



From the Newspaper

16<sup>th</sup> July, 2020

### **K-Electric's poor performance**

IT is ironic that the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepa) has yet again increased the K-Electric tariff by Rs2.89 per unit. This amounts to rewarding the utility's poor performance which has nothing to its credit except record power outages, loadshedding, frequent power failures, erratic voltage and — most alarming — the deaths of scores of people, including children, in Karachi owing to KE's faulty system.

Recently, Energy Minister Omar Ayub disclosed on the National Assembly floor that the government was ready to enhance power transmission but KE would not have the capacity in its system before 2022 for the storage additional quantum of electricity. This is an alarming situation. This means that the people of Karachi cannot expect relief for another two years.

Nowadays, as Nepa is hearing the public complaints against KE, the power outages have increased manifold. In fact, Nepa seems to be helpless.

To my mind, it seems that Nepa and Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra)) are helping KE. As soon as Ogra increases the price of furnace oil, Nepa transfers this benefit to KE but if the price of furnace oil decreases, the benefit is not passed on to consumers.

In view of the above, the federal government should avail the services of Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research as well as the institutions of quality control to thoroughly check the equipment used by KE in its system, including generation, transmission and distribution of electricity.

The Centre should also direct the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan, FBR, Competition Commission and the office of auditor general to thoroughly audit the finances of KE, particularly billing, for the last decade.

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