



National Electric Power Regulatory Authority

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN
NEPRA TOWER Attaturk Avenue (East) ,
Sector G-5/1, Islamabad.
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Consumer Affairs Department


TCD 03/ ⁶⁰²³ -2022
November 18, 2022

Chief Executive Officer,
Gujranwala Electricity Power Company (GEPCO),
565/A, Model Town GT Road, Gujranwala.

Subject: **DECISION IN THE MATTER OF COMPLAINT FILED BY MR. ATTIQ-UR-REHAMAN S/O MUSHTAQ HUSSAIN , UNDER SECTION 39 OF THE REGULATION OF GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC POWER ACT, 1997 AGAINST GEPCO REGARDING DISCONNECTION OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY.**

Complaint # GEPCO-GJW-12639-05-22

Please find enclosed herewith the decision of the NEPRA Consumer Complaints Tribunal dated November 18, 2022 regarding the subject matter for necessary action and compliance within twenty (20) days, positively.


(Muhammad Abid)
Assistant Director (CAD)

Encl: As above

Copy to:

1. C.E./Customer Services Director
Gujranwala Electricity Power Company (GEPCO)
565/A, Model Town GT Road, Gujranwala.
2. Mr. Ghulam Rasool, (Assistant Director),
NEPRA Regional Office, Office # 87, Block M,
Trust Plaza, Gujranwala.
Ph: 055-3822766
3. Mr. Attiq-ur- Rehaman S/O Mushtaq Hussain
Village Sadkal, P/O Chak Bakthawar,
Tehsil Kharian, District Gujrat.
Contact # 0334-1052192, 0343-8495108



BEFORE THE
NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(NEPRA)

Complaint No. GEPCO-GJW-12639-05-22

Mr. Attiq-ur-Rehman s/o Mushtaq Hussain,
Village Sadkal, P/O Chak Bakthawar,
Tehsil Kharian, District Gujrat.

.....Complainant

VERSUS

Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO)
Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO),
565/A, Model Town GT Road, Gujranwala.

.....Respondent

Date of Hearing: September 06, 2022

On behalf of
Complainant: Mr. Mushtaq Hussain

Respondent: Syed Qasim Jan, SDO GEPCO

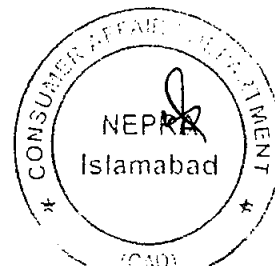
Subject: DECISION IN THE MATTER OF COMPLAINT FILED BY MR. ATTIQ-UR-REHMAN S/O MUSHTAQ HUSSAIN UNDER SECTION 39 OF THE REGULATION OF GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTRIC POWER ACT, 1997 AGAINST GEPCO REGARDING DISCONNECTION OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY (REF NO. 16-12363-1102400-R)

DECISION

This decision shall dispose of the complaint filed by Mr. Attiq-ur-Rehman s/o Mushtaq Hussain (hereinafter referred to as the "Complainant") against Gujranwala Electric Power Company (hereinafter referred to as the "Respondent" or "GEPCO"), under Section 39 of the Regulation of Generation, Transmission and Distribution of Electric Power Act, 1997 (hereinafter referred to as the "NEPRA Act").

2. NEPRA received a complaint from Mr. Attiq-ur-Rehman S/o Mushtaq Hussain wherein the issue agitated by the Complainant was that GEPCO allotted defective code to his meter in the billing month of April, 2021 while his meter was running smoothly. He approached concerned Sub Division for installation of check meter to determine the accuracy of impugned meter but his request was not entertained. Further, in the month of May, 2021 GEPCO allotted RP (replacement) code without replacing the impugned (old) meter physically and on the bill for the month of June, 2021 snaps of some other meter were pasted. The Complainant added that he paid all the bills regularly, however, GEPCO officials disconnected the supply on April 20, 2022 without serving any notice upon him. Therefore, being aggrieved, he requested to direct GEPCO for immediate restoration of his electricity supply and disciplinary action against the delinquent officials of GEPCO.

3. The subject matter was taken up with GEPCO. In response, GEPCO vide a report dated September 09, 2022 submitted that the meter of the Complainant was declared defective in April, 2021 and when staff deputed for meter replacement visited the site, the Complainant created hindrance and did not allow the line staff to replace the meter and also misbehaved with the staff. The bills were issued to the Complainant on minimum charges basis i.e. Rs. 123/month. Disciplinary proceedings have been initiated against the

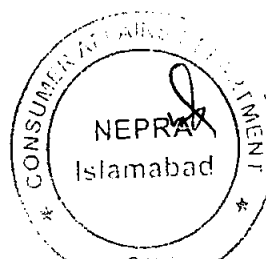


staff who did not charge correct billing. A notice dated April 04, 2022 was also served upon the Consumer, however, on non-response; his meter was removed and the Complainant was briefed to deposit detection bill (for the period from June, 2021 to April, 2022) amounting to Rs. 40,594/- which has not yet been paid by the Complainant and his supply will be restored after deposit of detection bill. The report submitted by GEPCO was forwarded to the Complainant, however, the Complainant raised objections and apprised that the report of GEPCO is based on mala fide intentions.

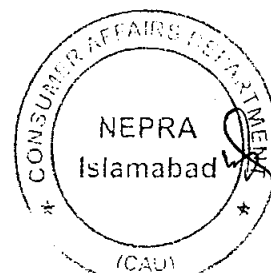
4. In order to proceed further, a hearing was held on September 06, 2022 at NEPRA Head Office, Islamabad which was attended by both the parties (GEPCO officials & the Complainant) whereby they advanced their respective arguments. During the hearing GEPCO official (i.e. SDO) advanced his argument in light of GEPCO's report dated June 09, 2022 and further apprised that the impugned meter was sent to M&T Department on July 04, 2022 whereby accuracy of the impugned meter was found within permissible limits. Final reading of the impugned meter was recorded as 27701 units whereas GEPCO had charged total 28452 units, therefore, the difference between units charged for the said period and as per report of M&T i.e. $28452 - 27701 = 751$ units have been refunded to the Complainant. However, the Complainant argued that his meter was running smoothly but GEPCO declared it defective and GEPCO sent bills with reading snapshots which did not pertain to his meter. Furthermore, no notice was issued to him by GEPCO for replacement of meter. GEPCO issued detection bill after removal of meter from the site which is violation of relevant rules/regulations and his residence is without electricity supply since April, 2022. The Complainant also requested for disciplinary action against the GEPCO officials and payment of compensation in lieu of mental stress and expenses incurred on contesting of case at different forums. During the hearing GEPCO official (i.e. SDO) agreed to recover outstanding amount from the Complainant in twelve (12) installments and restoration of electricity supply immediately upon payment of the first installment.

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


- (i) The Complainant is a domestic consumer of GEPCO bearing reference No. 16123631102400. GEPCO allotted defective code to the meter in billing month of April, 2021. The Complainant requested GEPCO officials for checking of meter to ascertain the accuracy of the impugned meter, however, his request was not materialized. During the period from June, 2021 to April, 2022 no units were charged to the consumer whereas the Complainant consumed electricity.
- (ii) According to Clause-6.1.3 of Consumer Service Manual (CSM) taking snapshots of meter readings of all consumer categories is mandatory. Meter readings are taken through mobile snapshots/hand held units to ensure correct readings. Clause-6.2 of Consumer Service Manual (CSM) provides mechanism of percentage checking to increase vigilance and ensure accuracy of meter reading process. In this case no proper reading and percentage checking was carried out. Bills were issued on minimum charges basis without showing consumption of electricity. GEPCO vide report dated June 09, 2022 apprised that show cause notices were issued to delinquent officials, however, no proof was provided.
- (iii) The billing data provided by GEPCO shows that the impugned meter was replaced during the month of May, 2021 whereas the meter was not replaced physically which is sheer negligence of GEPCO officials. However, in April, 2022 GEPCO removed the meter without installation of new meter and detection bill amounting to Rs. 40,594/- was issued to the Complainant. The meter was removed without any notice to the Complainant. Moreover, the Complainant was making payment of bills regularly as issued by GEPCO. The Complainant applied to GEPCO at different times in writing for issuance of bills as per actual consumption, however, GEPCO failed to do so.

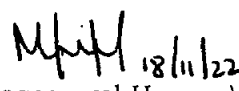



- (iv) According to Clause 4.3.3 of Consumer Service Manual (CSM) if at any time DISCO doubts the accuracy of any metering installation, DISCO may after informing the consumer; fix another duly calibrated and tested metering installation in series with the impugned metering installation to determine the difference in consumption, therefore, if there was any issue with impugned meter, GEPCO should have been proceeded in accordance with the above mentioned provision of CSM, however, GEPCO declared the meter defective and replacement status was also updated in PITC data. The Complainant requested GEPCO to install check meter, however, the meter was neither checked nor a check meter was installed in series with the impugned meter to determine the accuracy of the meter.
- (v) The meter was removed from site on April 20, 2022 and GEPCO sent the meter to laboratory for M&T report vide letter dated July 04, 2022 for determination of accuracy and M&T Department vide letter dated July 28, 2022 declared the accuracy of meter within permissible limits. Therefore, it is evident that metering equipment of the Complainant was working smoothly, however, if GEPCO had any doubt, it should have checked the meter as per procedure laid down in CSM, however, GEPCO did not adhere to the said provisions of CSM and kept issuing bills on minimum charges basis.
- (vi) Furthermore, snapshot pasted on the original bill for the month of April, 2021 shows reading as 24905 units which is duly verified by PITC data, however, PITC data shows replacement status of meter w.e.f. May, 2021 and meter snaps with fresh reading were pasted on the bills of the Complainant for the period from May, 2021 to June, 2021, however, these snaps did not pertain to the Complainant's connection. In the month of July, 2021 again snapshot of actual meter was pasted on bill with reading index of 25610 units but bills were not charged as per actual meter reading at site. As such the Complainant consumed $25610 - 24905 = 705$ units for the billing months of May-July, 2021.
- (vii) Billing data shows that the Complainant was charged upto 25109 reading index upto the month of April, 2021. As per M&T report; the final reading in the meter was 27701 units at the time of removal of meter. In this way, the Complainant consumed $27701 - 25610 = 2091$ units during the disputed period i.e. August, 2021 to April, 2022. GEPCO charged 3343 units ($423 + 2920 = 3343$) on account of two detection bills i.e. 1st detection bill in the month of June, 2021 for 423 units and 2nd detection bill in the month of April, 2022 for 2920. The detection bill were charged without following the procedure laid down in Consumer Service Manual (CSM). According to detection bill assessment proforma for the month June, 2021 GEPCO declared the meter dead stop whereas according to M&T report the meter was functioning within the permissible limits which shows that concerned detection bills were issued to the Complainant with mollified intension.
- (viii) During the hearing GEPCO official (i.e. SDO) confirmed that, the meter of the Complainant was physically removed from the site in April, 2022 and no snapshot or final reading of meter was shared with the Complainant. The impugned meter was tested by M&T on July 28, 2022. The Complainant showed dissatisfaction with the final reading as determined by M&T because the meter was tested after laps of three months of removal, therefore, he responded during the hearing that he may not be charged according to final reading as reported in M&T report. The Complainant has disputed the final reading index shown by M&T but on the other end it's a fact that the electricity supply was being used at the premises. In order to meet the hand of justice, the Complainant may be charged as per consumption recorded in corresponding months of previous year(s). FPA also needs to be adjusted in accordance with the applicable rates during the period from August, 2021 to April, 2022.

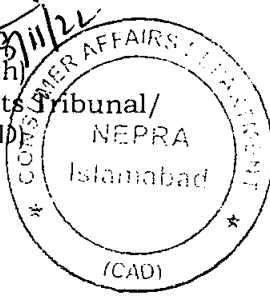


- (ix) The claim of compensation by the Complainant in lieu of mental stress and expenses incurred on contesting his case at different forums does not fall under the purview of NEPRA, therefore, the Complainant may approach relevant court of law.
- (x) In view of above, during the handling of the instant case, sheer negligence of relevant provisions of applicable law has been observed on the part of GEPCO officials which caused wastage of precious resources in lieu of time and money of both parties i.e. the Complainant as well as of GEPCO, therefore, strict disciplinary action should be taken against the field staff and concerned SDO after proper inquiry.
6. Foregoing in view, GEPCO is directed for the following:
- (i) To restore the electricity supply of the Complainant immediately and both the detection bills (423 units + 2920 units = 3343 units) & late payment surcharge be withdrawn. The Complainant be charged for the period from August, 2021 to April, 2022 on the basis of corresponding months of previous year i.e. August, 2020 to April, 2021. FPA be adjusted in accordance with the rates applicable during the said months. The amount already paid by the Complainant on minimum charges mode be adjusted accordingly and remaining payable amount be recovered in twelve (12) installments.
- (ii) To charge the actual consumption to the Complainant i.e. 25610-24905=705 units for the period from May, 2021 to July 2021 with due slab benefits and FPA adjustment.
- (iii) To take disciplinary action against concerned SDO and field staff for their incompetency for not charging bills as per actual consumption and recording of wrong information in PUTC data.
- (iv) To educate officers/officials regarding provisions of Consumer Service Manual (CSM).
- (v) To submit report within twenty (20) days.
7. The Complainant may approach relevant court of law if he so desires; regarding his claim of compensation in lieu of mental stress and expenses incurred on contesting his case at different forums because the same does not fall under the purview of NEPRA.


(Lashkar Khan Qambrani)
Member Consumer Complaints Tribunal
Director (CAD)


(Moqem ul Hassan)
Member Consumer Complaints Tribunal
Assistant Legal Advisor (CAD)


(Naweed Hahli Shaikh)
Convener Consumer Complaints Tribunal/
Director General (CAD)



Islamabad, November 18, 2022