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National Electric Power Regulatory Authority Islamic Republic of Pakistan

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OFFICE OF THE
REGISTRAR

No. NEPRA/Dir.(CAD)/TCD-05/14397-98

October 19, 2016

Chief Executive Officer
Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO)
22-A, Queen's Road,
Lahore

Subject: **Order in the matter of Complaint filed on behalf of Mrs. Fazeelat Begum by Under Section 39 of the Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power Act, 1997 against LESCO regarding Correction of Bill/Re-Installation of Connection (A/C # 19 11233 1578700 U) Complaint # LESCO-123/2015**

Please find enclosed herewith the Order of NEPRA regarding the subject matter for necessary action and compliance within thirty (30) days of receipt of this decision.

Encl: As Above

(Syed Zavar Haider)
Deputy Registrar

Copy to:
Mrs. Fazeelat Begum
W/o Ch. Muhammad Naem
116 Nishtar Block,
Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore



BEFORE THE
NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(NEPRA)

Complaint No.LESCO-123-2016

Mrs. Fazeelat Begum **Complainant**
W/o Ch. Muhammad Naeem,
116 Nishtar Block, A.I.Town,
Lahore.

Versus

Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO), **Respondent**
22-A, Queen's Road, Lahore.

Date of Hearing: August 18, 2016
September 01, 2016

Date of Decision: October 18, 2016

On behalf of:

Complainant: Mr. Asif Rashid.

Respondent: i) Mr. Nouman Nisar, Assistant Manager (Operation), LESCO
ii) Mr. Iqbal Anwar, Assistant Manager (Customer Services), LESCO

Subject: **ORDER IN THE MATTER OF COMPLAINT FILED ON BEHALF OF MRS. FAZEELAT BEGUM UNDER SECTION 39 OF THE REGULATION OF GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC POWER ACT, 1997 AGAINST LESCO REGARDING CORRECTION OF BILL/RE-INSTALLATION OF CONNECTION (AC # 19 11233 1578700 U)**

ORDER

This order shall dispose of the complaint dated July 27, 2016 filed on behalf of Mrs. Fazeelat Begum (hereinafter referred to as the "Complainant") against Lahore Electric Supply Company (hereinafter referred to as the "Respondent" or "LESCO") under Section 39 of the Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power Act, 1997.

2. Brief facts of the case are that the Complainant in her complaint stated that LESCO has charged illegal arrears amounting to Rs. 18,819/- in the billing month of May, 2016. The Complainant approached LESCO for correction of bill but instead of resolving the issue, her electricity supply was disconnected. The

Complainant requested that the meter be checked, illegal detection bill be withdrawn and her connection be re-installed.

3. The matter was taken up with LESCO for submission of para-wise comments. Moreover, LESCO was directed to restore the electricity supply of the Complainant, issue current bills to the Complainant for payment and defer the disputed amount of Rs. 18,819/- till final decision in the matter is taken. LESCO vide its letter dated August 16, 2016 reported that the site was checked by Meter & Testing (M&T) team on May 13, 2016 wherein a discrepancy of meter sticking stop was reported. Accordingly, a detection bill amounting to Rs. 18,890/- was charged against the Complainant in the month of May 2016.

4. In order to probe further into the matter, hearings were held on August 18, 2016 and September 01, 2016. The hearing dated August 18, 2016 was attended by representatives of LESCO only, however, the hearing dated September 01, 2016 was attended by the representatives of both parties. During the course of hearing the representative of the Complainant stated that the Complainant lives outside the country and the premises is closed. She comes occasionally and uses electric supply. He added that the meter is not defective and there is no discrepancy in it. He further stated that only a maid visits the premises once in a week for up keep and cleaning work. LESCO representatives reiterated their earlier version as submitted in written correspondence. A site inspection was also conducted on September 01, 2016 in presence of both the parties wherein it was confirmed that there was no use of electricity supply at the premises.

5. The case has been examined in detail in light of available record, relevant documentary evidence, arguments advanced in the hearing, site inspection and applicable law. Following has been observed:

- i. As per report of LESCO, the meter was checked on May 13, 2016 wherein it was found sticking stop. On this basis, LESCO assessed the consumption of the premises as 1488 units for the period from February, 2016 to April, 2016 (3 months) and after deducting already charged 484 units during this period, LESCO raised detection bill of 1004 units amounting to Rs. 18,890/-.
- ii. LESCO installed a check meter at the premises of the Complainant on August 17, 2016 on the basis of M&T report, whereby it was observed that the impugned meter was not sticking stop rather the results show that the said meter was a bit fast. Moreover, the site inspection dated September 01, 2016 confirmed that there was no use of electricity supply at the premises. If we consider the plea of LESCO that the meter was sticking stop, even the responsibility lies with LESCO as why such obsolete meters still exist at consumers' premises.
- iii. The billing statement of the premises provided by LESCO is as under:

Month	No. of units (kWh) consumed		
	2014	2015	2016
January	-	208	275
February	188	243	269
March	125	165	149
April	128	36	66
May	150	9	50
June	131	21	50
July	157	37	0
August	124	42	
September	150	165	
October	440	407	
November	297	347	
December	289	330	

LESCO checked the meter on May 13, 2016 and declared it sticking stop. Accordingly, LESCO raised a detection bill for the period from February to April 2016. The above billing shows that the consumption of the premises was 484 units during this period whereas the consumption in corresponding months of previous year was 444 units as such the consumption of the Complainant was already on higher side during the disputed period.

- iv. Consumer Service Manual (CSM) envisages a procedure prior to issuance of detection which provides, inter alia, for securing the existing meter in the presence of the consumer or his representative, installation of check meter, issuance of notice and examining the reply of the consumer. Once illegal abstraction is confirmed, then detection bill issued. If the consumer objects payments or disputes over the quantum of the units detected by the distribution company, the appellat authority for revision of detection bill would be the review committee of distribution company headed by the next higher officer. The consumer will also be given personal hearing by the review committee. In case, the dispute remains unresolved even after exhaustive review, the distribution company after getting approval of Chief Executive Officer may lodge the F.I.R. The consumer may also approach a competent Court of law under the relevant provisions of Electricity Act, 1910. CSM also envisages that in case a meter becomes defective through atmospheric effects or through some internal fault, the consumer shall not be charged and the meter is required to be replaced with a healthy meter. If distribution company feels that quantum of energy lost due to malfunction of meter is more than one billing cycle then in such cases a check meter is installed and declared as billing meter and difference between consumption of the two meters is charged to the consumer for a maximum of two billing cycles. From the record, it has not been established that distribution company has followed the procedure given in CSM prior to imposition of detection bill.

6. In consideration of above, LESCO is hereby directed to withdraw the detection bill amounting to Rs. 18,890/- charged against the Complainant being illegal & unjustified and replace the impugned meter. Compliance report be submitted within thirty (30) days.

Islamabad, October 18, 2016

Member (Consumer Affairs)

18/10/16