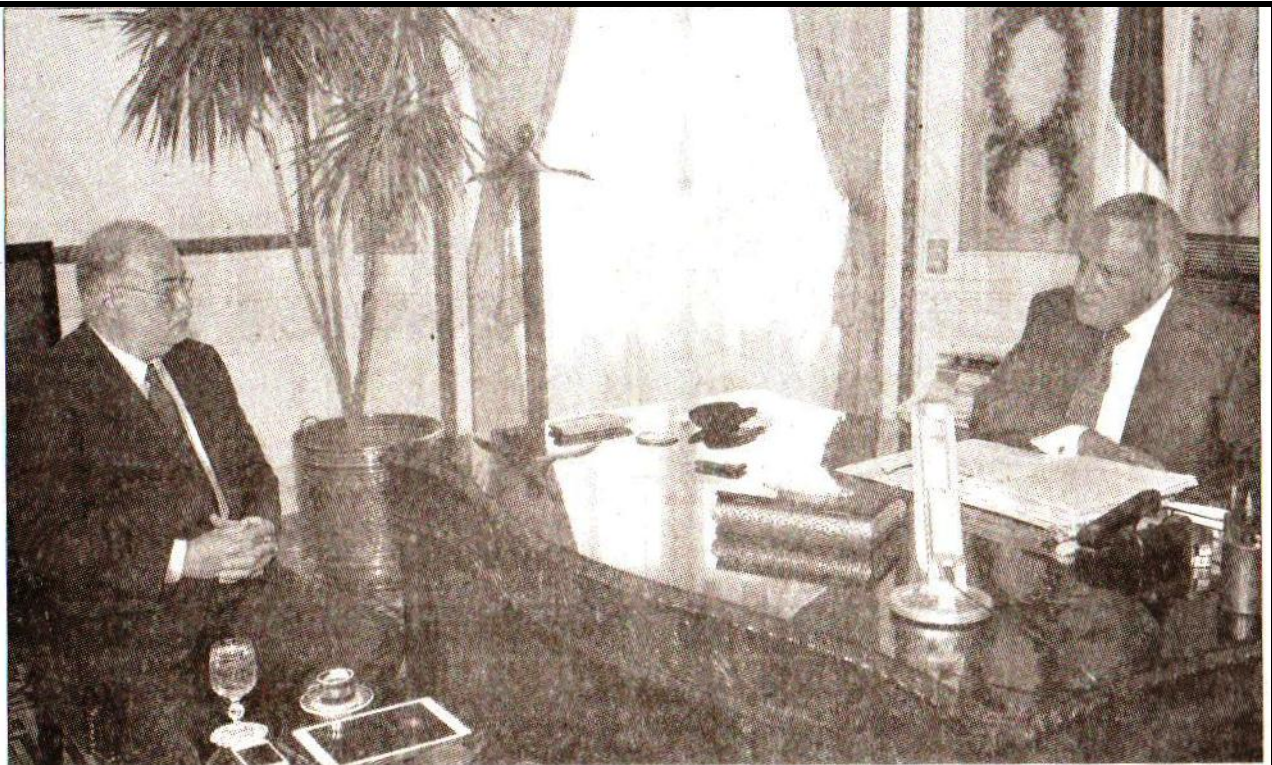


PRESS CLIPPING SHEET

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PRESS CLIPPING SHEET



PRIME Minister Ibrahim Mahlab held a meeting yesterday with Minister of Petroleum Sherif Ismail to discuss measures that should be taken by the government to ease the butane gas crisis.

Gas crisis: Hotline tapped, bootleggers trapped

Staff report

BLACK market butane gas cylinder sellers are manipulating shortages to drive the price higher than the government-subsidised LE8.

Prime Minister Ibrahim Mahlab ordered governors nationwide to monitor sales of cylinders to ensure their fair distribution.

He wants them to crack down on the black market racketeers, local media reported yesterday.

Mahlab is in contact with the Minister of Local Development Adel Labib, Interior Minister Magdi Abdel Ghaffar and other governors to ensure butane cylinders are available across the country.

He stressed the importance of launching campaigns to seize the black market's manipulators and to ensure

that cylinders are being sold according to fixed prices.

Butane gas is subsidised by the government, and used by the low-income class and higher-income groups in areas that are not linked to the national grid. Since the beginning of 2015, there has been an increasing shortage of cylinders, a crisis that has been exacerbated by black market traders.

Mahlab met the Petroleum Minister Sherif Ismail, who stressed his ministry is exceeding the planned number of butane gas supplied to end the crisis.

The Prime Minister ordered the Ministry of Supply to activate the hotline (19280) from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. to receive citizens' reports about black market activities or areas that are suffering from butane shortages. He also ordered the activation of the cabinet's

hotline (16528) to receive citizens' complaints.

Cairo Governor, Galal Moustafa el-Saeed, has stressed the importance of intensifying campaigns to monitor the main gas warehouses, especially after the daily pumping rates have increased by 30 per cent, the official news agency MENA reported yesterday.

Governor el-Saeed said queues for gas cylinders have ended in all Cairo districts. He also stressed the increase of inspectors at Cairo's seven main warehouses coupled with 169 private warehouses across the governorate. This had helped to achieve the desired stability as well as ensuring that butane cylinders are being sold for LE8.

Ibrahim el-Askani, the head of Cairo's Directorate of Supply, said 58,407 gas cylinders per day were being offered.