

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.

In the matter of:

Smti. Ramba Devi, R/o Bathubasti, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman.

.....Complainant

Versus

The Electricity Department, A & N Administration, Port Blair.

.....Respondent

Complaint No. : ANI/C.G. No.26/2024 dated 24/09/2024.
Complaint : Providing New Service Connections (8 Nos.)
Date of Hearing : 04/10/2024
Date of Order : 07/10/2024



ORDER

Background

The complainant Smti. Ramba Devi, R/o Bathubasti, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman, filed a complaint vide R.D. No. 768 dated 24/09/2024 regarding new electricity connections (Domestic) (08 Nos).

The complaint was registered as Complaint No. ANI/C.G.No. 26/2024 dated 24-09-2024 and forwarded on 24/09/2024 vide letter No. ANI/CGRF/10-349/480 to the Nodal Officer (CGRF), Executive Engineer (HQ) and Assistant Engineer-III(HQ), Electricity Department for submitting reply/comments and attending the Hearing fixed on 04/10/2024 at 10:30 a.m. in the Hearing Hall of the Electricity (CGRF), A&N Islands, Horticulture Road, Haddo, Sri 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 04/10/2024 at 10.30 a.m.

The Assistant Engineer (W/Shop), Nodal Officer (CGRF), Electricity Department vide his letter No. EL/AE(W/Shop)/2-16/2024/553 dated 03/10/2024 submitted reply/comments on behalf of the Licensee/Respondent (ED), which was received by the Forum vide R.D No. 796 dated 03/10/2024 (the letter is kept in case file) (**Exbt. -1**).

Hearing on 04/10/2024

The Hearing was held on 04/10/2024 in the Hearing Hall, Electricity CGRF at 10:30 a.m. The following were present: -

- (i) Shri. Anup Kishen, Auth. Complainant.
- (ii) Shri. E.P. Shahnawaz, AE-III, Elect. Dept.
- (iii) Shri. Dipak Kumar Singh, JE, Elect. Dept.
- (iv) Shri. R. Raja, LMMR, Elect. Dept.

Statement of the Complainant

The complainant Smti. Ramba Devi, R/o Bathubasti, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman stated in her complaint letter dated 24.09.2024 that *"I, the undersigned, am a senior citizen who applied for eight new electric connections in October 2019. Following the instructions from the AE's Site Office of the Elect. Dept. at Prothrapur, I submitted the required security deposit and estimate charges for these connections in my name (Ramba Devi) The details are as follows: -*

Sl. No.	Estimate Charges			Security Deposit			Remarks
	Amount (Rs.)	Receipt No.	Date	Amount (Rs.)	Receipt No.	Date	
1.	661.00	008-008-326804	01/11/2019	250.00	A&NSCB Ltd.	23/12/2019	1 st Connection
2.	1175.00	008-008-326805	01/11/2019	250.00	A&NSCB Ltd.	23/12/2019	2 nd Connection
3.	404.00	008-008-326806	01/11/2019	250.00	A&NSCB Ltd.	23/12/2019	3 rd Connection
4.	404.00	008-008-326807	01/11/2019	250.00	A&NSCB Ltd.	23/12/2019	4 th Connection
5.	404.00	008-008-326808	01/11/2019	250.00	A&NSCB Ltd.	23/12/2019	5 th Connection
6.	404.00	008-008-326810	01/11/2019	250.00	A&NSCB Ltd.	23/12/2019	6 th Connection
7.	404.00	008-008-326811	01/11/2019	250.00	A&NSCB Ltd.	23/12/2019	7 th Connection
8.	404.00	008-008-326812	01/11/2019	250.00	A&NSCB Ltd.	23/12/2019	8 th Connection

For the past 4 years, I have faced significant challenges in obtaining these connections. Despite my repeated visited to the site office, I informed that the necessary energy meters were unavailable and nil stock, wherever received accordingly, installed in your premises. In the meantime, the Site Office, JE was transferred, and another JE was take over the charges. I met with newly posted JE, and he informed that the said file is missing and untraceable. The JE further advised that new connections are now only being issued based on online application, which had led to the refuse of my plea.

It has come to my knowledge that the CGRF is established to resolve electricity related issues in our islands. I kindly request your intervention to

expedite the provision of the eight domestic electric connections for which I have already paid the necessary fees (copies enclosed).

Prayer

1. Please provide the eight new domestic electricity connection for which I had already paid security deposit and estimate charges (copies enclosed).
2. I request compensation for the mental distress and travel expenses incurred over the past three years as per applicable rules and guidelines.
3. I urge you to take necessary action against the officials of the Electricity Department responsible for the delays and pending issues over the past three years.
4. As a senior citizen I am unable to attend the hearing in person. I hereby authorized my son Shri. Anup Kishan whose signature is given below, to represent me at the hearing until this matter is dispose off. I enclosed both ID proofs for your kind perusal."

The complainant enclosed photocopies of payment receipt, security deposit pay-in-slip and Aadhaar Card as ID proof, which is kept in the case file (Exbt. -2).

Reply of the Respondent/Licensee (ED)

The Assistant Engineer-III (HQ) submitted para-wise comments on behalf of the Respondent/Licensee (ED) vide letter No. EL/AE/PP/1-12/23-24/1182 dated 01/10/2024 stated that "As per the report JE (PP-I) Smti. Ramba Devi, W/o Late Appana, R/o- Bathubasti applied for 08 numbers of new electric connection on 08.08.2019 & 16.09.2019. The detailed of amount deposited and previous/present connected load as follows: -

Sl. No.	Estimate Charges			Security Deposit			Previous Connection Load	Present Connection Load
	Amount (Rs.)	Receipt No.	Date	Amount (Rs.)	Receipt No.	Date		
1.	661.00	008-008-326804	01/11/2019	250.00	008-008-326804	23.12.2019	0.196 Watt	1780 Watt
2.	1175.00	008-008-326805	01/11/2019	250.00	008-008-326805	23.12.2019	0.368 Watt	1840 Watt
3.	404.00	008-008-326806	01/11/2019	250.00	008-008-326806	23.12.2019	0.368 Watt	1740 Watt
4.	404.00	008-008-326807	01/11/2019	250.00	008-008-326807	23.12.2019	0.368 Watt	1740 Watt
5.	404.00	008-008-326808	01/11/2019	250.00	008-008-326808	23.12.2019	0.368 Watt	1840 Watt
6.	404.00	008-008-326810	01/11/2019	250.00	008-008-326810	23.12.2019	0.368 Watt	1800 Watt
7.	404.00	008-008-326811	01/11/2019	250.00	008-008-326811	23.12.2019	0.368 Watt	1640 Watt
8.	404.00	008-008-326812	01/11/2019	250.00	008-008-326812	23.12.2019	0.368 Watt	1640 Watt

During 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 lockdown was exercised several occasions due to covid-19 and thereafter this department has resorted to the acceptance of online application for new electric connection purpose. Smti Ramba Devi R/o- Bathubasti never approached to Sub Division/Site office for her pending connection. The documents pertaining to the eight connections are enclosed herewith."

The AE-III(HQ), Electricity Department enclosed photocopies of complainant's application form (08 Nos. service connection), estimate and SD, complainant's bill copy, Form-F and Aadhaar card, which is kept in the case file (Exbt. -3).

Submission of the Complainant

The complainant authorized her son Shri Anup Kishan for attending the hearing. He stated that his mother submitted an application for eight new electric connections in October 2019 to the Prothrapur Site Office. Following the instructions of the Assistant Engineer, she deposited the estimate charges and required security deposit on 1/11/2019 and on 23/12/2019 respectively. However, despite her efforts over the past four years, she has been unable to obtain the connections. She reported multiple visits to the site office, where she was told that energy meters were out of stock. When a new Junior Engineer (JE) was assigned, she was informed that her file was missing and that the department had shifted to an online application process, leaving her request unaddressed. Smti. Ramba Devi has since sought assistance from the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF), asking for immediate to provide the connections, and compensation for the emotional and financial strain caused by the delay, and sought disciplinary action against the responsible officials.

Submission of the Respondent (Licensee)

According to the respondent from the Electricity Department, Smti. Ramba Devi applied for eight new electric connections in August and September 2019. The department experienced multiple disruptions due to COVID-19 lockdowns during 2019-2021, which delayed the processing of new connections. They switched to an online application system for new connections as a result. The respondent maintained that after the shift to the online system, the complainant did not approach the department to resolve the issue or complete the application through the new process. They argued that the delay was not solely the department's fault, as the complainant did not follow up or submit a fresh application via the new platform. Relevant documents related to her original application were provided during the hearing.

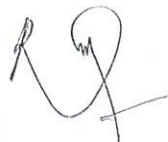


Forum's Observation

The complainant, Smti. Ramba Devi, a senior citizen, applied for eight new electric connections in October 2019. She followed the instructions of the Assistant Engineer (AE) at the Prothrapur Site Office and paid the necessary estimate charges and security deposit. However, for the past four years, she has faced numerous challenges in obtaining the connections. Despite repeated visits to the site office, she was informed that energy meters were unavailable and not in stock. During this time, the Junior Engineer (JE) at the office was transferred, and a new JE took charge, who then informed her that the file related to her application was missing and advised her to apply online. Despite the payments already made, her plea was denied. She approached the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) for intervention, requesting that her connections to be expedited, compensation be provided for the mental distress and travel expenses she incurred, and action be taken against the officials responsible for the delay. Additionally, she authorized her son, Shri Anup Kishan, to represent her at the hearing.

The respondent, representing the Electricity Department, stated that Smti. Ramba Devi had applied for eight electric connections in August and September of 2019. However, due to multiple lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, the department transitioned to accepting online applications for new connections. They claimed that Ramba Devi never approached the subdivision or site office regarding her pending connections during this period. The respondent further enclosed the documents pertaining to the eight connections and asserted that the delay was due to the complainant's failure to follow the new online process.

The forum observed that the complainant, Smti. Ramba Devi, applied for the eight service connections in October 2019 and paid the security deposit and estimate charges in December 2019 and November 2019, respectively. The respondent acknowledged that due to the pandemic, the connections were delayed, and the department transitioned to an online application system. However, the complainant claimed she made multiple visits to the department but was informed that meters were unavailable. During the hearing, the department committed to providing the connections on or before 07-10-2024. The Forum also decided to conduct a joint inspection of the site after hearing. Accordingly, Forum inspected the site and found that a connection shifted from her old house vide consumer no.H1/1773 in the name of Ramba devi was extended unauthorizedly and given to nine one BHK in the same premises. The connection was provided during 2019 and seems that the reading of the meter was in stuck up condition having initial reading and final reading was same as 1235 from January 2019 to August 2024 and bills are prepared based on average consumption of 94 units only. Forum observed that the respondent did not follow the supply code regulations for providing connection within the stipulated timelines, mean time the complainant also



extended the supply unauthorizedly and enjoying the connection without any intimation to the department, hence the Forum denies her prayer for compensation for mental distress and travel expenses. The Forum also observe that the existing connection extended unauthorizedly, and the billing was done on average bases makes huge revenue loss to the department, hence the Forum directs the department to act against erring officials and the loss to be recovered from them.

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 Electricity Department is directed to provide the eight new domestic electric connections to the complainant without further delay, completing all necessary codal formalities.
2. The Forum directs to the department to find out the erring officials, those who have make a huge revenue loss to the department due to unauthorized extension and average billing for more than three years and the same may be recovered from the concerned.
3. The complainant is directed to install ELPD in the wiring to prevent any leakage and fire hazards and safety of equipment's in the premises.
4. The Respondent/Licensee (ED) is directed to comply the **JERC Regulation No. 23/2028 under Section 5.135, 5.136 & 5.137** against '**Interest on Security Deposit and Review of Security Deposit**'.
5. The Respondent/Licensee (ED) is directed to follow the '**Processing of Application Form**' after receiving the application for new connection as per **JERC Regulation No. 23/2028 under Section 5.35**.
6. The Respondent/Licensee (ED) is directed to follow the **JERC Regulation No. 23/2018 (ESC) and No. 06/2009 (SOP)** for providing new connection as per norms/guidelines.
7. 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.

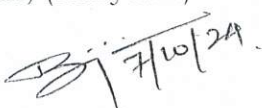


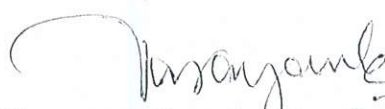
8. As per JERC Regulation No. 31/2024, non-compliance of the Forum Order shall be treated as violation of the Regulations of the Commission and accordingly liable for action under Section 142 of the Electricity Act 2003.
9. The complainant shall not be harassed overtly or covertly in any manner whatsoever 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-III(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


(Narayan Chandra Baroi)
Member (Licensee)
Electricity CGRF


(R. Ravichandar)
Chairman
Electricity CGRF

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