

### **Where's the power?**

While rates charged for each unit of electricity consumed have spiralled, nothing has been done to improve the supply of power to consumers. If anything, it would seem things have gotten worse in Karachi after the city was plunged into darkness late on Monday after very mild rainfall. Not only did the power outages affect electricity supply, they also left many areas in the city without water. If this is the state of Pakistan's commercial capital, one can only wonder how poor the state of the electric grid is elsewhere. The failure in Karachi is not only the failure of the government, but a larger reflection of how little privatisation has delivered in improving the country's power grid. Where private power distributors were expected to do better, K-Electric has continued to fail. The company failed to bring back power in all areas on Tuesday too.

The fact is that improving the electricity grid will not come cheaply. There is much left to be done. Many experts have previously raised this issue before and will continue to do so again. K-Electric blames the rain and the poor transmission lines. Someone needs to take responsibility for these issues. The life of a big commercial city like Karachi cannot afford such outages. It is K-Electric's job to fix Karachi's transmission links, but it seems to want the government to do it instead. Amidst all this, customers ask whether it is fair to ask them to pay more for worse service. The worry is that the monsoon's have only started in Karachi now. If there is more rain, it is likely to show up the entire grid. This should not be happening. Already, this situation has led to a 150 million gallon water shortage in the city, which needs a solution rather quickly. Karachi's power grid should not be tripping so easily due to a small amount of rain. A painful monsoon season seems to await the residents of Karachi.

Editorial