

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 26TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2021

CONSUMER CASE No.64/2021

B.N.K. Subrahmanyam,
D.No.03.03.0220,
Jaladangi Street,
Yanam-533464

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Complainant

Vs.

- 1) The Assistant Engineer-(O&M),
Electricity Department,
Yanam.
- 2) The Assistant Engineer (Computer)
Electricity Department,
Puducherry.
- 3) The Junior Engineer,
Electricity Department,
Yanam.

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Respondents

This case in C.C. No.64/2021 came up before this Forum for final hearing on 11/10/2021. 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 B.N.K. Subrahmanyam through email on 17/09/2021. In the complaint, the Complainant had stated that, Yanam Electricity Department staff had taken meter reading in the month of May 2021 and reading was 9351 at that time. The bill was Rs. 30,554/-. But, he had paid Rs.33,554/- (an excess amount of Rs.3000) on 21/05/2021. Electricity staff did not come in the month of June and July 2021. The Complainant had paid Rs.33,162/- on 13/07/2021. Department had taken meter reading upto date in the month of August 2021, but the bill was mentioned as June 2021. The Department had mentioned two door locks. The Department had mentioned 9351 instead of 9191 previous reading. The Complainant had paid upto meter reading 9351. In order to solve the issue, the Complainant had gone to the Department, but there is no response from the officials. The Department informed that the pending bill was Rs.42,044/- The Complainant was ready to pay Rs.32,294/- as per bill dated 06/07/2021. However, the Department not accepted the amount and asked to pay Rs.42,044/-. The Complainant has requested to solve the bill issue. Hence, the Complaint.

2. The complaint has been registered as C.C. No.64/2021 on 20/09/2021 and Notice was issued to the Respondents for giving reply by 30/09/2021. The reply of the Respondent was received on 08/10/2021. Hearing of the case was fixed on 11/10/2021 through video conferencing.

3. The Respondent in his reply stated that the Complainant has a commercial service connection for the lodge namely M/s Sarva Inn at Door No.03-03-020 Jaladanki Street, Yanam vide policy No.91-03-03-0143. Monthly current consumption charges bill for April 2021 were raised and distributed to the consumer starting from 1st Cycle to 3rd Cycle with the initial reading 9191 and final reading 9351 claiming an amount of Rs. 30,554/- for the actual consumption of 3200 units. Due to COVID-19 pandemic lock down imposed by the Government of Puducherry

and nearly 6 numbers of staff working in the sub-division were affected by Corona and hence this sub-division had raised only Door lock average bill during April 2021 and May 2021 for all the consumers at Yanam sub-division and uploaded to Online payment system as directed by the Computer billing sub-division of Electricity Department, Puducherry so as to enable the consumers for payment through Online mode. Due to unavoidable circumstances (in view of complete damage of billing server system in Yanam) Online billing system implemented in Yanam region on war footing basis by availing software support from NIC, Puducherry, Hence, on making more efforts both at Computer section, Puducherry and Yanam, the actual monthly current consumption charges bills are started issuing in Yanam region by taking meter readings. As per the Tariff Order 2021-22 came in force from 01/04/2021, the rates are revised and fixed service charges @ Rs.75/- per KW for the connected load is imposed monthly for commercial services. Details of bill claim for April 2021 to June 2021, payment details of consumer and balance bill amount to be paid are mentioned below:

Billing month	Initial reading	Final reading	Fixed SC	Current consumption charges	Total bill amount	Remarks
April 2021	9191	9191	4,875	28,679	33,554	Average billing
May 2021	9191	9191	4,875	28,287	33,162	Average billing
June 2021	9191	9752	4,875	83,274 (for 3 months)	99,010	Actual billing

Payment details

- i. Receipt No.RL.21559943922 dated 21/05/2021 Rs.33,554/-
- ii. Receipt No.RL.21550086736 dated 13/07/2021 Rs.33,162/-
Total Rs.66,716/-

Balance: Rs.99,010/- (-) Rs.56,966/- = Rs.42,044/- (upto 6/2021)

4. The hearing was held through video conferencing on 11/10/2021. During the hearing the Complainant has not appeared. The Assistant Engineer, Yanam was asked whether he has taken the problem of server with the higher authorities. The

Assistant Engineer, Yanam informed that he had sent a letter to the Head of Department informing about the problem of server and claiming average bill for the month of April and May 2021. Subsequently, he had also sent a copy of the letter addressed to the HOD. The Assistant Engineer Yanam, was asked to furnish a working sheet for the consumption till the latest bill indicating the payment made by the consumer. The Assistant Engineer, Yanam sent the reply on 15/10/2021. Even, from the working sheet it is felt that the calculation for June and August 2021 are not clear and the Assistant Engineer was asked to clarify the above two points. The required clarification were received on 18/10/2021 through email.

Observation: i. From the details furnished by the Assistant Engineer, Yanam it is observed that the server problem has been taken up promptly with the higher authorities. During the hearing, the Assistant Engineer, Yanam had informed that the reading taken for April 2021 could not be entered into the computer due to server problem is genuine.

ii. The difference in amount for the month of June 2021 as received by the Complainant and that has been asked to pay by the Department, is due to the fact that the Department has claimed Fixed surcharge from 1st April 2021 which were not included in the earlier average bills.

iii. Bill workings given by the Assistant Engineer, Yanam have been verified and found that the calculations are in order.

ORDER

i. In view of the observation, the consumer is informed that the bills claimed by the Department are in order. Since the Complainant had already paid Rs.1 lakhs on 10/08/2021, he is directed to pay the balance amount also along with the next bill to be claimed by the Department.

ii. Since necessary clarification are furnished by the Department, the Complaint is treated as closed.

iii. 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 26th day of October 2021.

Sd/-

(R. KRISHNAMURTHY)
JERC NOMINATED MEMBER

Sd/-

(A.S. JITENDRA RAO)
LICENSEE MEMBER

Sd/

(T. GOPALAKRISHNAN)
CHAIRMAN