

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

TUESDAY, THE 21ST DAY OF MARCH 2023

CONSUMER CASE No.20/2023

R. Ellappan,
S/o Ragavan,
No.01, Main Road,
Pinnachikuppam,
Bahour Commune,
Puducherry -607 402

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Complainant

Vs.

- 1) The Executive Engineer, Rural-South O&M,
Electricity Department,
Puducherry
- 2) The Assistant Engineer – Bahour,
Electricity Department,
Puducherry.
- 3) The Junior Accounts Officer-Rev.III,
Electricity Department,
Puducherry.
- 4) The Junior Engineer- Bahour,
Electricity Department,
Puducherry.

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Respondents

This case in C.C. No.20/2023 came up before this Forum for final hearing on 14/03/2023. 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 R. Ellappan S/o Ragavan during the Public Interaction Programme of this Forum held at Bahour on 25/01/2023. In the complaint, the Complainant had stated that, in the Policy Code bearing No.44-32-06-0447 the meter was not working properly. An amount of Rs. 8,000/- was claimed by the Department. On his request to the officials the bill was revised and paid the amount. Subsequently the meter was changed. From the date of change of meter, the recording in the meter for his residence is continuous and the bill is issued for huge consumption. He has shifted his residence during the COVID-19 and the house was kept vacant. He had returned in November 2021 only but, the total amount of bill is Rs.37,758/- till December 2022. He requested to revise the bill for the period the house was kept unoccupied and issue correct amount as accepts to make payment from November 2021 to till date without any dispute. Hence, the Complaint.
2. The complaint was registered as C.C. No.20/2023 on 25/01/2023 and copy of the complaint was handed over to the Executive Engineer, Rural (South) and others to furnish reply by 06/02/2023. Reply from the Assistant Engineer, Bahour/ Respondent No.2 was received on 15/02/2023 and a copy of the same was communicated to the Complainant. The case was posted for hearing on 08/03/2023.
3. In the Affidavit dated 10/02/2023, the Assistant Engineer- Bahour/ Respondent No.2 filed for himself and on behalf of Respondent 1 and 4 had stated that, the existing meter was replaced with another one on 04/02/2023 and the existing meter was sent to the LTM section for meter performance. The report of LTM, the existing tested meter is working in good condition. Hence, there is no need for bill revision. However, as requested a ledger copy of the consumer is requested to the Revenue Section for consideration.

4. In the Affidavit dated 10/03/2023, the Junior Accounts Officer-Rev.III/Respondent No.3 had submitted the details of last three years current consumption bill from January 2019 to December 2022 in respect of the policy 161906/A2; Policy Code No.44-32-06-0447. The Respondent No.3 submitted the lab report dated 04/02/2023 has stated that the performance of the meter was found good and the errors are within the permissible limits. The current consumption bill is in order and hence no revision is required. The final reading recorded during the billing month of December 2022 is 7040. The last reading at the time of meter test is 7132. The current consumption bill for March 2020 to June 2020 has not been issued to consumers of Puducherry region due to COVID-19 pandemic. The average units and current consumption charges have been updated in the online portal and the consumers were requested to pay the average consumption through online. After the pandemic, the bills were issued regularly to all the consumers. When the Meter Reader approached to issue bills for April 2021, May 2021, August 2021 and June 2022 to the Complainant, the house was found door-locked and hence average current consumption charges has been calculated based on the previous monthly consumption charges and bills were issued. The Complainant has last paid partial amount of Rs.2,500/- on 12/12/2018 for November 2018 and thereafter no payment has been made from December 2018 to till date. Further the Respondent stated that the average consumption of 200 units per month has been claimed before the MS meter changed on December 2019. Break-up of arrears of Rs.37,758/- was furnished from January 2020 to December 2022.

5. Hearing was held on 08/03/2023. Both the Complainant and the Respondents were present. During the hearing, the Complainant stated that he is ready to pay the bill amount from November 2021 to till date and had no issues with the meter. However for the period during the DL, the meter had shown consumption which is not acceptable by him. The Respondent No.2 stated that reading was taken by the Meter Reader and there is consumption in the meter. The Respondents were directed