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Power Companies Overcharge Consumers Rs244 Billion, Audit Reveals

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An explosive audit has exposed eight electricity Distribution Companies (DISCOs) in Pakistan for overbilling consumers by Rs244 billion, masking inefficiencies and theft while burdening households. The scandal, spanning fiscal year 2023–24, demands urgent accountability to restore trust in the energy sector.

The Auditor General of Pakistan's report, released on July 22, 2025, detailed systemic fraud by Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO), Hyderabad

Electric Supply Company (HESCO), Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO), Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO), Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO), Sukkur Electric Power Company (SEPCO), and Tribal Areas Electric Supply Company (TESCO). These companies inflated bills for 904.6 million extra units, with five DISCOs overcharging 278,649 consumers Rs47.81 billion in a single month, per The Express Tribune. QESCO led the misconduct, overbilling agricultural tube wells by Rs148 billion to conceal operational failures, while MEPCO shockingly sent Rs496 million in bills to deceased customers, per The News.

The audit revealed that overbilling was a deliberate tactic to offset line losses and power theft, with Rs22 billion charged under “load adjustments” and Rs18.64 billion via 1,432 feeders. Some companies claimed refunds, including Rs5.29 billion for meter reading errors and Rs2.18 billion in PESCO credits, but provided no evidence, raising transparency concerns. “This is daylight robbery,” tweeted @cymakhan0, echoing public outrage on X. The lack of action against responsible officials fuels perceptions of a corrupt system shielding powerful interests.

This scandal exacerbates Pakistan’s economic woes, hitting consumers already grappling with soaring tariffs and inflation. The government must act decisively to recover funds, punish culprits, and overhaul DISCOs’ operations, as privatization talks linger without progress, per Pakistan Today. Stronger oversight and transparent billing are critical to protect citizens and ensure a stable energy sector vital for economic growth.