



National Electric Power Regulatory Authority Islamic Republic of Pakistan

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OFFICE OF THE
REGISTRAR

No. NEPRA/CAD/TCD-06/17388-90

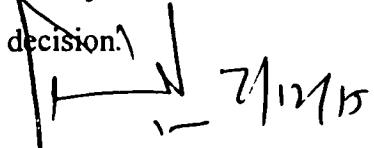
December 07, 2015

Chief Executive Officer
Multan Electric Power Company, (MEPCO)
Complex, WAPDA Colony, Khanewal Road,
Multan

Subject: **DECISION IN THE MATTER OF COMPLAINT FILED BY M/S
NATIONAL FLOUR MILLS (NFM) THROUGH TASLEEM AKHTAR,
MANAGING PARTNER, NFM UNDER SECTION 39 OF THE
REGULATION OF GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND
DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC POWER ACT, 1997 AGAINST MEPCO
REGARDING EXCESSIVE BILLING (AS # 27 15133 1025500)
COMPLAINT # MEPCO-379/2014**

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

Encl: As above


(Ifkhar Ali Khan)
Deputy Registrar

Copy to:

C.E./Customer Service Director
Multan Electric Power Company, (MEPCO)
Complex, WAPDA Colony, Khanewal Road,
Multan

Mr. Tasleem Akhtar
National Flour Mills, T.B, Hospital Road,
Chungi No. 14, Multan



**BEFORE THE
NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(NEPRA)**

Complaint No. MEPCO-379-2014

M/s National Flour Mills (NFM) Complainant
through Mr. Tasleem Akhtar,
Managing Partner, NFM,
T.B. Hospital Road, Choungi No. 14, Multan.

Versus

Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO), Respondent
MEPCO Complex, WAPDA Colony,
Khanewal Road, Multan.

Date of Hearing: 17th June 2015

Date of Decision: November 30, 2015

On behalf of:

Complainant: Mr. Zafar Iqbal, Manager, National Flour Mills

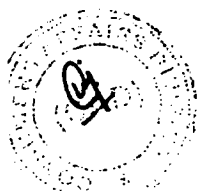
Respondent: Engr. Zia-ur-Rehman, CSD

Subject: **DECISION IN THE MATTER OF COMPLAINT FILED BY M/S NATIONAL FLOUR MILLS (NFM) THROUGH MR. TASLEEM AKHTAR, MANAGING PARTNER, NFM UNDER SECTION 39 OF THE REGULATION OF GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC POWER ACT, 1997 AGAINST MEPCO REGARDING EXCESSIVE BILLING (AC # 27 15133 1025500)**

DECISION

This decision shall dispose of the complaint dated nil (received on 12th August 2014) filed by Mr. Tasleem Akhtar on behalf of M/s National Flour Mills (hereinafter referred to as the "Complainant") against Multan Electric Power Company (hereinafter referred to as the "Respondent" or "MEPCO") under Section 39 of the Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power Act, 1997.

2. The Complainant in the complaint stated that they are an industrial consumer of MEPCO under B-2 tariff category and have been paying their bills regularly. MEPCO issued an excessive bill for the month of May 2014 amounting to Rs. 374,802/- for 18960 units (off-peak hours) and 1200 units (peak hours). They approached MEPCO in this regard and complained about the matter. They were informed by MEPCO that the metering equipment was checked by Metering & Testing (M&T) department and the same was found dead stop. The Complainant added that their average monthly consumption was 13702 units during the months from June 2012 to April 2013 and 16116 units during the months from June 2013 to April 2014 when the



electricity meter was in order, whereas MEPCO has charged 20160 units for the month of May 2014 which is not justified. Further, MEPCO was requested to replace the meter if it was dead stop and charge the bills as per data retrieval of the meter, however MEPCO did not pay any heed to the request. The bill was paid to avoid disconnection. Later, MEPCO again issued an inflated bill for the month of June 2014 amounting to Rs. 244,590/-. MEPCO was again approached for correction of bill and issuance of correct bill as per data retrieval or installation of a check meter, however no action was taken by MEPCO. The Complainant also added that they had deposited the bill under protest to avoid disconnection. The Complainant requested that MEPCO be directed to issue bills for the months of May 2014 and June 2014 as per data retrieval of the meter or as per average consumption of previous year.

3. The matter was taken up with MEPCO for submission of parawise comments. In response, MEPCO vide its letter dated 3rd October 2014 reported that the meter of the Complainant was found dead, phase indicator was missing. They also stated that kWh and kVARH reading were found held and MDI recorded as 160 kW during May 2014, therefore, 20160 units were charged on the basis of previous month's consumption i.e. April 2014. Later, the meter was sent to M&T for checking, whereby the meter was declared as dead. In the billing month of June 2014, 12480 units were charged to the Complainant on the basis of consumption of corresponding month of previous year, i.e. June 2013. Further, the healthy meter was installed on 7th June 2014 and removed meter was sent to the manufacturer for data retrieval. According to the manufacturer, data retrieval was not possible due to internal damage of EEPROM. MEPCO further added that an enquiry committee has also been constituted and further outcome would be submitted after finalization of the enquiry report.

4. The report of MEPCO was sent to the Complainant for information/rejoinder. In response, the Complainant vide letter dated nil (received on 29th October 2014) raised observations over the report of MEPCO. Final report in the matter was awaited from MEPCO, therefore, it was directed to expedite the case and submit report of the enquiry committee. In response, MEPCO vide its letter dated 31st December 2014 reported that the enquiry committee has recommended charging to consumer from March 2014 to June 2014 on the basis of consumption of corresponding months of previous year, i.e. March 2013 to June 2013, as per which 11200 units are chargeable for the disputed period. The report of MEPCO was sent to the Complainant for his information. In response, the Complainant again raised observations over the report of MEPCO. Accordingly, the matter was again taken-up with MEPCO in light of the observations of the Complainant. In response thereto, MEPCO vide its letter dated 6th March 2015 apprised that the Complainant was invited in the enquiry proceedings and the decision of the committee was concluded in his presence who accepted and also signed the enquiry report, therefore, the matter may be closed. The report of MEPCO was sent to the Complainant for information. In response thereto, the Complainant vide letter dated 28th March 2015 approached this office and informed that he neither signed the enquiry report nor the decision was announced in their presence. Accordingly, the matter was again taken up with MEPCO and a copy of the enquiry report was sought from MEPCO, which was submitted by MEPCO vide letter dated 28th April 2015.

5. To probe further into the matter, a hearing was held on 17th June 2015 at NEPRA Head Office, Islamabad which was attended by representatives of both the parties. During the hearing, the parties advanced their arguments on the basis of their earlier versions. Subsequent to the hearing, some additional information was sought from MEPCO with respect to billing history, MDI, reasons for defect in the meter, copy of MCO, legible copy of M&T checking reports, etc, and the same was submitted by MEPCO vide letter dated 10th August 2015. The case was analyzed in detail and further clarification was sought from MEPCO vide letter dated 21st August 2015 with respect to non-charging of average bills as per the provisions of Consumer Service Manual (CSM), charging of detection bill in addition to average bills, allegation against the Complainant for tampering of meter, etc. In response, MEPCO vide its letter dated 2nd September 2015 submitted its report which was found unsatisfactory.

6. The case has been examined in detail in light of the documents made so available by both the parties, arguments advanced during the hearing and applicable law. Following has been observed:

- i. As per the record, meter of the Complainant was checked by M & T in February 2014 and was found to be in order. Again the said meter was checked on 14th May 2014 and this time the meter was declared as dead stop/display integration seized. Prior to this, there was no blame upon the



Complainant for involvement in theft of electricity. The meter was sent to the manufacturer by MEPCO for data retrieval but the data could not be downloaded by the manufacturer due to burning of electronic components inside the meter. Furthermore, there is no M&T report or allegation for scratches on the meter or breaking of seals of the meter by the Complainant. This shows that the meter was damaged due to its internal functioning and not due to the Complainant.

- ii. MEPCO charged bill to the Complainant for 20160 units in the month of May 2014 on the basis of consumption of previous month i.e. April 2014. Further, 12480 units for the month of June 2014 were charged as per the consumption of corresponding month of previous year, i.e. June 2013. Whereas, according to the provisions of Consumer Service Manual (CSM), in case of defect in the metering equipment, the Complainant should have been charged on defective code for the months of May & June, 2014 as per the consumption recorded in corresponding months of previous year i.e. May 2013 and June 2013 or average of last 11 months whichever was higher. In the instant case, MEPCO has devised its own formula for charging average bills to the Complainant, which is unjustified.
- iii. The Complainant was charged average bills for the months of May 2014 and June 2014. In addition, MEPCO also charged 11200 units to the Complainant, being the difference of consumption for the period from March 2013 to June 2013 and March 2014 to June 2014 as per recommendations of the enquiry committee. As such the Complainant has been penalized twice i.e. charged average bill and difference bill for the same period (May 2014 and June 2014).
- iv. The CSM envisages that a consumer shall not be charged if the meter wears out through (inter alia) some internal fault for which the consumer cannot be held responsible. For such cases, the meter is required to be replaced with a healthy meter. However, if the DISCO feels that the quantum of energy lost because of malfunctioning of the metering equipment is more than one billing cycle, then a check meter shall be installed in series with the impugned meter and the same shall be declared as the billing meter. Difference between the consumption of the two meters to be recorded and the same be charged to the consumer for a maximum of two billing cycles, however, it would not be a detection bill.

7. Foregoing in view, MEPCO is directed to withdraw the difference bill charged for 11200 units to the Complainant and submit compliance report within thirty (30) days.


(Maj (R) Haroon Rashid)
Member (Consumer Affairs)

Islamabad, November 30, 2015

