

**Merge K-Electric with national grid**

TO alleviate the perennial electricity problems faced by consumers in Karachi, the government should merge K-Electric with the national grid technically, commercially and administratively. This will not only help Karachi's citizens receive better service but will also ensure a centralised control of the power system for the whole country by a single agency i.e the NTDC (National Transmission & Despatch Company).

In a fully integrated, synchronised power system, planned and unplanned power shutdowns will be minimised across the country. The distributed merits and benefits of separate entities will be utilised optimally in consumers' interest. It will also help in reducing loadshedding in Karachi and in the rest of the country.

In addition, the central overseeing authorities (Nepra and allied agencies) will have a more effective control over the power system in Karachi than the present loose setup. The government needs to mobilise all its resources and expertise in this respect and start legislation in this regard.

KE's merger with the national grid will improve the situation for the city. In case of a shutdown in Karachi, the shortage could be covered by import of energy from the integrated grid. Vice versa is also possible if exports are required to the main grid in case of surplus power available in the KE system.

As a private company, KE is reluctant to invest in power projects upgradation and maintainance as its main objective is to maximise its profit. The sooner the merger of KE with the rest of the power system is done the better for Karachi consumers and the government.

One hopes the authorities pay attention to these suggestions.

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