

Press Release

Gas is People's Property; and Unfair Price Hike by the Capitalist Government Shows that it cares Very little about the People

The Hasina government has once again announced its outrageous plan to raise natural gas prices for the second time in under two years; and this time by an average 22.7 percent in two phases starting next month (March, 2017). When people are in agony due to this decision, Finance Minister's derisive comment just rubbed salt into their wound; he stated that the reason for raising the price was because it was too cheap in the country! These greedy capitalist politicians are acting in such a manner that as if gas is not the right of the people and, rather, they are the owners of the people's resources, not the caretakers.

The continuous gas price hike by the capitalist governments reminds us that they have no care for the welfare of the people. This government has no political will to curb gas pilferage and other losses. And to hide their inefficiency in tackling mismanagement in the gas sector, they pass the burden onto the people's shoulder by slashing subsidies in this sector (which has been their pledge to the notorious IMF to get credit facility), whereas in many cases they fail to provide adequate gas supply in households and factories. We ask if subsidies are to be cut off, then why not the same for the private quick rentals? This is the real face of capitalist democracy in which the privileged elites will be protected by making the mass people as victims.

We urge the people not to overlook the real cause of this crisis; and that is the commoditization of public resources by 'state capitalism'. It never distinguishes between public property, private property and state property. Under the Islamic economy, oil, gas, abundant minerals, seas, rivers, green pastures etc are all public properties owned by people collectively. It is also a source of funds for the Bait ul Mal (state treasury), and state-run organizations under the Khilafah will ensure its distribution to the public. But today we see on the contrary that various state-run distribution companies, such as Titas Gas, are enlisted in stock markets for making profits. Also we see that vital energy sectors are run by private organizations for profit maximization. Under the Khilafah, public ownership [*mulkiya 'aam*] remains public property and does not become private property [*mulkiya khas*] in the name of 'privatization'. It was narrated from Ibn 'Abbas that the Messenger of Allah (saw) said: «المسلمون شركاء في ثلاث: الماء، والكأ، والنار» "The Muslims are partners in three things: water, pasture and fire, and its price are unlawful." (Ibn Majah)

Therefore, to bring a permanent end to this ongoing misery, the bitter fruit of capitalist democracy, people need to realize that the Islamic economic system offers a practical alternative to our current crisis and we all should work hard to establish this system once again.

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