

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

Before:

Shri. R. Ravichandar, Chairman.
Smti. Biji Thomas, Independent Member (JERC Nominated).

In the matter of:

Shri. Debnath Kumar Paul, S/o Shri. Ramen Kumar Pal, R/o Teylorabad, Sri Vijaya Puram, South Andaman

.....Complainant

Versus

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

.....Respondent

Complaint No. : ANI/C.G. No. 36/2025 dated 04/12/2025.
Complaint : Excess Billing (Domestic)
Date of Hearing : 22/12/2025
Date of Order : 23/12/2025



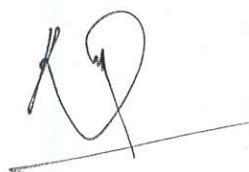
ORDER

Background

The complainant filed a complaint vide R.D. No. 1462 dated 04/12/2025 regarding Excess Billing on Account no. L3/1817(Domestic).

The complaint was registered as ANI/C.G. No. 36/2025 and forwarded on 05/12/2025 vide letter no. ANI/CGRF/10-423/929 to the Nodal Officer (CGRF), Executive Engineer (SAD) and Assistant Engineer (Chouldhari), Electricity Department herein after known as respondent for submitting reply/comments and attending the Hearing fixed on 22/12/2025 at 10:30 a.m. in the Electricity CGRF Building at Horticulture Road, Haddo, and 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 22/12/2025 at 10.30 a.m.

The respondent, vide his letter No. EL/AE/CD/3-21/2025/692 dated 18/12/2025 with enclosures submitted reply / comments, which was received by the Forum vide R.D No. 1483 dated 18/12/2025 respectively (the letter is kept in case file) (**Exbt. - 1**).



Hearing on 22/12/2025

The Hearing was held on 22/12/2025 in the Hearing Hall, Electricity CGRF at 10:30 a.m. The following were present: -

- (i) Shri. Debnath Kumar Paul, Complainant.
- (ii) Shri. Suresh Kumar, AE-IV, Elect. Dept.
- (iii) Shri. J. Jayakumar, AE, NO, Elect. Dept.
- (iv) Shri. Suresh Lall, LMMR.

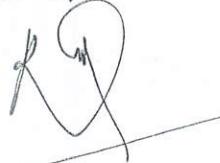
Statement of the Complainant

The complainant stated in his complaint letter dated 04.12.2025 that "Sir, I am Debnath Kumar Paul R/o Teylorabad village under PS Pahargaon as follows:-

1. My electricity having consumer no L3/1817.
2. Due to excess bills coming in for more than a few months.
3. Then I am lodged a written complaint to the AE Chouldhari dated 8.03.2024
4. The AE transferred the copy of my complaint to the JE Sippighat.
5. The JE an officer of electricity department Sippighat came to my house on 22.06.2024 at approx 7 a.m.
6. The officer admitted his mistake and said from next time you will not get any chance to complain and there will be no error in meter reading.
7. Then I said because of your wrong meter reading! why should I pay a higher bill (I am leaving out of few sentences. I will speak with proof.)
8. The next morning after being influenced by the officer words.
9. I have all dues amount approx Rs. 10000/- (6 months) have been paid.
10. After a few months, I started getting even higher bills amount then before. Then I complaint to again JE Sippighat date 02.05.2025, L3/1817. It was removed and another checking meter was installed. After one month he said, your meter is giving correct reading. Then he open his meter and install our meter.
11. I saw that there was no light on the meter. I thought the electricity had gone out but the power supply remained intact. Again 04.08.2025 I have given a written complaint about this that our meter is not working.
12. The electricity department Sippighat employees called us. Please pay your outstanding bill or your line disconnect will be taken away.
13. Electricity department AE notice issue 24.11.2025. If the above outstanding amount is not paid within 15 days of the receipt of this notice your electric connection will be disconnected and reconnection fees will be charged accordingly.
14. Whatever conversation I had with the officer, I will share it with proof later.
15. Maximum time there is load shedding in Teylorabad area.

Please I request you to give me relief in this case."

The complainant enclosed photocopies of letter submitted to the AE(Chouldhari) dated 08.03.2024 & 04.08.2025 respectively, Bill details, Current dues notice dated 24.11.2025, Payment receipt and Driving license as ID proof, which is kept in the case file (**Exbt. -2**).



Reply of the Respondent

The Respondent submitted para-wise comments vide letter no. EL/JE/SG/2-3/2025-26/585 dated 17/12/2025 stated that: "The consumer is using a smart meter installed on 17.07.2021 however, since the date of installation; online readings have not been available on the portal.

Therefore, the meter reading was taken physically by the LMMR. Connected load at the time of installation is 4KVA. As the complainant lodged a complaint regarding excessive billing, an inspection was carried out by the Junior Engineer, Sippighat, on 06.10.2025.

During the inspection, the earthing and neutral current were checked and found to be satisfactory. It was also observed that the initial connected load was 4 kVA; however, at the time of inspection, the connected load was found to have been increased to 7.5 kVA. Subsequently, on the same day, an electronic meter was installed. The relevant details are enclosed herewith.

The Smart meter became non-functional on 13.02.2025, and average billing was continued up to 06.10.2025 and a testing meter was installed on 15.12.2025 to check the accuracy of the present meter reading. A separate report in this regard was prepared and is enclosed herewith."

The Respondent submitted para-wise comments vide letter no. EL/AE/CD/3-21/2025/692 dated 18/12/2025 stated that:

"Further it is to inform that a notice was issued to the consumer on 29/11/2025 for Non - Payment of outstanding dues in the tune of Rs. 11416/- (Rupees Eleven Thousand four Hundred and sixteen only) I request the Hon'ble Forum to give direction to the defaulter consumer to pay the outstanding dues (Copy of Notice enclosed) Submitted for necessary action please."

The Respondent enclosed photocopies of letter to the AE(Chouldhari) dated 06.02.2021, other official correspondences, Form-F, Estimate of service connection dated 12.03.2021, consumer ledger, meter testing report, meter reading record and current dues notice, which is kept in the case file (**Exbt.-3**).

Submission of the Complainant

The complainant submitted that despite being a regular consumer, he was compelled to suffer financial distress due to prolonged issuance of excessive electricity bills arising from a defective meter. He emphasized that he cooperated with the respondent at all stages, allowed inspections, and even cleared disputed dues based on assurances given by officials.

He stated that the absence of visible display on the meter, coupled with continued power supply, clearly indicated a malfunction which went unattended for months. He further submitted that issuing disconnection notices without first rectifying billing anomalies amounted to unfair treatment.

He requested the Forum to intervene to protect him from unjust billing and coercive recovery.

Submission of the Respondent

The respondent reiterated that they acted bona fide and followed established procedures in addressing the consumer's grievance. It was stated that inspections were conducted promptly upon receipt of complaints and corrective measures, including installation of a new electronic meter and testing meter, were undertaken.

The respondent emphasized that increased connected load at the consumer premises contributed to higher billing and that notices were issued strictly in accordance with rules for recovery of outstanding dues. The respondent assured compliance with the Forum's directions and reiterated its commitment to maintaining reliable and regulated electricity supply.

Forum's Observation

The present case pertains to a grievance raised by Shri Debnath Kumar Paul, resident of Teylorabad village, concerning persistent excess electricity billing and alleged faulty meter operation in respect of his domestic electricity connection bearing Consumer No. L3/1817.

The electricity connection was originally provided with a Smart Energy Meter installed on 17.07.2021. Since installation, the said smart meter failed to communicate with main server and the same was not rectified on time either by the respondent or its representative, resulting in disputes on monthly consumption data of the complainant. Due to the failure of communication the monthly readings were taken by meter reader manually and the bills were prepared accordingly. The written complaints were submitted by the complainant during March 2024, May 2025 and August 2025 regarding excess billing. As per the report submitted by the respondent, the smart meter became non-functional with effect from 13/02/2025 and the bills were prepared based on average consumption and the billing continued up to September 2025. The faulty smart meter was replaced only on 06/10/2025 by an ordinary meter. As per the regulation in cases of defective meter the billing will be based on higher of the monthly consumption from the same month of the previous year or the average monthly consumption from the preceding three months of the faulty meter. This charge applies for a maximum period of three billing cycles, during which the respondent is expected to replace the defective meter. No bills can be raised beyond three billing cycles. The respondent is required to replace the defective meter and cannot issue bills beyond this period. As per the meter testing report submitted by the respondent, it shows that an average per day consumption was three units and the complainant agreed to pay if the Forum revised the average bill beyond the period of May 2025 to September 2025 to his actual consumption. He submitted that for several consecutive months he received abnormally high electricity bills, which were inconsistent with his actual consumption pattern.

and living conditions. The complainant also stated that frequent load shedding in the Teylorabad area significantly reduced actual electricity consumption, yet the bills issued were disproportionately high. He contended that the average billing for an extended period placed an unfair financial burden on him and requested relief from the Hon'ble Forum.

The respondent also reported that upon receipt of complaints regarding excess billing, an inspection was conducted on 06.10.2025. During the inspection, earthing arrangements and neutral current were checked and found to be satisfactory. It was further observed that the connected load at the premises had increased from 4 kVA to 7.5 kVA, which could have contributed to higher electricity consumption.

The respondent submitted that the smart meter became non-functional on 13.02.2025, and as per prevailing practice, average billing was carried out up to 06.10.2025. A checking/testing meter was installed on 15.12.2025 to verify the accuracy of the newly installed electronic meter, and a report confirming its correctness was prepared.

It was further submitted that due to non-payment of outstanding dues amounting to ₹11,416/-, a statutory notice dated 29.11.2025 was issued to the consumer. The respondent requested the Hon'ble Forum to direct the complainant to clear the outstanding dues, asserting that billing was carried out in accordance to the procedures.

The Hon'ble Forum carefully examined the pleadings, documents, and submissions made by both parties. It was observed that the smart meter installed on 17.07.2021 remained non-communicating for a considerable period and ultimately became faulty.

The Forum noted that average billing was continued beyond three months, which is not permissible under JERC Regulations, except under specific circumstances. The Forum further observed that the disputed billing period from May 2025 to September 2025 coincides with the monsoon season, during which electricity consumption is generally lower, particularly in areas experiencing frequent load shedding.

The Forum found merit in the complainant's contention that prolonged average billing during this period resulted in inflated consumption figures and excess billing, thereby causing undue financial hardship. While the Forum acknowledged the respondent's action of replacing the faulty smart meter with an electronic meter in October 2025, it held that the earlier billing methodology was inconsistent with regulatory provisions.

The Forum further observed that the complainant had expressed satisfaction with the performance of the newly installed meter, indicating resolution of the technical issue. However, billing correction for the disputed period remained necessary to ensure regulatory compliance and consumer fairness. Hence the Forum directs the Respondent to revise the bills from May

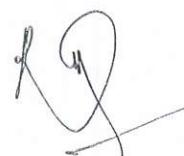
2025 to September 2025 based on actual consumption of the previous year's corresponding month's consumption instead of average billing. The Forum also directs the respondent to issue a notice to the complainant to reduce the connected load within the permissible limit of single phase or avail three phase connection for meeting the existing connected load.

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. The Forum directs the Respondent to revise the bills from May 2025 to September 2025 based on actual consumption of the previous year's corresponding month's consumption instead of average billing.
2. The Forum also directs the respondent to issue a notice to the complainant to regularize the existing connected load within the permissible limit of single phase or avail three phase connection for meeting the enhanced connected load.
3. Any excess amount already paid by the complainant shall be adjusted in the future electricity bills.
4. No penal charges shall be levied from the complainant during the disputed period i.e. May 2025 to September 2025.
5. The revised bills may be prepared and served to the complainant and sufficient time may be allowed for payment as per the regulations and no disconnection may be initiated during this process.
6. In case of defective meter the average billing beyond three billing cycles shall not be resorted to in future cases and to strictly adhere to JERC Regulations to replace the faulty meter with in this period.
7. The complainant is also advised to install an ELPD (Earth Leakage Protective Device) for safety.
8. The Respondent is directed to submit **compliance report within 15 days** from the date of receipt of this order as per JERC Regulation No. 31/2024.
9. 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.

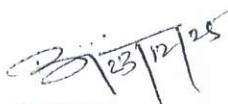
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10. The complainant shall not be harassed overtly or covertly in any manner whatsoever in future for exercising his right by availing the redressal within his jurisdiction.

"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 (Respondent), Executive Engineer (SAD), Nodal Officer (CGRF), Assistant Engineer (Chouldhari), 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

(Vacant)
Member (Licensee)
Electricity CGRF


(R. Ravichandar)
Chairman
Electricity CGRF
23/12/25

xxxx