

NEWSCLIPPINGS

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URBAN SERVICES



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Gas crisis

GAS consumers, particularly domestic users, are suffering across the country, and not just because of the inflated bills that have been draining their pockets since the government decided to raise the fuel's price to exorbitant levels in October.

It is also low gas pressure that has made it near impossible for them to cook food or heat water. Both industrial and domestic consumers had complained of low pressure in most parts of the country and unannounced suspension of gas supplies in some areas in the last several weeks. But the two authorities in charge of supply and much more fail to acknowledge the problem.

The situation has worsened in recent days, forcing many factories in Karachi's industrial area and Punjab to close down in the wake of unannounced supply cuts. In Karachi, a SITE official has claimed that 80pc to 90pc units have been shut in the last couple of days. In Punjab, the textile industry issued a press release on Thursday, regarding low pressure and a suspension in supply. CNG stations in Karachi have also been shut as SSGC is facing a shortage of 300mmcf in addition to the general low pressure.

The SNGPL blames the supply gaps on the increased consumption owing to low temperatures in Punjab and KP, as well as illegal compressors installed by both industrial and domestic consumers.

Low gas pressure has been a regular feature for the last many years due to a failure to fix the distribution system. But this year, the situation is pinching consumers more because of the cumulative impact of the steep price increase for domestic users and the pressure factor. This is in spite of the fact that honest consumers are paying to cover the gas distribution companies' losses on account of theft and inefficiencies.

When the prime minister removed the heads of the two utilities blaming them for shortages at the beginning of the winter, it was hoped his government would take effective steps to ensure smooth supplies. The measures are still awaited.
(By Editorial Dawn, 08, 09/02/2019)