

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:

Ms. Preeta Kumari, R/o Near Joda Canal, C/o AKT Vegetables, Sippighat, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman.

.....Complainant

Versus

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

.....Respondent

Complaint No. : ANI/CG No. 46/2024 dated 11/12/2024.
Complaint : Excess Billing bearing Consumer No. L3/1466 (Commercial)
Date of Hearing : 23/12/2024
Date of Order : 23/12/2024

ORDER

Background

The complainant Ms. Preeta Kumari, R/o Near Joda Canal, C/o AKT Vegetables, Sippighat, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman, filed a complaint vide R.D. No. 911 dated 11/12/2024 regarding excess billing bearing Consumer No. L3/1466 (Commercial).

The complaint was forwarded on 11/12/2024 to the Assistant Engineer (Workshop), Nodal Officer for CGRF, Executive Engineer(SAD), Assistant Engineer(Chouldhari), Electricity Department who represents the Respondent/Licensee(ED) for submitting reply/comments and for attending the Hearing fixed on 23/12/2024 at 10:30 a.m. in the Hearing Hall of the Electricity CGRF, A&N Islands, Horticulture Road, Haddo, Sri Vijayapuram with relevant documents to depose before the Forum. A copy of this letter was also endorsed to the complainant for attending the Hearing on 23/12/2024 at 10.30 a.m.

The Respondent on behalf of Licensee (ED) i.e., Assistant Engineer(C/D), Electricity Department filed his letter No. EL/AE/CD/3-21/2024/536 dated 18/12/2024, which was received by the Forum on 19/12/2024, which is kept in case file (**Exbt. -1**).



Hearing on 23/12/2024

The Hearing was held on 23/12/2024 in the Hearing Hall, Electricity CGRF at 10:30 a.m. The following were present: -

- (i) Shri. S. Suresh Kumar, NO, Elect. Dept.

The Complainant earlier withdrew her complaint vide her email dated 13.12.2024 and was absent during the hearing.

Statement of the Complainant

Complainant Ms. Preeta Kumari stated in her complaint letter dated 11/12/2024 that:

"I, the undersigned am a consumer of Electricity Department enjoying electric connection with Consumer No. L3/1466, situated near Joda Canal, Sippighat, Port Blair, South Andaman.

That I run a commercial establishment where the usual electric bill comes to the tune of Rs.60,000/- odd every month; however, in the month of September 2024 I was slammed with an electric bill for an amount of Rs.4,67,236/-, which is completely unjustified and bogus, as I have not used anything extra or new in the said month and therefore I approached the electricity office at Sippyghat and raised the above grievance with a staff at that office and I was informed by such staff that this particular bill should have been for an amount of Rs.67,236/- only; however, erroneously and due to sheer mistake it is appearing as Rs.4,67,236/- only. Additionally, that staff asked me not to raise any complaint, but to pay that amount in this month and subsequently the later bills will be adjusted towards the extra amount of Rs.4,00,000/- being paid by me, on which I denied to agree.

In the light of the facts and circumstances I request your good self to kindly look into the matter and do the necessary correction in my aforesaid electric bill and issue me a new electric bill with proper amount being mentioned in the same.

Thanking you in anticipation."

The complainant submitted copies of disputed bill and payment receipt, which is kept in the case file (Exbt. -2).

Reply of the Respondent/Licensee (ED)

The Assistant Engineer(C/D), Electricity Department on behalf of the Respondent/Licensee (ED) in his written submission vide letter No. EL/AE/CD/3-21/2024/536 dated 18/12/2024 has stated that: -

"The Complaint regarding unjustified excessive electric bill received from the consumer bearing A/C No. L3/1466 Ms. Preeta Kumari, R/O Jodacanal, C/O AKT Vegetables, Sippighat. In this regard Junior Engineer Sippighat site office has submitted the investigation report where in it was discovered that due to typing error in the meter reading software, the meter reading was entered as 90824 instead of 70824, Subsequently the Junior Engineer Sippighat informed Nodal officer (IT) (Copy Enclosed) electricity Department via E-mail requesting



correction in monthly reading of consumer bearing A/C No. L3/ 1466, for the month of 09/2024.

The IT Cell promptly took action and error was rectified. The correct reading was updated in the system, resolving the issue. The matter has been resolved to the consumer's satisfaction.

This is for your kind information please."

Ms. Preeta Kumari, a business owner, reported a billing anomaly for September 2024, where she received an inflated bill of ₹4,67,236/-. She stated that the actual usage and prior bills did not justify such a high amount. Upon seeking clarification from the Electricity Department, she was informed that the error was due to a typographical mistake. Dissatisfied with the initial resolution offered by the staff, she escalated the issue to the forum for immediate correction.

The Respondent/Licensee (ED) has submitted consumer ledger, monthly consumption data, meter reading copies, check meter testing report, which is kept in the case file **(Exbt. -3)**.

Submission of the Respondent (Licensee)

The Electricity Department acknowledged the billing error and attributed it to an incorrect meter reading entry in the software. The actual reading for the complainant's account in September 2024 was 70824, but it was erroneously recorded as 90824. Upon investigation by the Junior Engineer and communication with the IT department, the error was rectified in the billing system, and the complainant was informed about the correction. The department reiterated its commitment to addressing such issues promptly.

Forum's Observation

The Forum observed that the complainant's grievance exorbitant bill during the month of 09/2024 was discovered by the respondent due to typing error in the meter reading software was subsequently corrected and revised bill accordingly. The same was acknowledged by the complainant and informed to the Forum through an E-mail dated 13/12/2024, mentioning "My issue has already been resolved by the respondent hence, I withdraw my complaint dated 10/12/2024". Hence the Forum decided to close the case without any merits.

Hence,

It is Ordered

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

1. The Case No. 369 is hereby closed without any merits with specific direction to the Respondent/Licensee (ED).

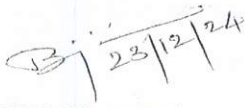


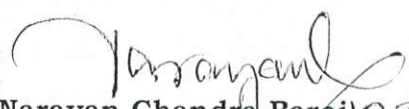
2. The Respondent is directed to ensure proper training for staff handling meter reading and data entry to avoid such errors in the future. Mandate a double-check mechanism for billing entries before issuance to consumers.
3. The complainant is suggested to install an Earth Leakage Protective Device (ELPD) to prevent any leakage and protect the electrical equipment.
4. 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, from Sl. No. 2&3 of the above said directions compliance should be provide with supporting documents, if any.**
5. As per JERC Regulation No. 31/2024 under Chapter-III, 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.
6. 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 Form 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(C/D), 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) 23/12/24
Member (Licensee)
Electricity CGRF


(R. Ravichandrar) 23/12/24
Chairman
Electricity CGRF