

Pakistan Information Commission
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In the Pakistan Information Commission, Islamabad
Appeal No 1565-12/21

Rana Abrar Khalid

(Appellant)

Vs.

Islamabad Electric Supply Company

(Respondent)

ORDER

Date: April 13, 2022

Zahid Abdullah: Information Commissioner

A. The Appeal

1. The Appellant filed an appeal on December 24, 2021, to the Commission stating that he filed request for information with Islamabad Electric Supply on December 13, 2021 under the Right of Access to Information Act 2017 but did not receive any response from the public body.
2. The information sought by the Appellant is as follows:
"I would like to know whether Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has issued any electrical connection for the multi-story building Fortune Residency situated at 26, NPF E 11/4, Islamabad (Islamabad Capital Territory)? If yes, how many electric connections have been issued for the Fortune Residency and what are their status and category, i.e. residential/commercial/industrial/agricultural etc.?"

2 Has the Fortune Residency (situated at Street 26, NPF E 11/4, Islamabad) been issued NOC by Capital Development Authority (CDA), is the status of Fortune Residency legal?

3. If the status of Fortune Residency is Legal, then please inform me that why Residential Electric Connections have not been issued to the residents/owners of the apartments/facts of Fortune Residency till now?

4. Did you know that Fortune Residency is a multi-story apartment building in which 160 to 170 families live and all the apartments in the building are provided with electricity from two commercial electric connections?

5. Let me know, if the status of Fortune Residency is illegal (NOC was not issued by Capital Development Authority), then how and why are two electric connections being provided for this building by Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO)?

6. *Let me know, when and on which name were the said two commercial/residential electric connections issued, through which electricity is being provided to 160 to 170 apartments/flats of Fortune Residency? And how much of the balance of these two electric connections/meters is due to the management of Fortune Residency? (Please tell with month wise detail of electricity bills of both connections/meters from the date of issue, payment, and balance amount).*

7 *Let me know, what steps has ISECO taken so far to recover electricity dues/arrears from the management of Fortune Residency?*

8. *Did you know, electricity is being provided to the residents of 160 to 170 apartments/flats of Fortune Residency by check meters from two IESCO electric connections and management of Fortune Residency charged them 30 to 35 rupees per Unit (Kilowatt/h) electricity?*

9. *Let me know, is it true that one of the two electric connections issued to Fortune Residency or supplies electricity to Fortune Residency is often disconnected on the basis of non-payment, and sometimes both connections are disconnected due to nonpayment?*

10. *Let me know, is it not a matter of running a private grid to supply electricity to the residents of 160 to 170 apartments/flats in an illegal building (without NOC by Capital Development Authority) through one or two electric connections through check meters and charging them Rs 30-35 per unit? Isn't this illegal?*

11. *Let me know, is it not a violation of electricity supply (load approved at the time of issuing the connection) through the check meters of the residents of 160 to 170 apartments/flats of a multi-story building by only one or two electric connections? And isn't that dangerous? Couldn't this action of Fortune Residency's management lead to a major accident for IESCO's transmission system at any time?*

12. *Let me know, isn't it true that the management of Fortune Residency, with the Connivance/complicity of the staff of IESCO, does not regularly pay the electricity bill (of both connections) every month but temporally restores the connection by paying partial payment, therefore the management of Fortune Residency with the connivance/complicity of IESCO staff (illegally) through one or two connections, residents of 160 to 170 flats /apartments provide expensive electricity through check meters and earn profit, in return the management of Fortune Residency regularly pays hundreds of thousands rupees (laks) to IESCO staff every month?"*

B. Proceedings

3. The record on the file shows that the commission sent notice to the public body to submit its response as to why the requested information was not provided to the Appellant. The public body did not submit its response.
4. The commission also sent hearing summons to the public body and the Additional Director, IESCO did not attend the hearing.

C. Discussion and Commission's View on Relevant Issues

5. This commission takes strong exception to the fact that the Respondent neither responded to the requests for information filed by the citizen nor responded to the notices of the commission. Such utter disregard to the law will not be tolerated in future.
6. This commission maintains that the requested information pertains to the functions and services provided by the public body and as such it is public information. These functions and services pertain to issuance of all types of electricity connections in accordance with the laws of the land, current status of electricity connections and steps taken by IESCO for the recovery of outstanding amounts.
7. The disclosure of requested information will shed light on level of efficiency of IESCO in performing its functions and address the trust-gap between citizens and public institutions.

D. Order

8. The Appeal is allowed. The Respondent is directed to provide the Appellant requested information in para 2 of this Order, based on records available with the Respondent, ignoring item No. 12 of general query, at the earliest but not later than 7 working days of the receipt of this Order.
9. Copies of this Order be sent to the Respondent and the Appellant for information and necessary action.

Fawad Malik

Information Commissioner

Zahid Abdullah

Information Commissioner

Announced on: April 13, 2022

This order consists of 3 (three) pages, each page has been read and signed