

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:

Smti. Laxmi Mandal, W/o Shri. Vinod Halder, R/o Bamba Nallah, Sippighat,
Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman.

.....Complainant

Versus

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

.....Respondent

Complaint No. : ANI/C.G. No. 53/2025 dated 28/01/2025.
Complaint : New Connection (Domestic)
Date of Hearing : 04/02/2025
Date of Order : 07/02/2025



ORDER

Background

The complainant Smti. Laxmi Mandal, W/o Shri. Vinod Halder, R/o Bamba Nallah, Sippighat, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman, filed a complaint vide R.D. No. 963 dated 28/01/2025 regarding New Connection (Domestic).

The complaint was registered as ANI/C.G. No. 53/2025 and forwarded on 28/01/2025 vide letter No. ANI/CGRF/10-376/612 to the Nodal Officer (CGRF), Executive Engineer (SAD) and Assistant Engineer-IV, Electricity Department for submitting reply/comments and attending the Hearing fixed on 04/02/2025 at 10:30 a.m. in the Hearing Hall of the Electricity (CGRF), A&N Islands, Horticulture Road, Haddo, Shri Vijaya Puram with relevant documents to depose before the Forum. A copy of this letter was also endorsed to the complainant for attending the Hearing on 04/02/2025 at 10.30 a.m.

The Assistant Engineer-IV (Chouldari), Electricity Department vide his letter No. EL/AE/CD/3-21/2025/664 dated 31/01/2025 submitted reply/comments on behalf of the Licensee/Respondent (ED) (the letter is kept in case file) (**Exbt. -1**).

Hearing on 04/02/2025

The Hearing was held on 04/02/2025 in the Hearing Hall, Electricity CGRF at 10:30 a.m. The following were present: -

- (i) Smti. Laxmi Mandal, Complainant.
- (ii) Shri. Binod Halder, Asst. Complainant.
- (iii) Shri. K. Vijayan, Asst. Complainant.
- (iv) Shri. Suresh Kumar, AE-IV, Elect. Dept.
- (v) Shri. Chiranjeet Sen, JE, Elect. Dept.

Statement of the Complainant

The complainant Smti. Laxmi Mandal, W/o Shri. Vinod Halder, R/o Bamba Nallah, Sippighat, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman stated in her complaint letter dated 28.01.2025 that *"Sir I am to state that I am a consumer of Electricity, residing at Bamba Nallah, Sippighat village and have applied for Electric connection for Domestic purpose for my newly constructed house, which was submitted to the Assistant Engineer vide online application No. 13746 dated 02/05/2023 (Copy enclosed). The department has not directed me to pay the estimate charges but have directed me to pay the security deposit of Rs. 5,940.00 vide Pledge deposit Account No, 00323405 1102366 (Copy enclosed). Since 24-10-2024 I am made to run from pillar to post for obtaining electric connection.*

The stated problem inspite of written request and several personal visits & telephonic calls have not been responded till date. I came to understand that a forum has been established to redress the Grievances of Electricity Consumers, hence approaching you for redressal.

The relief sought for by me is.

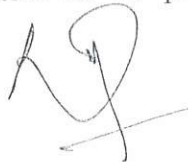
Provide Electric connection to my residence.

Reasons for such a prolong delay in resolving the Grievances by Electricity Department officers.

My agony may please be judged with suitable compensation as admissible under rules of JERC regulations.

I will not be able to attend the hearing if any personally and do hereby authorized Shri Vinod Halder, H/o Smti Laxmi Mondal, R/o Bamba Nallah, Sippighat to attend on behalf of me."

The complainant enclosed photocopies of Affidavit dated 02/05/2023, Declaration/ Undertaking, letter to the AE-IV, online application no. 13746 dated 02/05/2023, SD and Aadhaar card as ID proof, which is kept in the case file (Exbt. -2).



Reply of the Respondent/Licensee (ED)

The Assistant Engineer-IV submitted para-wise comments on behalf of the Respondent/Licensee (ED) vide letter No. EL/AE/CD/3-21/2025/664 dated 31/01/2025 stated that: -

"The Applicant applied for providing 1 phase Domestic NSC in online mode vide Application No.13746 dt 02/05/2023 to the undersign.

The said application was rejected on 06/06/2023 due to non-submission of residential certificate in encroachment land.

Again, the Applicant Applied for new connection online mode vide application No. 18510 dated 13/11/2023 with residential certificate.

The said application was forwarded to the Tehsildar Ferrargunj vide AE office Letter NO.F.NO.EL/AE/CD/3-14/2023/1178 dated 12/12/2023 for verification of land in respect of Assistant Secretary (Power) Circular No 4-3/21/2015-power dated 09/10/2023.

Again, the application was forwarded to J.E (Sippighat) for inspection, the same application was send by Junior Engineer Sippighat for obtaining clearance from forest department whether the subject land is forest or revenue land vide JE Sippighat letter NO. EL/JE/SG/1-16/24-25/198 dated 05/07/2024.

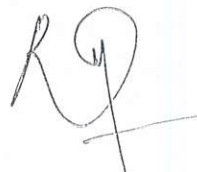
The required forest clearance was received by the Junior Engineer Sippighat on 29/07/2024 vide Forest office L.NO. RO/GC/G2/ (A)/583 dated 27/07/2024.

The junior Engineer Sippighat was inspected at the Premises and prepare estimate and the same estimate was approved but the mean time unavailability of Single-phase energy meter at Site office the connection was not provided."

The AE-IV, Electricity Department enclosed photocopies of letter received from JE(Sippighat), online application no. 18510 dated 13/11/2023, letter to the Tehsildar dated 12/12/2023, letter to the Range officer dated 05/07/2024, letter received from Range officer(G/charma), which is kept in the case file (**Exbt. -3**).

Submission of the Complainant

The complainant, a resident of Bamba Nallah, Sippighat, had been waiting for an electricity connection for a prolonged period despite completing all necessary formalities. After their initial application was rejected due to a documentation issue, they reapplied and successfully obtained verification and approval. However, despite depositing the security amount on 24/10/2024, they were continuously denied a connection due to the unavailability of an energy meter. The complainant expressed their frustration, citing multiple personal visits, written requests, and telephonic follow-ups, all of which yielded no resolution. Feeling helpless and distressed, they approached the forum, seeking immediate action, an explanation for the delay, and appropriate compensation for the inconvenience suffered.



Submission of the Respondent (Licensee)

The electricity department acknowledged the complainant's application history and the challenges faced in processing their request. The initial rejection was due to the absence of a residential certificate for encroached land, which was later rectified in the second application. The department completed all required inspections, secured the necessary forest clearance, and approved the estimate for the connection. However, due to a shortage of single-phase energy meters at the site office, they were unable to proceed with providing the connection. The department admitted that the complainant had deposited the required security amount and that the connection was pending solely due to the meter shortage. They assured that once a meter was collected from another section office, the connection would be provided at the earliest.

Forum's Observation

The case pertains to a consumer's grievance regarding the delay in obtaining a domestic electricity connection for their newly constructed house at Bamba Nallah, Sippighat village. Despite following the necessary application procedures and depositing the security deposit, the complainant has not been provided with an electricity connection. The matter was brought before the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) for resolution.

The complainant, a resident of Bamba Nallah, Sippighat, had applied for an electricity connection for their newly constructed house via an online application (No. 13746) on 02/05/2023. Despite fulfilling the requirements, including the payment of a security deposit of ₹5,940 on 24/10/2024, the electricity department failed to provide the connection. The complainant claims to have made multiple visits to the department and submitted written requests, but no action was taken. Frustrated by the prolonged delay and lack of response, the complainant sought redressal from the forum, requesting the immediate release of the electricity connection, an explanation for the delay, and suitable compensation as per the JERC regulations. Due to personal constraints, the complainant authorized Shri Vinod Halder to represent them in the hearing.

The electricity department stated that the complainant initially applied for a new service connection (NSC) under application No. 13746 on 02/05/2023. However, this application was rejected on 06/06/2023 due to the non-submission of a residential certificate for the encroached land. The complainant reapplied for the connection through application No. 18510 on 13/11/2023, this time submitting the required residential certificate. The application was subsequently forwarded to the Tehsildar, Ferrargunj, for land verification, as per Circular No. 4-3/21/2015-Power dated 09/10/2023. Following this, the Junior Engineer (Sippighat) sought clearance from the Forest Department to confirm whether the land in question was forest or



revenue land. The necessary clearance was received on 29/07/2024. After an inspection, an estimate was prepared and approved. However, the connection was not provided due to the unavailability of single-phase energy meters at the site office.

The Forum observed that the complainant applied for a new service connection on 13/11/2023, after rectifying the initial deficiencies. The security deposit was successfully paid on 24/10/2024. The electricity department has cited a shortage of single-phase energy meters as the reason for the delay. The verification and inspection processes were completed, and the estimate was approved. The electricity department has not denied the complainant's eligibility for the connection. The complainant has made multiple attempts, both in writing and in person, to expedite the process but received no timely response. The department failed to communicate the real reason for the delay (i.e., meter unavailability) to the complainant in a timely manner. The delay has caused significant inconvenience to the complainant, who has been waiting for a long time despite fulfilling all requirements. The department should have taken proactive steps to arrange a meter from another section office.

The Forum directs that the electricity department shall immediately arrange a single-phase energy meter from a nearby section office and release the connection within seven days. The electricity department must establish a mechanism to ensure better communication with applicants regarding the status of their applications. The Assistant Engineer and Junior Engineer concerned must ensure that applicants are informed about pending requirements and the reasons for delays in a timely manner. The department must maintain adequate stock of energy meters to prevent similar issues in the future. A compliance report regarding the provision of the connection shall be submitted to the forum within fifteen days. If the electricity department fails to provide the connection within the stipulated time, a penalty may be imposed as per the regulations. The forum directs the department to conduct a review of all pending applications facing similar delays due to shortage of meter.

Hence,

It is Ordered:

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

1. The Case is closed with specific directions to the complainant and the Respondent/Licensee (ED).



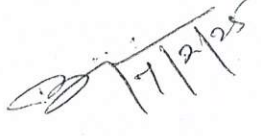
2. The Forum directs that the electricity department shall immediately arrange a single-phase energy meter from a nearby site office and release the connection within seven days until eviction by a competent authority.
3. The complainant is directed to pay all the future bills in promptly to avoid disconnection.
4. The connection so released to the consumer doesn't have a right over the land and is subject to eviction at any time by the competent authority, and the department has a right to remove and disconnect the energy meter in advance with proper notice.
5. The electricity department must establish a mechanism to ensure better communication with applicants regarding the status of their applications. The Assistant Engineer and Junior Engineer concerned must ensure that applicants are informed about pending requirements and the reasons for delays in a timely manner.
6. The department must maintain adequate stock of energy meters to prevent similar issues in the future. If the electricity department fails to provide the connection within the stipulated time, a penalty may be imposed as per the regulations.
7. The Forum directs the department to conduct a review of all pending applications facing similar delays due to shortage of meter and the reports may be submitted to the Forum scrupulously.
8. The Complainant is instructed to install Earth Leakage Protective Device (ELPD) in the wiring to prevent any leakage and fire hazards and safety of equipment's in the premises.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. 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.

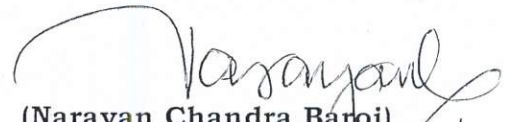


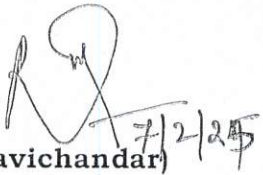
"The complainant, if aggrieved, by non-redressal of his / her grievance by the Forum or non-implementation of CGRF order by the Licensee, may make an Appeal prescribed Annexure-IV, to the **Electricity Ombudsman, Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for the State of Goa and UTs**, 3rd Floor, Udyog 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 (SAD), Nodal Officer (CGRF), Assistant Engineer-IV, 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


(Narayan Chandra Baroi)
Member (Licensee)
Electricity CGRF


(R. Ravichandar)
Chairman
Electricity CGRF

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