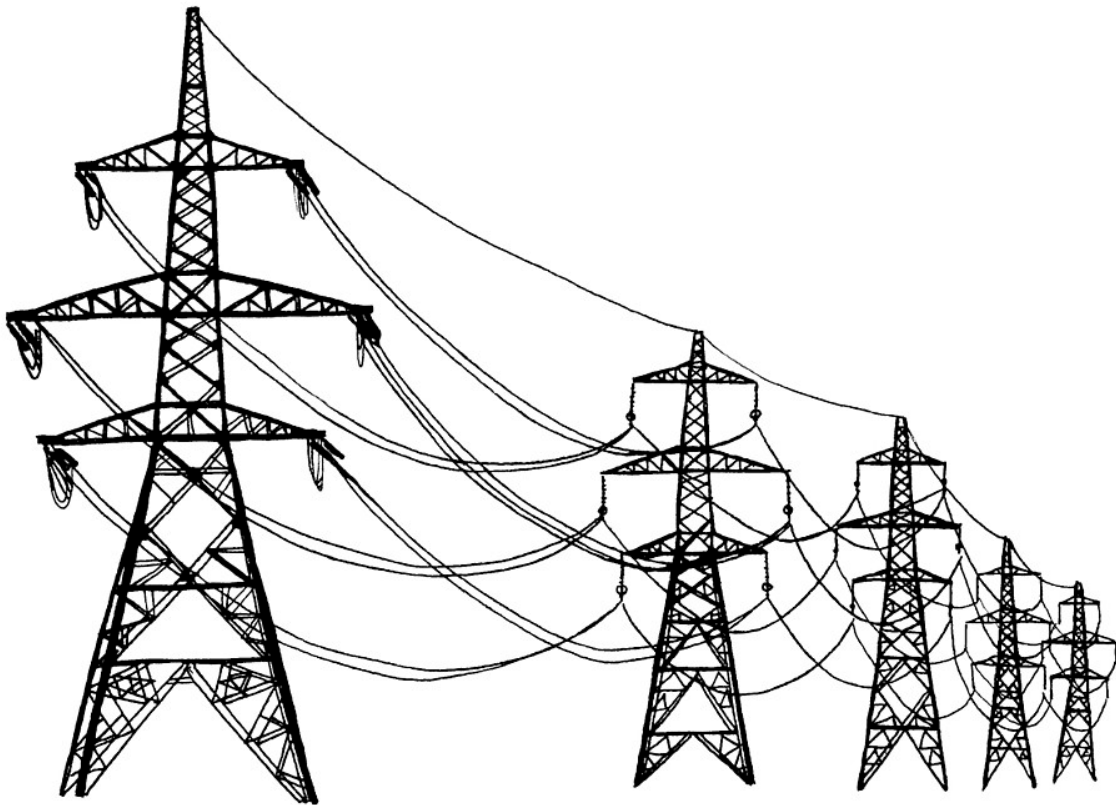


# NEWSCLIPPINGS

*JANUARY TO JUNE 2021*

## ELECTRICITY



## Urban Resource Centre

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## Emerging out of darkness

All of Sindh was plunged into darkness on Saturday night, along with the rest of the country, when the national grid hit a major snag, reportedly due a breakdown at the Guddu power plant, causing power stations across the country to trip. By Sunday evening, the power supply to most towns and cities was reportedly restored.

### Restoration process

Karachiites are often left in the dark given frequent power outages and load management by the K-Electric. This time, however, the fault arose at the national grid, causing a nation-wide blackout.

According to a statement issued by KE on Sunday evening, the power utility's teams had been working to restore power since midnight - it was around 11.45pm that the entire city was left without power - and electricity supply was restored in an incremental manner through the KE's transmission and distribution networks. By late evening, supply from the national grid was resumed through existing interconnection points with the KE, read the statement. "Most parts of Karachi have been energised already, while teams are available to address individual customer complaints received at its 118 call centre," stated the power utility.

On a regular day, the KE avails around 650 megawatts of electricity from the national grid while its own capacity from power plants in Bin Qasim and Korangi have a capacity of generating around 1,500MW of electricity. Besides, the KE draws around 300MW of electric supply from other private power plants. During the winter season, electricity demand in the metropolis is between 2,200 to 2,400 megawatts (MW) and on Saturday evening, the KE was utilising some 400MW of electricity from the national grid. When the fault hit, KE's system was also affected.

After the nation-wide breakdown occurred, the KE began its restoration efforts by first isolating itself from the national grid and relied on power generation from its Bin Qasim power plant and the independent power plants (IPPs). In this manner, it was able to ensure restoration of power to various districts in phases, and by 10am power was restored to several areas of the city, and to most by 1pm on Sunday. However, some 200 to 300 feeders were still affected till later on in the day.

Meanwhile, restoration began nearly 14 hours after the breakdown on Sunday afternoon by the Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO), which powers 13 districts of Hyderabad, Nawabshah and Mirpurkhas divisions.

"We started getting electric supply at 132kv Nawabshah grid station from the 500kv line from Dadu district at 1.30pm on Sunday," a senior official of the HESCO told The Express Tribune. And, the restoration continued in an incremental way till the evening.

A similar situation existed in the districts of Sukkur and Larkana divisions, which are powered by the Sukkur Electric Power Company.

The breakdown also left industrial zones without electricity for almost 17 hours. An official of HESCO told that when the restoration began, the domestic consumers remained the company's priority. By around 3.30 pm, 225 out of 550 electricity feeders of HESCO and 50 out of 79 grid stations were restored. However, the power supply to only one of the three SITE areas in Nooriabad was revived.

By 5.15pm the HESCO was able to electrify all of its 79 grid stations and 400 of its feeders while 150 feeders were kept on rotation. It was by that time that Hyderabad and Kotri SITE areas began to get the power supply.

### Rendered powerless

Prior to the incremental restoration process, however, people were forced to spend a chilly winter night without heating facilities from electricity and/or gas powered appliances. Due to gas load shedding in several districts, scores of citizens were also deprived of the use of generators.

Water shortage, which already prevails in several districts during the annual closures of water canals for repair and maintenance works, was aggravated in many districts.

During the power outage, major pumping stations of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board were affected. Consequently, 357 million gallons of water could not be supplied to areas in the metropolis. Water supply was restored from Gharo, Dhabeji, NEK, Hub and other pumping stations after their electricity supply was restored between 11am and 12pm on Sunday.

However, the KWSB warned that the effects of low water supply may be felt in some areas of the city. Equal distribution of water is being prioritised but citizens are urged to use water mindfully, said KWSB Chairperson Syed Nasir Hussain Shah, speaking to The Express Tribune.

Meanwhile, the blackout also affected hospital services in both the public and the private sectors. Hospitals in the metropolis relied on back-up generators and no untoward incident was reported.

"Secretary health was on board with all heads of hospitals all night...All was managed nicely and all was well," said Dr Seemin Jamali of the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre. "Our electricity was restored by 10am," she confirmed.

Moreover, people from several districts and cities reportedly experienced a drop in mobile phone signals and disturbed internet connectivity. The problem persisted in some areas till the filing of this report.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 11/01/2021)

### **Sindh faces 18-hour electricity loadshedding, PA told**

Provincial Energy Minister Imtiaz Ahmed Shaikh on Thursday informed the Sindh Assembly that injustice was being done with the people of Sindh as 18-hour electricity loadshedding was being carried out across the province, adding that the provincial government was ready to take control of power distribution companies Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (Hesco) and Sukkur Electric Power Company (Sepco) on its own terms and conditions for betterment of the people.

He was responding to a calling-attention notice of Grand Democratic Alliance's Arif Mustafa Jatoi.

Mr Shaikh said that the provincial government was involved only in coal mining under public-private partnership and had nothing to do with electricity production and its transmission.

"They (opposition members) don't know about procedures and come up with unnecessary questions," he added, apparently pointing his finger at the GDA member.

Mr Jatoi said that as the provincial government was already engaged in coal mining, electricity production and its transmission, it would not be convenient for it to take over distribution too.

Mr Jatoi said that the federation was ready if the provincial government wanted to carry out electricity distribution.

#### **Judicial reforms**

Responding to another calling-attention notice, Minister Shaikh said that the provincial government would soon bring judicial and legal reforms to take criminals and terrorists to task.

The notice was moved by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's Arsalan Taj.

The energy minister on behalf of the law department said that judgements of the cases depended upon statements of witnesses and FIRs. "What would the judges do, if a witness does not turn up to record his statement?" he asked.

Mr Shaikh rejected the PTI lawmaker's stance that many culprits were acquitted due to faulty prosecution and said that it might have happened in a few cases.

The PTI member was of the view that criminals especially terrorists found a safe haven in cases when the prosecution presented weak arguments against those involved in destabilising the law and order situation across the province.

He said that criminals and terrorists were acquitted due to weak prosecution, adding that notorious Lyari gangster Uzair Baloch was acquitted in four terrorism cases during last week. "The joint investigation team had found Uzair Baloch guilty of many heinous crimes. Are there some people who are providing shelter to him (Uzair Baloch)?," he asked.

The PTI MPA said that prosecution's witnesses against Rao Anwar turned hostile as they had no protection.

He said that the provincial assembly had passed a Witnesses Protection Act but the same was not implemented as yet.

#### **School for differently-abled children**

Shahnawaz Jadoon of PTI on his calling-attention notice said that there was no government school for special children, including hearing-impaired and visually-impaired students, in Karachi.

He said that urgent steps were required for establishment of the schools.

The PTI member recommended that two or three rooms in every public school should be allocated along with specialised teachers to teach special children.

In his response, the energy minister said that the chief minister's special assistant for differentially abled persons had taken measures for special children but there was still need to do a lot more.

Speaking on his calling-attention notice, Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal's Syed Abdul Rasheed said that parked motorbikes were being lifted in Karachi especially from Tower to Empress Market by unauthorised persons through private labourers.

He alleged that the operation was being carried out under 'supervision' of the traffic police.

The energy minister replied that the police could lift illegally parked bikes and cars under the laws.

He, however, assured Mr Rasheed that proper mechanism would be devised in a meeting with police authorities.

An adjournment motion, regarding prolonged gas loadshedding, moved by Shazia Javed of PPP was also admitted for discussion during the proceedings.

#### **Question Hour**

Replying to a question, Agriculture Minister Ismail Rahu explained that market committee of the New Sabzi Mandi in Karachi consisted of a panel of 18 members for undertaking all operations of the vegetable market.

He said the same committee performed different jobs, including cleanliness of the market, under observation of appointed stakeholders to monitor all cleanliness activities.

Responding to another question, he said presently one cane inspector was working in the office of cane commissioner of Sindh while the sanctioned strength of the post of cane inspectors was 12.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 15/01/2021)

### **'Power companies have made lives miserable'**

Provincial Energy Minister Imtiaz Shaikh announced in Sindh Assembly on Thursday that the provincial government is ready to take on power utility companies for their failure to supply electricity in the province.

Addressing the house, Shaikh referred to the hourslong loadshedding in various districts of Sindh and said, "Power companies have made the life of people miserable." He added that the Sindh government itself is not generating the power, but is involved in mining of coal in Thar.

He was of the view that Sindh government own five wind power projects, but federal government was unwilling to notify the same and finalise the tariff requirement. "In the best interest of people of Sindh, we are willing to take over Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) and Sukkur Electric Supply Company (SEPCO), which have failed badly in supplying power to consumers." Responding to the call attention notice moved by GDA MPA Arif Mustafa jatoi, who asked whether the provincial government was willing to take over the distribution electricity, Shaikh said that it was not the mandate of Sindh government to produce electricity or setup the transmission line.

### **'Weak prosecution'**

Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf MPA Arsalan Taj raised the issue of the weak prosecution system in the province, maintaining that this results in the release of terrorists and members of gang wars.

"Is it true that criminals, specially terrorists, find a safe haven in [such] cases when the prosecution presents weak arguments against those involved in destabilising the law and order situation across the province," he asked.

Taj referred to Uzair Baloch and former SSP Malir Rao Anwar to drive his point home. "Both might be released because of lack of evidences against them," he said. Responding on behalf of the provincial government, Shaikh said the cases are heard in court based on how strong the FIRs against them are. "Sindh government has nothing to do with verdicts. All decisions are announced by court of law," he said.

Earlier, as the session started, Sindh Agriculture Minister Ismail Rahu informed the house that office bearers of the new Sabzi Mandi, that is located off M-9, had been demanding security with establishment of new police station. "This is the place where vegetable and fruits across the country is transported, so we are considering the establishment of a new police station in its limits," he remarked. As the session ended, PPP MPA Sadia Javed moved an adjournment motion requesting the speaker to discuss on the issue of prolong gas loadshedding during winter season for domestic consumers in Sindh. Her adjournment was approved, but speaker deferred the debate on this issue some other day. Later, the session was adjourned till today (Friday).

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter The Express Tribune, 04, 15/01/2021)

### **Uncertainty looms over city's power situation due to lack of key KE deals**

K-Electric Chief Executive Officer Moonis Alvi on Wednesday said that the absence of a valid Gas Supply Agreement (GSA) with Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) and an expired Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with the National Transmission and Despatch Company (NTDC) were aggravating the uncertainty around city's power supply.

Replying to queries during a press conference, he said that though the federal government was fully cognizant of the need to urgently address the issues of GSA and PPA, the final decisions in this regard were still pending.

"These issues are impediments to permanently addressing Karachi's supply-demand gap," he said.

Connecting the issue of KE's payables to SSGC to the delay in the finalisation of the GSA, KE's chief financial officer Aamir Ghaziani categorically stated that KE owed SSGC only Rs13.7 billion on a principal basis and the issue of ballooning mark-up charged by SSGC was sub judice.

"K-Electric's receivables and payables should be seen on a holistic basis and netted off against each other since both are related to government entities. If only the principle amounts that KE is owed and KE has to pay are compared and netted off, then KE stands to receive Rs80bn," he averred.

Mr Alvi said that KE's flagship 900MW power plant, BQPS-III, was progressing on a fast track and the gas turbine, generator and heat recovery boiler for the first unit of 450MW had arrived at the power utility's Bin Qasim Power Complex.

*The power utility claims it owes SSGC Rs13.7bn principal amount as issue of mark-up is in court*

"Steam turbine and transformers for the first unit are on the way to the site. All relevant civil works are progressing swiftly for the installation with the target of ensuring that the first unit is ready to be commissioned by the summer of 2021, and the second unit of 450MW by the end of the year," he added.

He said that the RLNG-based power plant would go a long way in meeting Karachi's power demand and ensuring the city and its industries stayed energised to play their due role in the national economy.

He said that the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) had also recently approved the modification in the generation licence of KE, with the addition of the 900MW RLNG-powered BQPS-III to the power utility's generation capacity.

Mr Alvi said that the BQPS-III would result in lower import costs for the government, affordable power for consumers and a much smaller carbon footprint as compared to furnace oil power plants.

"I am confident that we will continue to have the support of the government and other stakeholders since there is no doubt that the upcoming 900MW RLNG power plant is very crucial for Karachi," he added.

#### **Fulfilment of govt commitments sought**

The KE chief said that while the approval of the 900MW plant was a vital element towards meeting Karachi's growing power demands, other commitments also needed to be fulfilled in a timely manner for this reality to be realised.

He said that heads of agreement with Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) for supply of 150mmcfcd of gas for BQPS-III had already been signed.

He said that the power utility appreciated the decision of the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) to approve KE's application for a licence to construct and operate a gas pipeline that would supply RLNG for the BQPS-III plant and supplementing fuel requirement of the power plants located at its Bin Qasim Power Complex.

"Further, keeping in view surplus of power in national grid, KE would off-take additional supply of 1,400MW from the national grid to mitigate demand-supply gap in future," he added.

"Additional supply of 1,400MW will be procured in phases and the first phase will include 450MW starting from April 2021 after the completion of rehabilitation works on Jamshoro-KDA transmission lines and NKI cross tripping tests," he added.

He said that NTDC's support for timely completion of interconnection facilities would be of immense importance.  
(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 13, 21/01/2021)

### **'Karachiites are victims of tussle over power, city resources'**

The prolonged war over power and resources has left Karachiites in unending pain and misery as civic conditions of the city are getting worse with each passing day. Only good governance can save Karachi.

This was stated by speakers at a seminar titled 'The priorities and solution to the festering civil problems of Karachi' organised by Karachi Citizens' Forum (KCF) at PMA House on Friday.

In her opening remarks, KCF convener Nargis Rahman regretted failure of successive governments to transform Karachi into a liveable city despite announcing ambitious projects.

"They were [talking] about making Karachi the envy of South East Asia, a smart city for tourists. Budget allocations were made and large sums were also borrowed from international donor agencies, but little materialised," she added.

*Despite massive budget allocations, Karachi is still an unliveable city, seminar told*

Karachi, she pointed out, over the past few years had degraded in international indices and become one of the most polluted cities in the world.

"There is little realisation that more people are dying in the city from diseases caused by air pollution than Covid-19."

Seasoned architect Arif Hasan, also a keynote speaker, said main problems of the common people in Karachi were scarcity of water, blocked drains, undeveloped coastal belt and delay in the Malir Expressway Project.

"The K-4 project is not the solution to Karachi's water issues and the authorities should find out new ways to overcome this problem in consultation with stakeholders," he noted.

The continued water scarcity, he told the audience, had led to an alarming drop in groundwater levels that had gone beyond 2,800 feet as people's reliance on this water source had increased.

Talking about poverty and housing, he said the poor were forced to put their lives in danger and build their homes alongside nullahs. "These slums are often destroyed by the government for completion of projects that see growth of new slums without any planning and facilities, where children are deprived of education," he said.

He was of the opinion that the government should develop vacant land in the city and use it for poor people's housing. He demanded that the government prepare proper housing policy for poor people and the elite should prepare a memorandum in this regard and submit it to the government.

Former Karachi administrator Faheem Zaman Khan said the only problem the city faced was poor governance. "There is a war of power between authorities. During the military rule, local governments were empowered but they were constrained to function in democratic set-ups. If we merge these institutions or bridge their differences, we can overcome the civic issues of Karachi."

Senior economist Dr Kaiser Bengali said: "We cannot achieve the goal of development unless there is coordination among institutions.

There is an imbalance of power between local and provincial governments. Constitutionally, provincial governments are more empowered for local development works. Empowerment of local bodies can only be achieved through a constitutional amendment."

Urban planner Farhan Anwar said it's unfortunate that in the last seven decades successive governments couldn't decide who was responsible for city's development work, often initiated without proper planning.

The dispute among authorities over city's responsibilities had become more intense after the 18th Amendment, he added.

Dr Abdul Ghafoor Shoro of PMA also spoke.

Earlier, KCF deputy convener Dr S.M. Qaiser Sajjad welcomed the guests, while sharing concerns over the state of civic conditions of the city.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 14, 07/03/2021)

### **City's iconic organisations celebrated at K-Electric's KHI Awards 2021**

Celebrating the untiring efforts of organizations that enable Karachi to function all year round and give it its signature ethos, K-Electric (KE) announced 34 winners across 13 different categories at the first edition of the KHI Awards, says a press release.

Commenting on the awards via a video message, Governor Sindh Imran Ismail said, "The participants and winners of these awards are an integral part of the state, as they support the government in its efforts to help the people of the city across a number of different fields including education, public health, and sustainability. I appreciate KE's step to recognize the efforts of these NGOs and I am sure that it will be a catalyst towards bigger plans."

CEO K-Electric Moonis Alvi said "KE is excited to bring the inaugural edition of the KHI Awards. Our relationship with the city extends over 107 years, and we are embedded in the fabric of Karachi. It is heartening to see so many competent and passionate organizations working at the forefront to uplift the city. These awards are KE's humble effort to acknowledge their dedication, and are proud to extend our support in their ongoing efforts."

Winners in each category are as follows:

#### **Digital Accessibility & Financial Inclusion**

doctHERs

#### **Education**

Idara-i-Taleem-o-Agahi

Orange Tree Foundation

Institute of Business Administration Karachi

Development in Literacy

#### **Empowering Women**

Kiran Foundation

The Citizens Foundation (TCF)

Behbud Association Karachi

#### **Heritage & Culture**

National Academy of Performing Arts

Idara-i-Taleem-o-Agahi

Tehzeeb Foundation of Pakistan

#### **Inclusion**

Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre

Family Educational Services Foundation (FESF)

HANDS

#### **Livelihoods & Vocational Training**

The Hunar Foundation

Who is Hussain? Foundation

Karachi Vocational Training Centre



**New Organizations (less than 12 months old)**

Pakistan Legal United Society (PLUS - Legal Aid)  
Pink Pakistan Trust

**Public Health**

Indus Hospital and Health Network (IHHN)  
Layton Rahmatulla Benevolent Trust (LRBT)  
ChildLife Foundation  
Fatimid Foundation  
Lady Dufferin Hospital  
Bait ul Sukoon Cancer Hospital

**Safety (Road, Fire, Home, Personal)**

Pakistan Life Saving Foundation (PALS Rescue)  
Citizens-Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) Sindh

**Social Service**

Ayesha Chundrigar Foundation  
AMTF Helping Blood Disorder Programme  
Roshni Research & Development Welfare Organization  
Panah Trust (Panah Shelter Home)

**Sports**

Karachi United Football Foundation Trust

**Sustainability & Environment**

NED University of Engineering and Technology

**Uplifting Communities**

INFAQ Foundation  
(By Dawn Newspaper, 14, 07/04/2021)

**KE working to add 900MW to its network, governor told**

The Karachi Electric (KE) authorities on Tuesday informed Governor Imran Ismail that the Bin Qasim Power Station-III (BQPS-III) would add 900 megawatts to the power utility's network in the metropolis.

KE executives at the power station were giving a briefing to the visiting governor about the KE's power generation capacity and plans to increase.

The governor reviewed progress of work at the project.

The visit followed his meeting with KE's top executives, who presented an update on the company's preparedness to meet increased electricity demand in Ramazan and summer season of the current year.

*'450MW-unit to be operational within six weeks'*

The governor was told that the BQPS-III was a \$650 million project which would be adding 900 megawatts to KE's existing network. "This mega-project is progressing with close collaboration between leading engineering firms which are partnering with the KE in achieving a shared goal of empowering Karachi," the KE executives said.

They added that the work was progressing swiftly, and above 70 per cent of work for the first unit of 450MW completed. "It is expected to come online within the next five-six weeks," they said.

The governor was informed that the high-efficiency plant would be utilising regasified liquefied natural gas (RLNG) as its primary fuel source. "This will not only help reduce the carbon footprint, but will also further diversify the company's fuel mix and ensure savings on the cost of furnace oil import," they said.

The KE executives were joined by senior representatives of the Siemens, SSGC and PLL who apprised the governor of the progress of the construction of a spur pipeline that would supply 150mmcfcd of gas to the BQPS-III, which was keeping pace with the plant's progress and over 90pc of the work was already completed.

They informed the governor that the underlying gas supply agreement between the SSGC and the PLL was also in an advanced stage and was expected to be finalised as soon as necessary approvals were received from government. The approval was meant to ensure an adequate supply of fuel to energise the plant.

Commenting on his visit, Governor Ismail said that sincerity of the federal government was evident from the support it had extended to the KE. "I am pleased to see that Sehr and Iftar times during this Ramazan are exempt from loadshedding as a result," he remarked.

The governor said he was monitoring the situation on a daily basis to ensure that best possible facilitation was given to citizens of Karachi. "Seeing the scale and progress of work and the commitment with which KE is working, I feel positive for the future of the city," he added.

The governor said that the KE management and representatives of the Siemens, SSGC and PLL had assured him that they were working to complete the project on time. "I have asked them to remove any bottlenecks that may affect energisation of the plant, expected to be inaugurated by the prime minister. I have also assured them of fullest support from my office and from the government of Pakistan," he added.

KE chief executive officer Moonis Alvi said: "The timely execution of this project is critical to meet Karachi's future electricity requirement". He appreciated the federal government's support to the KE which, he said enabled the power utility to meet the city's requirement. "We look forward for this support in the summer season as well," he added.  
(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter 13, 05/05/2021)

### **Can K-Electric be made to serve its consumers equitably**

Recently a K-Electric delegation met Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Shaukat Tarin in Islamabad. The minister assured the team, including the KE chairman and the chief executive officer, that the government would extend all possible support to the power utility to overcome its "constraints" and make it dynamic and sustainable in the long run". The KE did not offer any relief to its consumers in return. Nor did the minister seem interested in talking about public good.

The KE has been wresting concessions from the government on one pretext or another — seeking cheap fuel and tariff hikes off and on. It does not hide the huge profits it reaps annually at the cost of consumers' woes.

The power utility is so powerful that nobody can question its anomalies. Some politicians and political parties do try to discipline it, issue statements to criticise its waywardness, but those verbal attacks are like water off a duck's back. If they could have any impact on the utility's working, the KE would have become a consumer-friendly organisation a long time ago.

If we go by media headlines, which party has not condemned the KE for its announced and unannounced electricity loadshedding. From the mighty Muttahida Qaumi Movement to the Pakistan Peoples Party, which rules Sindh single-handedly, to the Jamaat-i-Islami and the nascent Pak Sarzameen Party, all have aired their vociferous condemnations, warning the KE to mend its ways or face retribution. The Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf, which is at the helm in Islamabad, has also lent its voice to its agitating opponents. The Jamaat-i-Islami, once a powerful proponent of Karachi's rights and now a toothless party struggling to stay relevant, had launched campaigns off and on against the KE. The JI agitated on various roads, near Governor House and at the KE head office, during the last two years or more. It also demanded re-nationalisation of the utility, but could not achieve anything except grabbing its share of media spotlight before abandoning the drive.

The MQM-P has not only held demonstrations in Karachi but also in front of the Parliament House in Islamabad to demand uninterrupted power supply to Karachi.

Sindh chief minister Syed Murad Ali Shah had called its top officials to the Sindh Assembly for an explanation to the lawmakers. The PPP's own newly acquired constituency of NA-249 not only suffers from water scarcity, as was highlighted in the media during the election campaign, it also endures hours-long loadshedding daily.

Over the years people in some areas also took to the streets, burnt tyres, caused excruciating traffic jams and damaged properties to vent their anger against prolonged power outages.

All this attracted the prime minister's attention to the issue and he told his party legislators to hold a meeting with the KE management to sort out the matter.

The KE, however, did not pay much attention to the clamour and continued to tread its chosen path — power cuts, alleged overbilling and tariff hike.

It is commonly held that the utility's meters run faster than they are supposed to, but who can check and confirm it? At least individuals do not have the means to do so. It is not a hidden fact that the KE punishes honest consumers if a few people in that area do not pay their bills on time, and subjects the honest ones to harsher power cuts. The utility officials do not catch and punish the actual wrongdoers. At least they can disconnect the supply to these defaulters. If an unscrupulous consumer manages to steal electricity and the KE cannot detect it, the whole block is made to pay for his misdeed as the extra amount is recovered from them to make up for its perceived losses.

All this has emboldened the wilful KE to deal with its consumers at will.

If you think they have shortened the loadshedding duration in your area, do not assume that it is the result of any public agitation or political pressure. They do so when it suits their own interests.

Hope interests of the consumers, including those living in low-income areas, and the electricity suppliers' merge during this summer.  
(By Naseer Ahmed Dawn, 14, 17/05/2021)



### **Govt, KE to sign agreement for supply of 2,050MW to Karachi**

While de-linking the past payables and receivables worth hundreds of billions of rupees, the government and the K-Electric have agreed to sign a new power purchase agreement (PPA) for supply of a total of 2,050MW to Karachi — instead of historic 650MW — under which the government would make timely payment of tariff subsidies and the KE would clear its power bills through standby letters of credit (SBLC).

In doing so, the government has made a commitment to also sign a separate agreement for payment of market-based mark-up on delayed subsidy payments by the ministry of finance. The KE would provide SBLCs backed by an escrow account to ensure that the Central Power Purchase Agency (CPPA) gets automatic payments for the monthly bills on account of power supply to the KE. The old payables and receivables would be settled through arbitration.

An official said a key demand of the KE for linking subsidy payments with payment of power bills to the CPPA remained unresolved at a meeting of a sub-committee of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) constituted on May 5. While the two sides agreed in a positive manner to sign these agreements for smooth payment mechanism and uninterrupted power supply to Karachi, "how KE will provide SBLC and escrow account without the payment of principal amount of subsidy by the finance ministry" was expected to be settled on Monday and thereafter.

*Govt will make timely payment of tariff subsidies and KE will clear its bills through SBLC*

It was agreed that liquidity would remain the key challenge for the SBLC or the subsidy payment and hence a solution was required or the KE would have to borrow from banks. The KE also wanted a government guarantee for timely payments of subsidies. At current rates, the monthly power bill payable by the KE is estimated at about Rs13 billion compared to about Rs8-9bn monthly tariff differential subsidy. Further meetings would be required to work on an agreement.

The meeting of the sub-committee held at Governor House in Karachi was convened by federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar and attended by Energy Minister Hammad Azhar, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on power and petroleum Tabish Guahar, the secretaries of finance and power and a KE team led by its chief executive officer Moonis Alvi.

Mr Umar confirmed to *Dawn* that legacy disputes of payables and receivables had been de-linked. This was necessary to move forward without which it is not possible to provide about 2,050mw electricity to Karachi from the national grid. "KE had been privatised, not Karachi or the people of the city," he said.

The minister said the supply of 650mw to KE was going on without any legal agreement for years and about 1,400mw would be added now.

Energy Minister Azhar said in a tweet that the government and the KE "agreed upon principles to resolve most of their long standing disputes regarding additional power supply, payment procedures and subsidy disbursements. We will be swiftly moving towards a new PPA, InshAllah".

On the other hand, the KE said its leadership met with members of the inter-ministerial committee and senior government officials and explained the challenges it faced and presented an update on progress of ongoing projects. "During the meeting the Government of Pakistan representatives reaffirmed their commitment to the people of Karachi and indicated that the PPA will be signed shortly, whereas the Terms of Reference (ToR) document for arbitration of the long standing dispute on payments will also be finalised in next few days".

Officials said both sides made their presentations on the PPA and additional power supply to Karachi, and discussed associated guarantees and mechanisms of resultant payments. The meeting ended on a positive note hinting that the next steps and drafts related to the PPA would be exchanged within a few days.

The power division contends that Rs212bn is payable by the KE to the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA)/National Transmission and Dispatch Company. The Cabinet Committee on Energy had decided last year to provide 1350-1400mw additional power supply from national grid to the KE to allay sufferings of the people because of power shortages. The NTDC has already started supplying a part of the additional power.

The KE had been seeking the above-mentioned payments and adjustment of those arising out of additional power supply (about 350-400mw over and above the past previous 650mw) against tariff differential subsidy payable by the ministry of finance. Incidentally, the power purchase agreement (PPA) on old 650mw supply had expired in June 2015 but power supply continues.

The power division told the ECC a few days ago that the KE was billing and collecting bills from consumers for entire 1,000mw supply from national grid, including additional 350mw, but was not making payments for 350mw additional supply to the NTDC, and threatened to stop power supply to the KE. The power division demanded non-adjustment of subsidies against transfer price, enhancement of the capacity to 1,400mw on firm and pro-rata basis, standby letter of credit backed with escrow arrangement for replenishment of SBLC upon encashment or grant of access by the KE.

(By Khaleeq Kiani Dawn, 01, 17/05/2021)

### **Power breakdown hits most city areas as high-tension line trips**

Karachiites had a miserable day on Saturday when most of the city was left with no electricity due to the tripping of a high-tension transmission line a little after noon.

The K-Electric said that its 220kV high-tension circuit was affected by the tripping in National Transmission and Despatch Company's NKI-Baldia 1 and 2, supplying electricity to Karachi.

The federal ministry of energy confirmed that the supply of electricity to Karachi was affected because of the tripping in Northern-Karachi Interconnections transmission lines Baldia 1 and 2 and the NTDC and the city's power utility were busy restoring the supply. No causes of the tripping were, however, mentioned by the authorities.

Sources said over 45 grid stations in Karachi were affected by the tripping of transmission lines after which the power supply to a major part of the city was suspended.

They said that the city was facing a shortage of 1,000MW of electricity.

*Electricity supply to many localities could not be restored till late evening*

While the KE claimed that the restoration efforts were progressing swiftly after the tripping in its high-tension circuit, people from across the city kept on calling the Dawn offices to say that the power supply was not restored to their respective locality till late in the evening.

The power utility said that power supply to PECHS, Defence Housing Authority, Nipa, Civil Lines, North Nazimabad Block S, and other areas had been restored.

Although the major breakdown ensued the tripping of the high-tension transmission line, affecting a large number of localities in the city, reports of outages in several other areas had started pouring in since early morning.

Residents of PECHS Block-6 complained that there had been no electricity in their area since 6:30am, while reports from Saadi Town suggested that there had been no power there since 1am.

Consumers alleged that the power supply was not restored despite several complaints lodged with the power utility. One of them said that he was not even given the complaint number by the KE complaint centre despite repeated complaints.

Similarly, residents from Model Colony, Karimabad and Clifton Block-7 said that they had been without power supply since 7:30am. They said that unannounced loadshedding was being carried out in the exempted areas and they were being told by the power utility that supply was disrupted by localised faults.

Reports from Mehmoodabad said that the power supply was disrupted in the locality at 9.30am and it was not restored till late in the evening. A caller from the vicinity said the power disruption had also led to an acute shortage of water in their area.

People from Lyari, New Karachi, Gulshan-i-Iqbal, Buffer Zone, Shadman Town, Sir Syed Town, Nagin Chowrangi, Surjani Town, FB Area, North Nazimabad, Gulistan-i-Jauhar, Manzoor Colony, PECHS, Korangi, Landhi, Malir, Qayyumabad, Defence, Jamshed Road, Saddar, Burnes Road, Orangi Town, Baldia Town and Nazimabad also said that their areas also suffered a power breakdown.

After the major breakdown, the KE said that restoration efforts had already been begun and were expected to be completed within an hour. It said that all affected grids had been restored and downstream energising was under way and power to all strategic sites had been restored on priority.

The power utility claimed that its transmission system was intact and restoration was progressing swiftly. However, the power supply to several localities was not restored till late in the evening.

The last massive power breakdown took place a little before midnight on Jan 10, plunging the entire country into darkness.  
(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 13, 23/05/2021)

### **Govt, KE fail to settle payment mechanism for more power supply**

The federal government and K-Electric on Wednesday could not settle payment mechanism for additional power supply to Karachi as consumers in the metropolitan city continued to suffer power shortages.

Informed sources said a high-level meeting was called at the power division on the directives of Prime Minister Imran Khan to address electricity supply problems in Karachi after Governor Sindh Imran Ismail took a KE delegation to PM Office.

The meeting at the power division was presided over by Minister for Energy Hammad Azhar but the power division did not issue any statement about it. Separately, a brief statement issued by the press information department said the meeting was attended by Governor Ismail, Minister Azhar and the secretaries of finance and power.

*Company directed to resolve issues hindering uninterrupted supply within 10 days*

The statement said the KE management was told that the federal government had addressed all issues of the power utility and it was clearly KE's responsibility to ensure uninterrupted power supply to residents of Karachi.

Mr Azhar reiterated the resolve to provide more than 400 megawatts to KE.

The KE was directed to resolve all issues hindering uninterrupted power supply to Karachi within 10 days.

An official said the hot weather currently hitting Karachi was expected to be over within these 10 days yet the issue would remain unresolved as major political and financial stakes were involved and financial signing authorities were reluctant to burn their fingers in such issues.

Informed sources said a group of cabinet members and top bureaucrats had raised red flags over supply of about 1,200MW of electricity to the KE without any power purchase agreement or payment mechanism.

This group has warned the prime minister and the power division that while the federal government could provide more than 2,000MW electricity to the KE within 24 hours as surplus generation was available in national grid, the KE did not have the system in place to absorb this additional supply.

They also complained that the KE had not placed an order to Pakistan LNG Limited for additional gas supply even for the testing of its new Bin Qasim plant whose first unit should have been operational by June with generation capacity of 450MW followed by another unit of same capacity in October. This was because the plant was not ready yet, they said.

The political problem, however, for the federal government is that neither it can stop power supply to the KE from national grid, nor had it been able to provide legal cover to power supply to KE taking place without any payment.

The power division contends that Rs212bn are payable by KE to the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA)/National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC). The Cabinet Committee on Energy (CCoE) had decided last year to provide 1,350-1,400MW additional power supply from national grid to the KE to address sufferings of the city people because of power shortages. The NTDC has already started supply as part of the additional power.

The KE had been seeking adjustment of the abovementioned payments and those arising out of additional power supply (about 350-400MW over and above the previous 650MW) against tariff differential subsidy payable by the ministry of finance. Incidentally, the power purchase agreement on old 650MW supply had expired in June 2015 but power supply to the KE continues.

The power division told ECC a few days ago that the KE was billing and collecting bills from consumers for entire 1,100MW supply from national grid, including additional 450MW, but was not making payments to the NTDC for additional supply. The power division and the NTDC had recently threatened to stop power supply to the KE. However, the political connection prevailed over the power division and supplies continued unabated.

(By Khaleeq Kiani Dawn, 13, 03/06/2021)