

# AZ Gases to establish first ever helium gas refilling facility in Pakistan - Syed Muhammad Asad

*Exclusive interview of AZ Gases (SMC) Pvt Ltd*

**T**he AZ Gases (SMC) Pvt Ltd is soon going to establish first ever compression plant, storage setup for helium gas refilling in Gwadar. This was disclosed by Managing-Director AZ Gases Ltd, Syed Muhammad Asad, during a recent interview with Energy Update to mainly explore the gas sector business of his company in Pakistan. Following are the important excerpts of his interview.

**Energy Update (EU): What are the salient features of your company?**

**Syed Muhammad Asad (SMA):**

After I came back to Pakistan after working abroad, I launched a startup here. I worked for different companies where I remained associated with the export sales work. I had information about Pakistan related to this field as I also had confirmed clients to whom I was doing the supply. We used to deal with the big companies dealing in industrial gases and related requirement as we used to provide them with direct supplies. This helped me a lot to gauge well the potential volume of our market. I came to know about the products facing problems in Pakistan as nobody here was available to deal in them. I knew how to fill these gaps. This was the way, I established my startup and pursued my work here.

**EU: What are the details of your clients in Pakistan?**

**SMA:** Prominent companies in Pakistan are our clients. We did participate in the SSGC's tendering process for LPG. The Karachi Water & Sewerage Board is one of our clients while some distributors and traders get the supply from us. We have been directly entertaining some of our Lahore-based customers. We do provide them with calibration gases and rear gases. Some of the multinational companies are also our client. We provide them with these supplies for industrial purposes. Then some of the defense-related organizations are also our client like the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant. So,

■ **By Mustafa Tahir**

we have been dealing with a lot of entities.

**EU: What are the issues faced by your business during the recent Covid-19.**

**SMA:** The requirement of oxygen supply did increase during the recent Covid-19 health emergency. The demand of breathing oxygen and related equipment in the country increased manifold. This created a panic-like situation in the market as a lot of panic buying also took place at that time. The import of oxygen and related equipment and its supply to the clients in a timely manner became a much challenging task. A lot of issues in this regard were related to the logistics like availability of the shipping containers. We had to face a lot of issues during this phase but eventually we came out of the situation and all the problems were ultimately sorted out amicably.

**EU: What is your viewpoint on the persisting gas crisis in the country?**

**SMA:** I remained part of the Sui Southern Gas Company so I know much about this situation. In this regard, my categorical analysis is that our in-house gas demand has always been unpredictable. The concerned people don't know as to how much gas shortage they are going to face. The most important aspect is that our resourcing should remain very good. Our gas



resourcing is not appropriate and properly aligned. Why we don't directly approach the refineries and government institutions outside the country for the purpose? There is a lengthy procedure related to our terminal handling that involves a lot many people. This delays the decision-making process. We do have to face acute shortage due to our improper projections. First we need to align our resourcing directly with the producers and manufacturers. We need to base our projections and requirements on our consumption. Our order for the coming year should be 10 per cent more than our consumption in the last year. Instead, we are placing an order of 160 metric billion tonnes if consumption in the last year remained 170 metric billion tonnes. The work has been in progress on a 24/7 basis to make new discoveries in the oil and gas sector. But results could not be quickly obtained from all these efforts. In the meanwhile, we are supposed to improve our import-based purchases and resourcing. This issue will persist till the time our resources are not properly aligned.

**EU: What are the safety standards being followed by your company?**

**SMA:** The safety-related SOPs of our company are very much well-defined. Each of our employee is required to fully understand and adhere to the safety plan of our company. There is zero compromise on the safety issue in our company. We simply can't afford any safety-related mishap in our services. We have been following the same set of safety protocols as of the case of the European and MENA region bodies of our trade. We have HSE officers and managers to get implemented these safety standards. We have a set work format to provide our services as we do execute our things while fully adhering to this format. Safety is no doubt our number one priority as we have defined some golden rules for the purpose.

**EU: What is the future plans of your company?**

**SMA:** Everybody is importing helium gas in Pakistan as the country doesn't have any such bulking facility. We don't have any compression station to do refilling of helium gas in the cylinders. The cost of helium gas in Pakistan is too much high as compared to the international market. We have planned to establish our proper storage setup and compression plant for helium gas. We have already initiated the talks to get land in Gwadar where we will establish filling station for helium gas. Different customers in the country procure the helium. This is a very important project that is very close to my heart. Our plan is to bring this facility to Pakistan very soon as it is going to phenomenally slash the cost of helium gas in the country. This project is going to benefit a lot of customers in Pakistan. A lot of small businesses will get the benefit with reduction in the cost of doing business with decrease in the helium price. This include clinical labs in the country providing MRI and CT scan services. The cost of these essential lab services are high due to exorbitant price of helium. The end-users related to these services will ultimately get the benefit with slashing of the helium cost. This step will help in raising the level of the competitiveness of our businesses to the standard of the international market. ■

**NBP media head Syed Ibne Hassan passes away**

Syed Ibne Hassan, Vice President (VP) and the head of Media & External relations department National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) died of Covid-19 pandemic. He was 50. He was laid to rest in Wadi-e-Hussain graveyard, amid tears and anguish. Hassan left behind four sons and a widow to mourn his death. He contracted Covid-19 after his return to Karachi from Islamabad on 8th of this month, and was under treatment at a private hospital. With a Master's Degree in Journalism, Hassan was an active and competent official whose professional career spanned over three decades. He has served in different positions mostly on public relations at various financial institutions, government and media organisations, including, PICIC, NIB Bank, and Sindh government. He had been associated with the NBP from 2011, and served the organisation in different positions. He worked as the head of publicity in the global home remittance management group, and divisional head of the corporate communication division at NBP.



Hassan was a member of various professional bodies pertaining to media as well as professional and philanthropic organisations such as FPCCI, Pakistan Management Association, Karachi Press Club (KPC), and Karachi Union of Journalists (KUJ) etc. He also attended various professional courses conducted by NIPA, the Management Association of Pakistan, the International Business Consultant, the Public Relation Society of Pakistan, Pakistan Economic Development Forum, KPC, ACP, Pakistan Television, Radio Pakistan etc. ■

**WLPGA ANNOUNCES LPG WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

The Women in LPG Global Network (WINLPG) is an initiative that was launched in 2015 by the World LPG Association (WLPGA). Recognising the need to promote women, and young talent, in the LPG industry the WLPGA created The Women in LPG Global Network (WINLPG) as a platform to meet, connect, exchange and learn. The network has over 2,000 members and has six active national chapters in the USA, Nigeria, South Africa, Myanmar, India and Colombia.

In 2018, WINLPG launched the Woman of the Year Award to recognize women who have made an important contribution to the propane industry or who demonstrate significant motivation or show support for the cause of diversity, and who have enjoyed unparalleled career success. In 2019, WINLPG also launched a Young Woman of the Year Award to recognise women under the age of 30 who have made a contribution to the LPG industry or who demonstrate



significant motivation. The award winners were announced in late November during a WINLPG webinar. WINLPG is delighted to announce that the winner of the 2020 Woman of the Year Award was given to Zhanar Gilimova, LPG Commercial Manager at Tengizchevroil in Kazakhstan.

"Becoming Women of the year 2020 was a very pleasant surprise to me. I proudly share this recognition with my team, a highly dedicated professionals, and hope that it will inspire many others to perform, deliver and be accountable for ambitious decisions. However, one can only do that with a strong, trustful and diverse team, which I'm proud to have," remarked Gilimova.

WINLPG announces 2020 Young LPG Woman Year Winner Marcela Rosado Orellana Ultrazgaz in Brasil reports BPN 1120WINLPG is equally delighted to announce that the winner of the Young Woman of the Year Award 2020 is Marcela Rosado Orellana, Senior Business Development Analyst, Ultrazgaz, Brazil. ■