

Power, gas prices go up again

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0.5 per cent and 7.65 per cent, while the price remained unchanged for lifeline consumers who consume less than 50 units or kilowatt-hour of electricity.

The price of natural gas for domestic cooking burners went up by 50 per cent and for industrial captive power generators by 100 per cent, while the price for power plants and fertiliser factories remained unchanged.

Abdur Rab Khan at the press briefing said the significant hike was to rationalise the price between domestic users from grid pipe and LPG, and industrial users from captive power generators and grid power.

With the latest hike, the energy commission, during the Awami League-led government's two successive regimes, has so far raised the average retail price of electricity by 69.25 per cent, up from Tk 3.76 per kilowatt-hour or unit to Tk 6.33, in eight phases, between March 2010 and September 2015.

The energy commission also increased the bulk price of electricity by about five

per cent, up from Tk 4.67 per unit to Tk 4.90, leading to a hike of 106.75 per cent in seven phases, between March 2011 and September 2015. Power distribution companies buy bulk electricity from the state-run Power Development Board.

Experts said the rise in the price of bulk electricity, which fueled the retail price hike, was due to increased dependence on imported fuel oil-based power generation and the government's move in allowing private companies in generation on a wholesale basis.

The commission last time had increased gas prices for all categories of consumers with effect from August 1, 2009. Later, it had increased only the price of compressed natural gas by 66.67 per cent in 2011.

According to the new tariff, household consumers of all power distribution utilities, but the Rural Electrification Board using less than 75 units a month, will need to pay Tk 3.80 a unit, up from Tk 3.53 a unit. The price for rural consumers, however, came down to Tk 3.80 per

unit from Tk 3.87.

Consumers using between 76 units and 200 units a month will need to pay Tk 5.14 a unit, up from Tk 5.01 a unit, between 201 units and 300 units Tk 5.36 a unit, up from Tk 5.19 a unit, between 301 units and 400 units Tk 5.63 a unit, up from Tk 5.42 a unit and between 401 units and 600 units Tk 8.70 a unit, up from Tk 8.51 a unit and the consumers using more than 600 units will need to pay Tk 9.98 a unit, up from Tk 9.98 a unit.

The electricity price for flat use at small industries has been increased to Tk 7.66 a unit, up from Tk 7.42 a unit.

Power prices have been increased to Tk 7.57 from Tk 7.32, for industrial users of 11kV line, Tk 7.49 a unit from Tk 7.20 for users of 33kV and Tk 7.35 from Tk 7.96 for users of 132kV line at flat rates.

The energy commission also created a new industrial consumer category who would draw power using 230kV line at Tk 7.25 flat rate.

Commercial and office users will need to pay Tk 9.80 a unit, up from Tk 9.20 a unit at flat rates.

The commission kept the minimum charge, service charge, demand charge and penalty for delay in bill payment unchanged.

New prices of natural gas for domestic consumers using single burner has increased to Tk 600 from Tk 400, using double burners to Tk 650 from Tk 450 and using meters to Tk 7 per cubic metres from Tk 5.16.

Factory owners will need to pay for natural gas at Tk 6.74 per cubic metre to run boilers, up from Tk 5.86 per cubic metre and Tk 8.36 per cubic metre to run captive power generators, up from Tk 4.18 per cubic metre.

The commercial users of gas will need to pay Tk 11.36 per cubic metre, up from Tk 9.47, while the owners of CNG filling stations will need to pay Tk 35 per cubic metre, up from Tk 30 per cubic metre.

The energy commission also increased the price of feed gas to the CNG stations to Tk 27 per cubic metre, up from Tk 25 per cubic metre, and the profit margin of the owners of CNG stations by Tk 1 per cubic metre.