy supply mix of the country. Pakistan has over 12,829 kilometers of transmission, 132,065 km of distribution and 34,631 km of services gas pipelines to cater to nine million consumers across the country.

In 2017, consumption of natural gas stood at 3.741 bcfd. Residential or domestic sector remained at the top priority in natural gas load management policy. The present government decided to divert RLNG to domestic consumers too during ongoing winter season to quell shortages of gas to high priority residential sector.

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