

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

PRESENT:

THIRU A.S. JITENDRA RAO, B. Tech., M.B.A.,
CHAIRMAN I/C AND LICENSEE MEMBER

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

FRIDAY, THE 4TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2020

CONSUMER CASE No.44/2020

P.Chandirasekar,
No.48, Mukkulathu Street,
Kottucherry,
Karaikal.

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Complainant

Vs.

- 1) The Executive Engineer,
Electricity Department,
Karaikal.
- 2) The Assistant Engineer – Town - II,
Electricity Department,
Karaikal.
- 3) The Junior Accounts Officer – Revenue,
Electricity Department,
Karaikal.
- 4) The Junior Engineer, Kottucherry
Electricity Department,
Karaikal.

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Respondents

This case in C.C. No.44/2020 came up before this Forum for final hearing on 03.12.2020. After 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 has been received from Thiru P. Chandrasekar during the camp of CGRF held on 20/10/2020 at Karaikal. In the Complaint, the Complainant had alleged that for the past one year he was getting bill approximately 200 units per month and paid the amount accordingly. During the month of March 2020 a new meter has been provided. But the bill was issued in the month of August 2020 for Rs. 14,106/- by providing an approximate consumption of 2700 units without taking proper reading. Since he is a Pensioner, he is not in a position to pay the amount and requested for revision of bills. Hence the complaint.
2. The complaint has been registered as C.C. No.44/2020 and notices have been sent to the Respondents on 20/10/2020 to reply on or before 02/11/2020. The reply from the Respondent was received on 17/11/2020.
3. In the reply the Respondent stated that the energy meter of electro static (semi static) type meter in the above service connection was replaced by one number of LPRF Meter through DDUGJY Scheme on 10/02/2020. The final reading of the released meter was recorded and the consumer has paid the amount for the same. Due to COVID-19 outbreak, there has been lock down since 24/03/2020 and hence spot billing based on meter reading was withheld and monthly average billing has been made for the consumers since the announcement of lockdown.
4. The Respondent further stated that the lockdown was unlocked gradually and billing based on consumption has commenced from August 2020. The total average consumption claimed during the lockdown period has been divided with appropriate number of months. Further after the lockdown period, the meter reading was accessed and the bill was served to the consumer.

The amount of each month was arrived based on the tariff applicable for the year 2019-20 and the total bill arrived for the pending months according to appropriate number of month. The payment made by the consumer during the average billing period has been deducted from the total bill amount. Hence, it is stated that the bill has been issued based on the guidelines issued by the Department and readings recorded by meter. In general, the domestic consumption is found to be high as the usage of AC, fan etc., during the summer lockdown period is more. So the bill is comparatively more during the lockdown period due to high consumption and as Tariff slab rate for consumption more than 300 units is Rs.5.60 / Unit.

5. Hearing was conducted on 03/12/2020 at Karaikal. The Complainant had been explained in detail the process adopted by the Department and as per the revised bill the arrears has come down to Rs.7,106/-. The Complainant still expressed doubt about the meter reading during the lock down period. But he states that now the meter is functioning normally. After detailed explanation the Complainant has agreed to pay the arrears in 5 instalments. The Complainant has been advised to file a new petition if he feels that there is a problem with the meter reading. The case was posted to 04/12/2020 for Orders.

ORDER

- (i) The Department is directed to issue revised bill to the Complainant upto the month of 10/2020 and to permit the Complainant to pay the arrears in 5 instalments. The revised bill along with instalment order may be issued within 10 days from the date of the Order. A Compliance report may be sent to this Forum within 10 days after that.
- (ii) The Complainant shall pay the regular monthly current consumption charges bill along with monthly instalment amount, failing which the Department is at liberty to take action as per norms.

- (iii) The Complaint is allowed to the extent indicated.
- (iv) Non-compliance with the directions of Forum by the Licensee shall attract remedial action under Sections 142 and 146, of the Electricity Act 2003.

Dated at Puducherry on this the 4th day of December 2020.

Sd/-

(R. KRISHNAMURTHY)
JERC NOMINATED MEMBER

Sd/-

(A.S. JITENDRA RAO)
CHAIRMAN I/C &
LICENSEE MEMBER