

PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT (PUBLIC)
AIWAN-E-SADR, ISLAMABAD

Rep. No.534/WM/2021
Date of Decision: 31.01.2023

Multan Electric Power Company Vs Shahid Iqbal

REPRESENTATION FILED BY MULTAN ELECTRIC POWER COMPANY AGAINST THE ORDER OF THE WAFaqi MOHTASIB IN COMPLAINT NO. M/2770/2021

Kindly refer to your representation addressed to the President in the background mentioned below:-

2. This representation has been filed by Multan Electric Power Company (the Agency) assailing the order dated 02.12.2021 of the Wafaqi Mohtasib whereby it has been held as under:-

“Para 4.3.2 (c) (d) of Consumer Service Manual 2021 prescribes that in case of replacement of a meter, the data of the impugned meter shall be retrieved and actual consumption as per retrieved data shall be charged to the consumer after issuing a notice and already charged bills issued on average basis shall be adjusted. The consumer’s account shall not be liable to any adjustment if the data is not retrieved within three months of display wash. However, if data retrieval is not possible within DISCO and meter is sent to the manufacturer/ company for data retrieval, and if its data is retrieved within six (6) months, then the consumer will be charged retrieved units after issuance of notice. In case, data is not retrieved within six (6) months the consumer’s account shall not be liable to any adjustment. The meter display washed out in 11/2021 and retrieved units must be charged maximum within 6 months, while the impugned retrieved units have been charged very belatedly. No notice was served on the consumer before debiting the impugned units and he was condemned unheard. Thus, the arbitrary process of charging the consumer retrieved units pertaining to previous period (10-12/2020) is contrary to the provisions of Manual ibid; Rules, regulation, prescribed procedure and is a departure from established practice which is tantamount to mal-administration under Article 2(2) of P.O. No.1 of 1983; consequently, the complaint under Regulation 23(4) of the Wafaqi Mohtasib (Investigation & Disposal of Complaints) Regulations, 2013 is accepted.

Following the above, in terms of Article 11 of P.O. No.1 of 1983, the Agency is recommended to consider the matter further, cancel or modify the process, provide appropriate relief to the complainant in accordance with the above discussion policy(s) and provisions of Consumer Service Manual and compliance be reported within 30 days or reasons for not doing so may be intimated in terms of Article 11(2) of P.O. No.1 of 1983.”

3. Shahid Iqbal (the complainant) had alleged that the Agency had charged him excess average for the period November-December, 2020 and January, 2021. He has been subjected to detection of Rs.402,357/-. According to him, he requested the Agency for rectification of detection bill but to no avail. Feeling aggrieved, he approached the learned Wafaqi Mohtasib who passed the impugned orders, hence the instant representation.

4. The case was fixed for hearing on 19.01.2023. The complainant Shahid Iqbal while Sibghatullah, SDO on behalf of the Agency has attended hearing.

5. The representative of the Agency has contended that the display of the meter was washed out; that the meter was sent to laboratory and bill was charged on the basis of units retrieved; that the Agency replaced the meter; thus the findings of the learned Wafaqi Mohtasib are unjustified and may be set aside.

6. The complainant stated that meter became defective and it was not his fault; that the Agency charged bill on higher side against the history of bills for last one year; that the Agency removed the defective meter and has not installed new one so far; he requested to uphold the order of the learned Wafaqi Mohtasib.

7. After perusal of record and hearing the parties, it has been observed that the Agency has not charged the bill on the average of last 11-months as per rules; that the Agency has not replaced the meter of the complainant so far and representative of the Agency has failed to give any plausible justification in this regard. The learned Wafaqi Mohtasib has rightly passed the impugned order dated 02.12.2021.

8. In view of the above, no interference is warranted with the impugned order.

9. Accordingly, the Hon'able President has been pleased to reject the instant representation with direction to the Agency that meter be installed within 15-days.

-Sd-
(Asghar Ali)
Director (Legal)

The Chief Executive Officer,
Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO),
MEPCO Headquarter, Khanewal Road, **Multan**.

Shahid Iqbal S/o Muhammad Iqbal,
R/o Saddar Bazar, Rajanpur,
Tehsil & District **Rajanpur**.

Copy to:

The Secretary, Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman)'s Secretariat, Constitution Avenue, Islamabad.