

Motorists, commuters face difficulties due to closure of CNG stations

RECORDER REPORT

PESHAWAR (January 07, 2013) : Motorists on Sunday faced difficulties as a good number of CNG stations suspended sales due to low supplies of gas and pressure here in provincial metropolis. Long queues of vehicles were seen at the filling stations owned by Pakistan State Oil and few others in the suburban areas, which continued to provide CNG to the motorists. The closure of CNG station adversely perturbed both motorists and commuters as waiting for hours in long queues. The worst situation was witnessed at University Road and Cantonment areas. Transporters were fleecing commuters with huge fares in the current circumstances. The closure of CNG stations also led to a unilateral increase in fares by the transporters. The signboards of 'low pressure' and 'repair work in progress' were displayed at the closed CNG stations in the city. Owing to low gas pressure and mounting chilly weather, gap widened between supply and demand resulted problems both for the CNG owners and domestic consumers, said a CNG station operator while talking to this scribe. Hamid Khan a CNG station Manager said that they were facing huge financial losses owing to cutting out sales due to low supply of gas. He said the owners had paid various taxes on operational cost and heads of CNG and electricity bills. He said that government instead of reducing the rate, they should focus the main problem taxes due to which CNG stations have been pushed toward financial crunches. Transporters said that they had increased fares after unavailability of gas at filling stations. "We are compelled to run vehicles on petrol and diesel in the present situation," Haji Khan Zaman, a local transporter said. While CNG station owners said that the Supreme Court had issued orders for provision of uninterrupted supply of gas to stations of the country. The SNGPL, they blamed, had violated the decision of the superior court. "We have grave concern over low suspension of gas supply to CNG stations, said Fazal Muqem, President All Pakistan CNG Association Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. He also held the OGRA and Ministry of Petroleum, Gas and Natural Resources for rapidly declining of CNG sector in the country. He said that the CNG Association has also announced to stage protest rally from Peshawar Press Club to Kohat Road against the OGRA formula, closure of supply to Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and low gas pressure. "We had rejected the recent increase in prices of CNG by Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority up to Rs 12.80 per kg for Region-I, Muqem said. He informed the OGRA had recently fixed Rs 74.44 per kg for Region-I comprising on Potochar, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Bolachistan, while Rs 65.78 per kg for Region-II, comprising of Sindh and Punjab. He said the decision was aimed at to deteriorate the CNG industry in the country, which could not acceptable to them. He informed that they would launch a full-fledged protest campaign against the OGRA, and strongly resist its decision of increase in CNG prices.

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