

BEFORE THE CONSUMER GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL FORUM
(Under the Electricity Act, 2003)
PUDUCHERRY

PRESENT:

THIRU T. GOPALAKRISHNAN, B.E.,
CHAIRMAN

THIRU A.S. JITENDRA RAO, B. Tech., M.B.A.,
LICENSEE MEMBER

THIRU R. KRISHNAMURTHY, B.Com., LLB., PGDFL.,
JERC NOMINATED MEMBER

MONDAY, THE 14TH DAY OF MARCH 2022

CONSUMER CASE No.13/2022

A.K. Ramadoss,
S/o Krishnamoorthy,
No.1, Vasugi Street,
Kuyavarpalayam,
Puducherry.

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Complainant

Vs.

- 1) The Executive Engineer Urban(O&M),
Electricity Department,
Puducherry
- 2) The Assistant Engineer –Town-II
Electricity Department,
Puducherry.
- 3) The Junior Accounts Officer- Rev-I,
Electricity Department,
Puducherry.
- 4) The Junior Engineer Town - Saram
Electricity Department,
Puducherry.

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Respondents

This case in C.C. No.13/2022 came up before this Forum for final hearing on 21/02/2022. After hearing both sides and having stood over till this date for consideration this Forum has delivered the following:

The case of the Complainant is as follows:

1. A Complaint was received from A.K. Ramadoss on 31/01/2022. In the complaint, the Complainant had stated that meter reading is not taken properly in his house and reading are being marked from the Office, even without visiting some time. Even some time the Meter Reader sends his son for taking reading. Since he is not getting bills properly every month, he is going to the main office for correcting the reading and for making payment. The Meter box is in the front side of the house. Still 'DL' is being marked in the bill. In 2014 and 2015, there was some problem in taking meter reading and wrong bill was issued which was solved after presenting old bills to the Junior Engineer Office. Excess payment made was also refunded. The bill issue and other problem are causing mental agony for which the Complainant demand compensation of Rs.50,000/-. Hence, the Complaint.

2. The complaint was registered as C.C. No.13/2022 on 31/01/2022 and the notice sent to the Executive Engineer, Urban and others to furnish reply by 10.02.2022. Reply from the Respondents was received on 14/02/2022. The case was posted for hearing on 21/02/2022.

3. In the Affidavit dated 09/02/2022, the Junior Accounts Officer-Rev.I/ Respondent No.3 had stated that, the Complainant's grievance is about Meter Reader. As the matter relates to non-recording of meter reading properly by the Meter Reader, the Assistant Engineer / Junior Engineer have been requested to give necessary instructions to the Meter Reader concerned to take reading properly.

4. In the Affidavit dated 09/02/2022, the Assistant Engineer-Town-II/ Respondent No.2 on behalf of Respondent No.1 and 4 had stated that, Meter Reader takes reading every month. During the month of December 2021 'DL' was marked since the gate was in locked condition. Reading for the month of January 2022 was taken and bill was corrected. Further, the meter board is existing at a height of 7 feet

from the floor and notices served to the Complainant for lowering the meter board height.

5. The case was heard on 21/02/2022 and attended by both the Complainant and Respondents. During the hearing the Complainant reiterated his complaint and confidently told that the Meter Reader's son is coming for taking reading several times. Further, whenever he goes to Office for correction of bill the Revenue Section staff comes at 9-30AM and he has to wait for getting correction, which is causing unwanted problems for him. Further the Complainant informed that he is having 3 services and the meter board was fixed only in consultation with the Department and the Department suddenly raised the issue of height of the meter board now, after filing CGRF complaint. When enquired, the Assistant Engineer, Town-II informed that the services were given at different times and the last service was given in 2003 and he could not answer when the Forum questioned him why the Department not issued notice for lowering meter while giving second and third services.

6. The Junior Accounts Officer(Rev-I) was not able to say correctly, how many times the Complainant has come for bill correction. The Junior Accounts Officer (Rev-I) was directed to file a statement showing the corrections done. The Assistant Engineer-Town-II informed that the 'DL' is also being marked if the power supply is not available at the Complainant's house when the Meter Reader goes for taking reading. As instructed by this Forum, the Junior Accounts Officer-Rev-I filed the statement showing the modifications attended in the services.

Observation: i. On perusal of the statement furnished by the Junior Accounts Officer (Rev-I) it is found that the Complainant approached the Department for correction of reading only in two months in November 2021 and December 2021. Even it is not acceptable as the Department ought to have taken appropriate reading and it is the responsibility of the Department to serve correct bill to the consumer at his door step.

ii. The practice of the Department marking 'DL' when power supply is not available at the Consumer's premises is also against the provisions of Supply Code. The Department should find out the way for charging weak batteries in static meters and proper display of readings for taking reading even in the absence of main power supply.

iii. From the copies of the bills produced by the Complainant, it is observed from the month of November 2021 no 'DL' was marked in 2 policies viz., 07-33-06-0705H and 07-33-06-0705A. Whereas, in the Policy 07-33-06-07051 it has been marked as 'DL' which clearly shows that the reading was not taken properly, when all the meters are in one place and the Meter Reader taken reading for two services and marks 'DL' for the third service, which shows total negligence.

ORDER

i. The Respondents are directed to ensure that reading is taken properly and the Complainant is not put to hardship.

ii. The Complainant is advised to take up the matter with higher authorities immediately, whenever he feels that any person other than the Meter Reader is entering his house for taking reading and he should not allow any unauthorised person in his house. The Complainant should insist for producing ID card of the person coming to house for taking reading.

iii. Any future complaint on the same issue by the Complainant will be viewed seriously and appropriate action will be initiated by this Forum.

iv. Since there is no provision in the Regulations for compensation towards mental agony as requested by the Complainant, the request for Compensation is not agreed to.

v. The Complaint is allowed partially.

vi. The Complainant is at liberty to prefer an appeal against this Order before the Ombudsman, Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for the state of Goa and Union Territories, 3rd Floor, Plot No. 55-56, Pathkind Lab Building, Service Lane, Udyog Vihar, Phase IV, Sector -18 Gurugram, Haryana-122015 within 30 days from the date of this Order under intimation to this Forum and the Respondents

Dated at Puducherry on this the 14th day of March, 2022

Sd/-

(R. KRISHNAMURTHY)
JERC NOMINATED MEMBER

Sd/-

(A.S. JITENDRA RAO)
LICENSEE MEMBER

Sd/-

(T. GOPALAKRISHNAN)
CHAIRMAN