

**THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN, UTTARAKHAND**

Shri Harbhajan Singh  
S/o Shri Manohar Singh,  
Rajpura, Gali No. 1, Haldwani,  
Distt. Nainital, Uttarakhand

Vs

The Executive Engineer,  
Electricity Distribution Division (Urban),  
Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd.,  
Tikoniya, Haldwani, Distt. Nainital, Uttarakhand.

Representation no. 10/2013

**Order**

The petitioner, Shri Harbhajan Singh S/o Shri Manohar Singh, Rajpura, Gali No. 1, Haldwani, Distt. Nainital approached the Ombudsman on 11.07.2013 with a petition against the order of the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Kumaon Zone (hereinafter referred to as Forum) dated 12.06.2013 in his complaint against the Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd. (hereinafter referred to as respondent).

2. The petitioner claims that he was getting correct bills up to April 2012 for his connection no. 386-A262-093012 and was regularly making the payments for the same. He claims that he received a CDF bill for May 2012, and two months after that he received a bill for three months for a total of 5192 units. On receiving this bill he approached the local office of the respondent with the claim that his meter appears to have jumped. He was advised to get a check meter installed and told that after the report of the check meter was received action to correct his bill would be taken. A check meter was installed at his shop which showed usage of 122 units for 3 months. The old meter also showed the same recording and hence was deemed to be working properly. The petitioner claims that even after receiving the report of the results of the check meter, the department did not correct

his bills. The petitioner therefore approached the Forum who gave their decision on 12.06.2013. The petitioner claims that the reasons given by the Forum for not correcting the bill of three months of 5192 units was not right and has appealed against the Forum's decision.

3. The petitioner informs that he has a tiny little shop of 6x9 where two CFL bulbs and one fan are installed. Though the shop was rented out, the petitioner was paying the electricity bill himself and hence used to check the usage of electricity in the shop from time to time. He has also informed that he lives above the shop. The petitioner states that he was regularly paying the bills sent by the respondent. The bills being sent by the respondent were according to the meter reading and were paid by the petitioner till August 2012. The Forum was wrong in not giving his complaint due consideration on the ground that the shop was rented out. The petitioner states that he had gone to the Forum with his complaint that he had been sent a bill for 5192 units for a three month period for his tiny shop. The Forum, however, took the view that if the total number of units from the time the meter was installed and including the three months for which the inflated bill was sent was calculated, the average units per month were only 128. The petitioner felt that this was not the correct assessment as from the time the meter was installed the petitioner was receiving bills based on the meter reading. Hence he has questioned that when prior to August 2012 when he was getting bills on meter reading how could the meter show consumption of 5192 units for 3 months and how could this abnormal reading be taken as normal consumption. The petitioner further states that after the meter jumping it is now working normally and has shown usage of 122 units for 3 months. The petitioner has therefore prayed that the Forum's order be set aside and he be given a bill for the disputed 3 month period based on the average of 122 units for 3 months or average of usage prior to this disputed period.
4. The Forum in their order have express the view that as the shop was not under the petitioner's own usage but was rented out, his claim that very little electricity was consumed in the shop, cannot be taken at face value. They have further stated that according to the sealing certificate the meter was installed at the premises on 10.01.2008. At the time of installation of meter the meter had a reading of 12 units. In August 2012

the meter had a reading of 7334. Calculating the usage from 10.01.2008 to August 2012 the average number of units used by the petitioner per month amounted to 128 units. The Forum felt that this could not be treated as abnormal consumption and hence there was no need to correct the bill of August 2012. However, the bill for May 2012 which was CDF may be corrected as per rules and regulations.

5. The respondent has claimed that the meter at the petitioner's premises showed usage of 5192 units during the period May – August 2012. Stating that the petitioner has claimed that the meter was recording more than the usage, respondent mentioned that a check meter was installed on 03.11.2012 at the petitioner's premises and removed on 19.02.2013. The check meter showed that the petitioner's meter was functioning correctly. Stating that the Forum had found the petitioner's claim to be incorrect the respondent maintained that usage was as per the units shown on the meter and the petitioner did not have the correct picture as the premises were on rent and not being used by him personally.
6. Brief facts of the case are that there is a 1 KW connection at the small shop of the petitioner. On 10.01.2008, a new meter was installed which is still in place. The meter installed at the petitioner's premises had a recording of 12 units on the date of installation i.e. 10.01.2008. Metered bills were being sent to the petitioner till April 2012. Thereafter he received a CDF bill for May and subsequently a bill for 5192 units for three months. On the complaint of the petitioner a check meter was installed on 03.11.2012. The petitioner's meter showed a recording of 7427 as per the sealing certificate of 03.11.2012 when the check meter was installed. During the three and half months when the check meter was installed (03.11.2012 – 19.02.2013) the petitioner's meter recorded a usage of 192 units more, total reading 7619 units. The check meter also recorded 192 units during this period Thus as per the check meter and the petitioner's meter, the usage was approximately 55 units per month.
7. As per the bill up to 30.04.2012, the meter had recorded a consumption of 2142 units. This consumption was from 10.01.2008 to 30.04.2012 (total of 51 months) i.e. an average of approximately 42 units per month.

The next bill for May was a CDF bill for 2400 units.

The bill 30.06.2012 to 31.07.2012 was NR for assessed 515 units.

Bill for 31.07.2012 to 31.08.2012 is for metered 5192 units (previous reading 2142 and present reading 7334).

Consumption from 31.08.2012 to 19.02.2013 was 285 units. (7619 reading as per sealing certificate dated 19.02.2013 – 7334 reading on 31.08.2012).

This shows an average of 47 units per month.

8. There appears to have been a peak in the consumption only between May to August 2012 when average consumption rose to 1298 units per month. This looks decidedly odd. The respondent has given no reason to explain this quantum jump in the reading from 2142 on 30.04.2012 to 7334 on 31.08.2012. Merely basing their entire premise on the fact that as per the check meter the meter installed at the petitioner's premises was working properly as both showed the same reading from 03.11.2012 to 19.02.2013, does not explain the situation. There is a possibility that during the period under contention there had been meter jumping which had settled down thereafter.
9. On the basis that the average consumption before the disputed period (May to August 2012) and thereafter also is between 42-55 units, I feel that the matter should have been examined in more depth by the respondent. It is ordered that the bills under dispute (May-August 2012) be reassessed on the average of 55 units per month as per check meter report. Order of the Forum is set aside.

Dated: 12.12.2013

(Renuka Muttoo)  
Ombudsman