

ELECTRICITY CGRF
(Under The Electricity Act, 2003)
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS
PORT BLAIR

Before:

Smt. Biji Thomas, Independent Member (JERC Nominated).

In the matter of:

Shri. K. Chandraiah, , R/o RGT Road, Port Blair, South Andaman.

.....Complainant

Versus

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

.....Respondent

Complaint No. : ANI/CGRF/334/24-25/11 dated 20/06/2024
Complaint : Excess Billing bearing Consumer No. D2/1922 (Domestic)
Date of Hearing : 08/07/2024
Date of Order : 12/07/2024



ORDER

Background

The complainant Shri. K. Chandraiah, R/o RGT Road, Port Blair, South Andaman filed a complaint vide R.D. No. 612 dated 19/06/2024 regarding excess billing bearing Consumer No. D2/1922 (Domestic).

The complaint was forwarded on 20/06/2024 to the Assistant Engineer (W/shop), Nodal Officer (CGRF), Executive Engineer(HQ), Assistant Engineer-I, Electricity Department who represents the Respondent/Licensee(ED) for submitting reply/comments and for attending the Hearing fixed on 08/07/2024 at 11:30 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 08/07/2024 at 11.30 a.m.

The Respondent on behalf of Licensee (ED) i.e. Assistant Engineer-I (HQ), Electricity Department filed his letter No. EL/AE-I/HQ/15/25-3/2024/195 dated 03/07/2024, which was received by the Forum on 08/07/2024, which is kept in case file **(Exbt.-1)**.

Hearing on 08/07/2024

The Hearing was held on 08/07/2024 in the Hearing Hall, Electricity CGRF at 11:30 a.m. The following were present: -

- (i) Shri. Naveen Lall, AE-I(HQ), Elect. Dept
- (ii) Shri. Rajesh Kumar Singh, JE(A/Bazaar), Elect. Dept.
- (iii) Shri. Padmanabhan, LMMR, Elect. Dept.

The Complainant was absent during the Hearing, and had earlier withdrawn his complaint vide letter dated 01/07/2024, which was received by the Forum vide R.D. No. 635 dated 01/07/2024 (**Exbt. -2**).

Statement of the Complainant

Complainant Shri. K. Chandraiah stated in his complaint letter dated 19/06/2024 that "I, K. Chandraiah bearing Electricity connection/Consumer No. D2/1922, Meter No. 7398997, and I am here writing this letter in regard to the electricity connection installed at my resident, R.G.T. Road, Ward No. 05, near PBMC Sanitary Office, Port Blair.

Sir, I would like to inform you that the electricity bill from the past one year, the consumption of the electricity is up to Rs. 1,200 (approx.), but sir, the bill for the month of April 2024 that I received from the period 1st April 2024 to 1st May 2024 for an amount of Rs. 3,199, which is more than two times higher than the last previous monthly bills enclosed. Moreover, I am living in a small family with less consumption of electric appliances.

Sir, given the discrepancy between my usual consumption and the amount billed, I suspect there may be an error in the meter reading or billing process. I have already raised this concern with Assistant Electricity-I, Aberdeen on 06.06.2024 but have yet to receive a satisfactory response or resolution.

Therefore, it is requested you to kindly look into the matter and do the needful at the earliest".

The complainant submitted electricity bill payment e-receipt, Urja-pay consumer paid details and online complaint copy, which is kept in the case file (**Exbt. - 3**).

Reply of the Respondent/Licensee (ED)

The Assistant Engineer-I(HQ), Electricity Department on behalf of the Respondent/ Licensee(ED) in his written submission vide letter No. EL/AE-I/HQ/25-3/2024/195 dated 03/07/2024 has stated that: -

1. The consumer bearing A/C No. D2/1922 (single-phase domestic) of Shri K. Chandraiah has complaint regarding high electric bill vide his letter dated 05.06.2024 addressed to the Assistant Engineer-I(HQ), Electricity Department.
2. The online reading was received up to August 2023, and the energy meter stopped communicating from September 2023 to March 2024, but was in running condition. The energy meter again started communicating and online reading received from April 2024.
3. Email was sent by the Junior Engineer, (A-Bazar) Site Office to EESL for online testing of energy meter on 21-06-2024.

4. The energy meter test report of A/C No. D2/1922 was received from EESL on 24.06.2024, stating "consumption is normal and meter is working fine".
5. The Junior Engineer, (A-Bazar) Site Office provided check meter on 24.06.2024 vide meter GP 7402288.

As directed by the forum, the following documents are submitted for consumer bearing A/C No. D2/1922 (single-phase domestic) of Shri K. Chandraiah.

6. Consumer Profile Ledger Sheet from January 2022 to till date.
7. Test Report Received from EESL.
8. Peak Demand Data from 05/2023 to 05/2024.
9. Monthly Consumption Data from 05/2023 to 05/2024.
10. EESL Online Reading Received through IT Section for the Consumer A/C No. D2/1922.
11. Reading Book from 04-2021 to till date.

The Respondent/Licensee(ED) has submitted copies of Consumer Ledger, meter reading book, EESL report, which is kept in the case file (Exbt.-4).

Submission of the Respondent (Licensee)

The Assistant Engineer-I(HQ) on behalf of the Respondent/Licensee (ED) submitted that as per the energy meter test report received from EESL on 24.06.2024, the consumption is normal, and smart meter is working fine. He further submitted that online reading was not communicated from September 2023 to March 2024 for seven months, but later onwards, the same was communicated, and a bill was raised as per consumption used by the consumer. The JE (A/Bazar) Site Office checked smart meter through the check meter and found it 'OK'. Therefore, the consumer were satisfied and accordingly withdrew his complaint vide R.D. No. 635 dated 01/07/2024.

Forum's Observation

The Forum noted that the Nodal Office (CGRF) was absent during the Hearing without any intimation. Further, para-wise comments/reply on behalf of the Respondent/Licensee (ED) against the complaint were also received during the Hearing, indicates negligence on the part of the Respondent/Licensee (ED) for not adhering to the Forum's directives with timely submission.

The Forum observed that the EESL online reading submitted by the Respondent (ED) bearing consumer No. D2/1922 indicated that **"Online Reading Not Received"** from September 2023 to March 2024 for seven months, and later, the reading was communicated and a bill was raised as per consumption of the consumer. However, the Forum directs the Respondent/Licensee (ED) that if online readings are not received for more than three (3)

months, EESL should be informed to rectify the issue immediately, and average billing shall be leviable for a maximum period of three (3) months under **Clause 7.12 of JERC Regulation No. 23/2018** (Electricity Supply Code), which has not been done in this instant case.

The Forum observed that the complainant is satisfied with the department's work and has paid all dues. However, the present connected load is around 3 KVA, while the earlier sanctioned load was 1 KVA. The Forum observed that the connected load was increased by the consumer as per the norms of a single-phase connection, hence, the same may be updated as per JERC Regulation.

The Forum received a letter from the complainant regarding the withdrawal of complaint vide R.D. No. 635 dated 01/07/2024, wherein he stated "satisfied with the test report received from EESL and the check meter provided by the JE(A/Bazar) Site Office". The Forum accepted the plea to withdraw the complaint.

Thus, with these above issues resolved, the Forum has come to the conclusion, that both parties are satisfied with their decisions and amicable settled outside the Forum, hence, the case is closed with specific direction to the Respondent/Licensee (ED), which is particularly noted in this instant case.

Hence,

It is Ordered:

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

1. The Case No. 334 is hereby closed with specific direction to the Respondent/Licensee (ED).
2. The Respondent/Licensee (ED) is directed to submit para-wise comments/reply timely, which was not done in this instant case and should not be repeated in future complaints. ***As per Clause 20 of JERC (CGRF and Ombudsman) Regulation, 2019 at Sl. No. 2 read as "the concerned officer of the licensee shall furnish para-wise comments to the Forum on the grievance within the time line specified in Annexure 1, failing which the Forum shall proceed on the basis of the materials available on record".***
3. The Respondent/Licensee (ED) is directed to update the connected load, increased from 1 KVA to 3 KVA as per the norms of single phase connection under JERC Regulation.
4. The Respondent/Licensee (ED) is directed to prepare a list of smart meter "Online Reading Not Received" of all consumers for more than

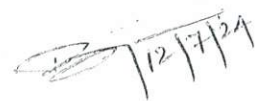
three (3) months under your jurisdiction and inform to EESL to rectify the issue immediately. The average reading of electricity bills shall be leviable for a maximum period of three months as per JERC Regulation No. 23/2018 (Electricity Supply Code), which has not been done in this instant case.

5. The Respondent/Licensee (ED) is directed to immediately take appropriate steps as per JERC Regulation No. 23/2018 under **Clause 8.8** against **any irregularity noticed** in any smart meter and inform the consumer accordingly, which has not been done in this instant case.
6. The complainant is suggested to install an ELCB/RCCB to prevent any leakage and protect the electrical equipment in her premises.
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. 26/2019** under **Clause 27(1)**. **Further, Sl. No. 2 to 7 of the above said directions should implement and submit compliance report under intimation to the consumer also.**
8. As per JERC Regulation No. 26/2019 under Chapter-IV of 27, 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, Plot No. 55-56, Service Road, Udyog Vihar, Phase-IV, Sector-18, Gurugram - 122015 (Haryana). Phone - 0124-4684708, 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-I(HQ), Electricity Department, Complainant and the Electricity Ombudsman, JERC for the State of Goa & UTs, Gurugram, (Haryana).



(Biji Thomas)
Independent Member
Electricity CGRF