



National Electric Power Regulatory Authority
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Registrar

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No. NEPRA/CAD/TCD.05/ *6133-36*

May 4, 2017

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

Subject: **ORDER IN THE MATTER OF COMPLAINT FILED BY MR. AHSAN GHARFOOR UNDER SECTION 39 OF THE REGULATION OF GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC POWER ACT, 1997, AGAINST LESCO REGARDING ARREARS IN THE BILL [14-11534-1118600 U]**
Complaint # LESCO-56/2016

Please find enclosed herewith the Order of NEPRA (04 pages) dated 28.04.2017 regarding the subject matter for necessary action and compliance within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Order.

Encl: As above

(Handwritten signature)
(Iftikhar Ali Khan)
Director
Registrar Office

Copy to: -

1. Chief Engineer/Customer Service Director
Lahore Electric Supply Company Limited (LESCO)
22-A, Queen's Road, Lahore.
2. Manager (Commercial)
Lahore Electric Supply Company Limited (LESCO)
22-A, Queen's Road, Lahore.
3. Mr. Ahsan Ghafoor
House No. 13, Main Street, Sherwani Colony
Main Bazar Karachi, Amar Sadho,
Ferozepur Road, Lahore



BEFORE THE
NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(NERPA)

Complaint No. LESCO-56/2016

Mr. Ahsan Ghafoor. **Complainant**
House No. 13, Main Street Sherwani Colony
Main Bazaar Kainchi, Amar Sadho
Ferozpur Road, Lahore

Versus

Lahore Electric Supply Company **Respondent**
22-A, Queen's Road, Lahore

Date of Hearing: September 01, 2016
November 23, 2016

Date of Order: April 28, 2017

On Behalf of Complainant: Mr. Ahsan Ghafoor

Respondent: (i) Mr. Mazoor ul Hassan Additional Deputy Manger
(ii) Mr. Asif Majeed Sub Divisional Officer

SUBJECT: ORDER IN THE MATTER OF COMPLAINT FILED BY MR. AHSAN GHAFOOR UNDER SECTION 39 OF THE REGULATION OF GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC POWER ACT, 1997, AGAINST LESCO REGARDING AREARS IN BILL [A/C # 14 11534 1118600 U]

ORDER

1. This Order shall dispose of the matter of complaint filed by Mr. Ahsan Ghafoor (hereinafter referred to as the "**Complainant**") dated May 15, 2016, against the Lahore Electric Supply Company Limited (hereinafter referred to as the "**Respondent**" or "**LESCO**") under section 39 of the Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power Act, 1997, (the "**NEPRA Act**").

2. Brief facts of the case are that the Complainant is a consumer of LESCO under tariff category A-1. In April 2016, the Complainant received an electricity bill from LESCO amounting to Rs. 509,550/-. Arrears amounting to Rs. 506,639 had been in the said bill.
3. The Complainant filed a complaint with NEPRA, on May 15, 2016. The Complainant stipulated that the exorbitant bill was attributed to charges concerning a meter which had burnt due to rainfall 4 to 5 years prior to the issuance of the impugned bill. It is further provided that the burnt meter was timely replaced by LESCO but no notice or intimation was given to the Complainant regarding any dues or outstanding payments with regards to replacement of meter. In addition, the Compliant suggests the possibility of LESCO officials installing the impugned meter elsewhere and charging the Complainant for electricity consumed by others on that meter. Upon contacting LESCO, disconnection of electricity was threatened upon non-payment of the impugned bill.
4. The matter was taken up with LESCO for submission of para-wise comments. In response, LESCO vide letter dated June 10, 2016 requested a grant of extension of time for reply to the Authority's notice. However, LESCO failed to submit para-wise comments within the extended timeframe.
5. In order to probe into the matter further, a hearing was scheduled for September 1, 2016 at NEPRA Head Office, Islamabad. The hearing was adjourned on request of LESCO and rescheduled for November 23, 2016 at NEPRA Regional Office Lahore. During the hearing, the Complainant advanced arguments stipulated in the instant complaint. LESCO, however, highlighted that the impugned meter experienced a fault of 'dead stop' which was removed and replaced at the Complainant's premises in July, 2013. The damaged meter was sent to LESCO's laboratory on February 11, 2016, for retrieval of meter data. The data retrieval report exhibited consumption of 30,580 units of electricity on the damaged meter. The Complainant had already been charged for 8,669 units, hence a bill for the remaining 21,911 was charged, amounting to Rs. 506,639, in the impugned bill for April, 2016. Upon inquiry, representatives of LESCO were unable to produce documentary record of the case. LESCO was accordingly ordered to produce information/documents pertaining to the MCO, details of data retrieval,

breakup of impugned arrears, meter reading record, reasons for not downloading meter data within reasonable time, etc. After considerable lapse of time and non-compliance, a reminder was issued to LESCO, vide letter dated January 19, 2017. In response, LESCO furnished incomplete information vide letter dated February 17, 2017.

6. This case has been examined in detail in light of the relevant documents, arguments advanced during the hearing and the applicable law. The following has been observed/concluded: -

- (i) As per the record, the impugned meter was installed at the Complainant's premises on February 15, 2011, vide MCO No. 101/15 dated January 29, 2011. The Complainant was charged monthly bills based on monthly meter readings being recorded on the Meter Reading Record (CP-11). This record shows previous, present and advanced units regularly. The impugned meter was then removed from the Complainant's premises on July 17, 2013 and no discrepancy report of the concerned Meter Reader has been produced by LESCO.
- (ii) The impugned meter was removed from the Complainant's premises on July 17, 2013 and sent to LESCO's laboratory on February 11, 2016, resulting in a delay of two and a half years.
- (iii) Prior to replacement of the impugned meter on July 17, 2013, proper meter readings were taken on monthly basis from the Complainant's residence and the consumption so recorded was being billed to the Complainant and fully paid.
- (iv) As per the laboratory report, the impugned meter's display had been washed and a meter reading of 30,580 units was retrieved. This reading formed the basis of billing the Complainant in the impugned bill. However, this exercise is inconsistent with LESCO's proposition of the meter experiencing 'dead stop' faults, since such a meter may not produce reliable information regarding electricity consumption.
- (v) LESCO, upon inquiry, could not provide a satisfactory response to why meter data was not downloaded at the time of removal of the impugned meter from the Complainant's premises.



- (vi) LESCO, upon inquiry, has failed to provide a satisfactory response to why a delay of two and a half years occurred between removal of the impugned meter from the Complainant's premises and dispatch to the concerned laboratory for testing.
- (vii) Upon examination, it is further found that the billing record of the Complainant on the properly functioning meter does not support the consumption pattern advanced by LESCO.
- (viii) LESCO has failed to provide conclusive evidence that the units charged to the Complainant in the impugned bill have in fact been consumed by the Complainant himself.
7. **The impugned meter was removed from site on July 17, 2013, however, the same was sent to laboratory for data retrieval on February 11, 2016 after more than two and half years. This shows inefficiency, mismanagement and negligence of LESCO officials. On the basis of the data retrieval report, LESCO charged 21911 units to the Complainant. It is pertinent to mention that prior to replacement of the impugned meter i.e. July 17, 2013 proper meter readings were taken on monthly basis and the consumption so recorded was being billed to the Complainant which were paid accordingly. The consumers have legitimate expectancy that what was being billed to them was actually the cost of electricity consumed. LESCO shall not be permitted to recover loss of revenue, (if any) arising from mismanagement and negligence on part of the company, from consumers.**
8. In light of the foregoing, LESCO is hereby directed to withdraw the arears amounting to Rs. 506,639/- charged to the Complainant being unlawful and unjustified.
9. Compliance is required within thirty (30) days.


Member (Consumer Affairs) 28/4/17

Islamabad, April 28, 2017