

National Electric Power Regulatory Authority

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

Provisional Office

1st Floor Link Arcade, 54B, GECH Society, Phase 3,
Link Road, Model Town, Lahore.

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**Consumer Affairs
Department**

POL.05/6196 -2024
December 20, 2024

Chief Executive Officer
Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO)
22-A, Queens Road, Lahore.

**Subject: COMPLAINT FILED BY MR. MUHAMMAD ANSER KHALIL UNDER SECTION 39
OF THE REGULATION OF GENERATION, TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION
OF ELECTRIC POWER ACT, 1997 AGAINST LESCO REGARDING DETECTION
BILL (REF # 12-11264-1292787).
Complaint No. LESCO-LHR-34065-01-24**

Please find enclosed herewith the decision of Complaints Resolution Committee
(RC), dated December 20, 2024 regarding the subject matter for necessary action and
compliance within ten (10) days, positively.

cc: As above


(Ubaid Khan)

Assistant Director (CAD)

Copy to:

1. C.E./Customer Service Director,
LESCO, 22-A, Queens Road, Lahore.
2. Mr. Rana Rizwan Sibghat Ullah, Manager/Incharge
Central Complaint Cell LESCO, (Focal Person, NEPRA)
LESCO, 22-A, Queens Road, Lahore.
3. S.E. 2nd Circle LESCO
132 kV Grid Station Chandni Chowk, Township, Lahore.
4. XEN Shahpur LESCO
132 kV Grid Station 20 km Multan Road, Chohang, Lahore.
5. Mr. Muhammad Anser Khalil
House No. 84, Block B, Sukh Chain Gardens, Lahore.
Cell # 0335-1757120



BEFORE THE
NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER REGULATORY AUTHORITY
(NEPRA)

Complaint No. LESCO-LHR-44195-09-24

Mr. Muhammad Anser Kahlil
House No. 84, Block B, Sukh Chain Gardens
Lahore.

..... **Complainant**

VERSUS

Lahore Electricity Supply Company (LESCO)
1-A, Queens Road, Lahore.

..... **Respondent**

Date of Hearing: July 18, 2024
September 04, 2024
December 02, 2024

On behalf of
Complainant: Mr. Muhammad Anser Khalil

Respondent: 1) Mr. Amjad Hussain SDO (Operation), LESCO
2) Mr. Ahmad Faraz SDO (Operation), LESCO
3) Mr. Hasan Raza SDO (Operation), LESCO

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BILL

DECISION

This decision shall dispose of the complaint filed by Mr. Muhammad Anser Khalil (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 (hereinafter referred to as the "NEPRA Act").

NEPRA received a complaint from the honorable Wafaqi Mohtasib in respect of Mr. Muhammad Anser Kahlil dated December 28, 2023 wherein the Complainant submitted that bill of 7437 units was charged by LESCO during the month of March, 2023 with mala fide intent and requested for withdrawal of exorbitant bill. The matter was taken up with LESCO whereby LESCO vide a letter dated January 31, 2024 apprised that the Complainant was charged accumulated units as per actual meter readings at site. In order to analyze the matter, hearings were held at NEPRA Provisional Office, Lahore in attendance of both the parties while matter remained inconclusive due to the conflicting arguments.

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

- i. The Complainant's electricity connection installed against reference number (12-11264-1292787) located at Sukh Chain Gardens, District Lahore was charged bill of (7437) units during March, 2023 on account of accumulated units since November, 2020. The dispute raised by the Complainant was that frivolous bill has been charged by LESCO as the meter was removed from the premises by LESCO during the same month.

Perusal of the documentary evidence reveals that the Complainant was charged 7437 units for a cumulative period of approximately (29) months i.e. November, 2020 to March, 2023 on account of actual consumption recorded at site as claimed by LESCO supported through meter readings snaps recorded during various billing cycles by LESCO officials. The analysis of electricity bills divulges date of disconnection and reconnections as November 20, 2020 & February 24, 2023 respectively ensuing the disputed charging of bill during March, 2023. It is matter of record that the meter was initially disconnected due to nonpayment of bills charged during the defective period i.e. June & July, 2020 while the same was reconnected during February, 2023 by LESCO on its own motive sans any motion and without clearance of outstanding amount by the Complainant.

- iii. Chapter 8 of Consumer Service Manual (CSM) details the procedure of disconnection and reconnection of which a relevant excerpt i.e. clause 8.3 provides that temporary disconnection of supply may be allowed on consumer request, for a maximum period of eleven months subject to payment of final bill up to the day immediately preceding the intended date of request for temporary disconnection. However, categorization of the instant matter in terms of temporary disconnection and subsequent reconnection by LESCO is not validated by absence of any request of the Complainant and the fact that connection was remained temporarily disconnected, allegedly, for extraordinary months surpassing the allowed time period. The same constitutes the sheer violation of the procedure envisaged for temporary disconnection from the concerned LESCO officials.
- iv. Even considering the supposition supported by the pendency of outstanding amount for more than three months prior to disconnection, clause 8.2.5 of the CSM obligates LESCO to issue Equipment Removal Order (ERO), remove metering installation and allot permanently disconnected code to defaulting premises which was not followed by LESCO officials as per their own admission complicating the matter at hand. The same clause also provides that electric supply will only be restored upon payment of all outstanding dues and completion of codal formalities given in reconnection policy. However, if DISCO does not remove the equipment for its own ease, consumer shall not be held responsible for any theft of electricity or material. Thus, penalizing the Complainant by maintaining temporary disconnection due to whatsoever reason in lieu of ERO as mandated by CSM for such cases is not warranted and is the culpable offense of LESCO officials. The matter can be considered aggravated due to absence of any registered FIR for any claimed obstruction by the Complainant in removal of meter by LESCO officials. Henceforth, temporary disconnection as stated by LESCO, however, disputed by the Complainant and also without ERO during the meantime as evident from record then violate relevant clauses of CSM which raises suspicion over the acts carried out by LESCO officials in the instant matter.
- v. The analysis of consumption of both the connections installed at the Complainant's premises are tabulated as below:

12-11264-1292787

| Sr. No. | Month/Year | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------|
| 1 | January | 102 | 04 | 00 DISC |
| 2 | February | 32 | 11 | 00 DISC |
| 3 | March | 16 | 24 | 00 DISC |
| 4 | April | 49 | 00 S Read | 00 DISC |
| 5 | May | 14 | 00 S Read | 00 DISC |
| 6 | June | 733 | 733 DF | 00 DISC |
| 7 | July | 120 | 145 DF | 00 DISC |
| 8 | August | 193 | 20 RP | 00 DISC |
| 9 | September | 135 | 89 | 00 DISC |
| 10 | October | 71 | 124 | 00 DISC |
| 11 | November | 06 | 00 S Read | 00 DISC |
| 12 | December | 01 S Read | DISC | 00 DISC |

Table-1

| Sr. No. | Month/Year | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|---------|------------|------|------|------|
| 1 | January | 32 | 69 | 300 |
| 2 | February | 0 | 90 | 262 |
| 3 | March | 6 | 108 | 317 |
| 4 | April | 56 | 140 | 302 |
| 5 | May | 20 | 249 | 612 |
| 6 | June | 819 | 777 | 1001 |
| 7 | July | 242 | 1061 | 731 |
| 8 | August | 605 | 861 | 787 |
| 9 | September | 334 | 562 | 372 |
| 10 | October | 109 | 619 | 375 |
| 11 | November | 114 | 252 | 138 |
| 12 | December | 52 | 326 | 172 |

Table-2

As above reflected in Table-I, the Complainant maintained lower consumption prior & following the defective/burnt meter replacement during August, 2020 and before disconnection which does corroborate the contentions of the Complainant pertaining to near vacant premises with the minimum usage of electricity and does not provide basis for extrapolation of such low level of usages into several thousand units down the line until March, 2023. Moreover, the higher level of units consumption recorded at the second connection having reference number i.e. 12-11264-1292899 installed at same premises following the disputed disconnection, further validates the shifting of complete load to same/second connection as claimed by the Complainant. Thus, scrutiny of the Complainant's electricity consumption asserts non-usage of disputed connection since November, 2020 rendering the arguments of LESCO in terms of the charging of actual usage, invalid.

- vi. Furthermore, it is of note that the bill charged during March, 2023 was not paid by the Complainant until now and in such case, the meter installed at the premises, as claimed by LESCO, was to be again disconnected, removed from site and ought to be in the custody of LESCO. However, it is matter of fact that LESCO failed to produce any relevant record and data retrieval report etc. to establish the charged usage as actual. Moreover, LESCO officials also remained unable to submit regular monthly meter readings snaps & electricity bills pertaining to the disputed period lacking any pertinence to the submitted partial evidence.
- vii. According to clause 6.1.4 CSM, meter readers shall also check discrepancies in the metering system at the time of reading meters/taking snap shots and report the same in the reading book/discrepancy book or through any other appropriate method as per the standard practice. The concerned officer/official will take corrective action to rectify these discrepancies which was not rectified by LESCO for an extraordinary time period as suggested by the available record, ensuing the charging of exorbitant bill at very belated stage which is not warranted. Furthermore, as LESCO failed to point out at any stage about such discrepancy from which stand point consumers have legitimate expectancy that what is being billed is actual cost of electricity and it is correct. In view of above, penalizing the Complainant on part of incompetency of LESCO officials is strictly not justified
- viii. Hence, the arguments advanced & evidence submitted by LESCO in support of the disputed bill can be adjudged as invalid in accordance with the relevant clauses of CSM while also being inconclusive after due consideration of healthy consumption of the second connection, converted into net-metering connection during September, 2022, which requires the withdrawal of bill being devoid of any solid grounds.

Forgoing in view, LESCO is directed to withdraw bill of (7437) units charged during March, 2023. Compliance report be submitted within (10) days.

5. درجہ بالا حقائق کے پیش نظر لیسکو کو ہدایت کی جاتی ہے کہ وہ ڈیٹیکشن بل واپس لے۔ تعمیل کی رپورٹ دس (10) دنوں کے اندر جمع کرائی جائے۔

(Ubaid Khan)

Member, Complaints Resolution
Committee/Assistant Director (CAD)

(Engr. Dr. Bilal Masood)

Member, Complaints Resolution Committee
/Additional Director (CAD)

Lahore, December 20, 2024

