

ELECTRICITY CGRF
(Under The Electricity Act, 2003)
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS
SRI VIJAYA PURAM

Before:

Shri. R. Ravichandar, Chairman.
Shri. Narayan Chandra Baroi, Member (Licensee).
Smt. Biji Thomas, Independent Member (JERC Nominated).

In the matter of:

Shri. B.N. Das, R/o Deen Street, Junglighat, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman.

.....Complainant

Versus

The Electricity Department, A & N Administration, Sri Vijaya Puram.

.....Respondent

Complaint No. : ANI/C.G. No. 35/2024 dated 07/10/2024.
Complaint : Excess billing and Replacement of Faulty meters (Domestic)
Date of Hearing : 28/10/2024
Date of Order : 05/11/2024

ORDER

Background

The complainant Shri. B.N. Das, R/o Deen Street, Junglighat, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman, filed a complaint vide R.D. No. 801 dated 07/10/2024 regarding Excess billing and Replacement of Faulty meters (Domestic).

The complaint was registered as ANI/C.G. No. 35/2024 and forwarded on 08/10/2024 vide letter No. ANI/CGRF/10-358/502 to the Nodal Officer (CGRF), Executive Engineer (HQ) and Assistant Engineer-II(HQ), Electricity Department for submitting reply/comments and attending the Hearing fixed on 28/10/2024 at 10:30 a.m. in the Hearing Hall of the Electricity (CGRF), A&N Islands, Horticulture Road, Haddo, Port Blair with relevant documents to depose before the Forum. A copy of this letter was also endorsed to the complainant for attending the Hearing on 28/10/2024 at 10.30 a.m.

The Assistant Engineer (W/Shop), Nodal Officer (CGRF), Electricity Department vide his letter No. EL/AE(W/Shop)/2-16/2024/576 dated 21/10/2024 submitted reply/comments on behalf of the Licensee/Respondent (ED), which was received by the Forum vide R.D No. 822 dated 21/10/2024 (the letter is kept in case file) (*Exbt. -1*).



Hearing on 28/10/2024

The Hearing was held on 28/10/2024 in the Hearing Hall, Electricity CGRF at 10:30 a.m. The following officer is attended the hearing: -

- (i) Shri. Rakesh Singh, JE (D/Farm), Elect. Dept.

Statement of the Complainant

The complainant Shri. B.N. Das, R/o Deen Street, Junglighat, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman stated in his complaint letter dated 07.10.2024 that "I am writing to bring to your kind attention a matter of serious concern regarding ₹exorbitant high electricity bills I have received for the month of July 2024. In this Context I am to inform you that my household consists of two elderly members (Senior Citizen). We hardly use any heavy electrical appliances that could justify such an excessive amount, our primary usage involves basic electrical items such as Ceiling Fans, Tube Lights, TV, and a Refrigerator. It is important to note that despite our limited usage of electricity, the bill I received for the month of July 2024 (Consumer No. F/3775) is a staggering ₹6,246 (Copy enclosed).

Further to add here that one of my rented room, which is occupied by tenant has received a bill of ₹3,238 (Consumer No. F/3776) for the month of July 2024. It is pertinent to mention that the room is equipped only with basic electrical fixtures like tube lights and ceiling fans only which can be physically inspected by officials of Electricity Department. There are no additional heavy appliances. Given the low level of consumption, a bill of ₹3,238 is completely unjustifiable.

I also have a vacant rented room which is not currently occupied by any tenants. Surprisingly, I have received a bill of ₹518 (Consumer No. F/3655) for this room despite it being unused & disconnected from any significant electrical consumption.

In response to these inflated electricity bills, I have already made several visits to Dairy Farm Site Office. I met the JE and explained the issue of faulty meters on multiple occasions. Each time, I was assured that the matter would be addressed, and the faulty meters would be replaced. However, despite these assurances, no action has been taken to resolve the issue and I continue to receive unjustifiably high electricity bills. The recurring issue of faulty billing is causing significant mental stress, particularly for us as elderly individuals who depend on a fixed income. I had expected prompt action, given the severity of the situation, but lack of re of response has left me with no choice but to escalate this matter. The AE-II, E/D. letter dt. 25/09/24 is enclosed.



I would appreciate it if you could look into, the abnormally high bills I have received for the month of July 2024, and make necessary adjustments based on actual consumption. It is only fair that I am charged for the electricity I have actually used and not for erroneous readings caused by faulty meters.

In light of the above, I kindly request your esteemed office to immediately replace these faulty meters to prevent further incorrect billing in the future. I would be grateful, if necessary, actions are taken without further delay."

The complainant enclosed photocopies of application submitted to the AE-II, Elect. Dept., E-bills, and Aadhaar Card as ID proof, which is kept in the case file **(Exbt. -2)**.

Reply of the Respondent/Licensee (ED)

The Assistant Engineer-II (HQ) submitted para-wise comments on behalf of the Respondent/Licensee (ED) vide letter No. EL/AE/SD-II/1-29/2024-25/481 dated 16/10/2024 stated that: -

"Sir, Kind attention is invited to the letter cited under reference on the above subject. In this regard, it is to inform that the Junior Engineer, Dairy farm solved the grievances of the consumer regarding excess electric bill raised vide consumer A/c No F/ 3775, F/ 3776 & F/ 3655 (Domestic).

*The complainant has submitted an affidavit addressed to the Chairman (CGRF) to withdraw the complaint on dated 15.10. 2024 and a letter dated 16. 10 2024 addressed to the undersigned, in which he informed that he is satisfied the action taken by the department and he has no further grievances, hence the complainant withdraw his complaint (copy enclosed)
This is for your kind information please."*

The AE-II(HQ), Electricity Department enclosed photocopies of complainant's application dated 16.10.2024 and Affidavit dated 15.10.2024, which is kept in the case file **(Exbt. -3)**.

Submission of the Complainant

The complainant was not attended the hearing due to resolve his complaint by the department to his satisfactory accordingly he withdrawn the complaint.

Submission of the Respondent (Licensee)

The respondent clarified that the Junior Engineer from Dairy Farm addressed the complainant's concerns regarding inflated bills for Consumer Account Numbers F/3775, F/3776, and F/3655. According to the respondent,



the complainant submitted an affidavit on 15/10/2024 to the Chairman of the CGRF, requesting to withdraw the complaint. Moreover, the complainant sent a letter on 16/10/2024 to the department, acknowledging satisfaction with the measures taken and confirming the absence of any further grievances. The respondent included copies of both the affidavit and the letter as evidence.

Forum's Observation

The complainant submitted that they are facing a serious issue with excessively high electricity bills received for July 2024. They highlighted that their household, consisting of two elderly senior citizens, only uses basic electrical appliances such as ceiling fans, tube lights, a TV, and a refrigerator. Despite the minimal usage, the complainant received an unusually high bill amounting to ₹6,246 for Consumer No. F/3775. Additionally, a rented room with minimal electrical fixtures, occupied by a tenant, received a bill of ₹3,238 for Consumer No. F/3776. The complainant stated that the tenant's room only has tube lights and ceiling fans, with no heavy appliances. Another rented room, which is currently unoccupied and has no significant electrical consumption, was billed ₹518 for Consumer No. F/3655.

The complainant has visited the Dairy Farm Site Office numerous times, meeting with the Junior Engineer and explaining the issue. Despite assurances from the JE that the faulty meters would be addressed and replaced, no action was taken, and the complainant continues to receive inflated bills. The issue has caused considerable mental stress for the elderly complainants, who rely on a fixed income. They provided a letter dated 25/09/24 from AE-II, E/D, and requested that the high bills be adjusted to reflect actual consumption and that faulty meters be replaced to prevent future billing errors.

The respondent stated that the grievances raised by the complainant regarding excessive electricity bills for Consumer Account Numbers F/3775, F/3776, and F/3655 were resolved by the Junior Engineer at Dairy Farm. The complainant submitted an affidavit to the Chairman of the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) on 15/10/2024, expressing a desire to withdraw the complaint. Additionally, the complainant addressed a letter to the respondent on 16/10/2024, indicating satisfaction with the actions taken by the department and confirming that no further grievances remained. Copies of the affidavit and the letter were enclosed for reference.

The Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum noted that the complainant did not attend the hearing and had already withdrawn the case. The affidavit dated 15/10/2024 indicated that the complainant's wish to withdraw the matter. Consequently, the forum decided to close the case, finding it without any merit. No further actions are required, as the complainant expressed satisfaction with the department's response.



Hence,

It is Ordered:

After detailed deliberations, submissions and documents produced before the Forum, and based on the observation so reached, the following Order is passed: -

1. Since the complainant withdrawn the case, the Forum decided to close the case without any merit.
2. The complainant is advised to install ELPD in the wiring to prevent any earth leakage, fire hazards and safety of equipment's in the premises.
3. The Respondent/Licensee (ED) is directed to submit **compliance report within 15 days** from the date of receipt of this order as per JERC Regulation No. 31/2024.
4. As per JERC Regulation No. 31/2024 under Chapter-III of 30, non-compliance of the Forum Order shall be treated as violation of the Regulations of the Commission and accordingly liable for action under Section 142 of the Electricity Act 2003.
5. The complainant shall not be harassed overtly or covertly in any manner whatsoever in future for exercising his right by availing the redressal within his jurisdiction.

"The complainant, if aggrieved, by non-redressal of his / her grievance by the Forum or non-implementation of CGRF order by the Licensee, may make an Appeal prescribed Annexure-IV, to the **Electricity Ombudsman, Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for the State of Goa and UTs**, 3rd Floor, Udyog Vihar, Phase, Sector-18, Gurugram - 122015 (Haryana). Phone - 0124-4684709, E-mail: ombudsman.jercuts@gov.in **within one month from the date of receipt of this order**".

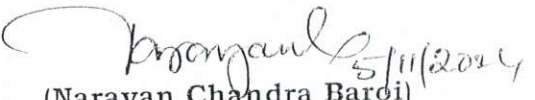
[Annexure – IV Appeal Form can be collected from the office of the Forum on any of the working days].



A certified copy of this Order be sent to the Superintending Engineer (Licensee/Respondent), Executive Engineer (HQ), Nodal Officer (CGRF), Assistant Engineer-II(HQ), Assistant Engineer (IT), Electricity Department, Complainant and the Electricity Ombudsman, JERC for the State of Goa & UTs, Gurugram, (Haryana).


(Biji Thomas)
Independent Member
Electricity CGRF


(R. Ravichandar)
Chairman
Electricity CGRF


(Narayan Chandra Baroi)
Member (Licensee)
Electricity CGRF

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