

THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN, UTTARAKHAND

Sardar Gyan Singh
S/o Shri Nand Singh
Ambedkar Colony, Tarla Aamwala
Raipur Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Vs

Executive Engineer,
Electricity Distribution Division (North),
Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd.
18, EC Road, Uttarakhand

Representation No. 29/2017

Order

The petitioner, Sardar Gyan Singh has filed this representation against the order dated 16.08.2017 of the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Garhwal zone (hereinafter referred to as Forum).

2. Petitioner's claim is that bills for the period 03.10.2016 to 11.05.2017 against his 5 KW (correct sanctioned load is 1 KW as per billing history and bills) connection no. 702/1312/098813 have been excessive and he had filed his complaint before the Forum for correction of these bills showing excess consumption. Petitioner's argument is that he has been regularly paying his bills every two months. On 03.12.2016 he received bill for Rs. 10,915.00 which he deposited but when he got a bill of Rs. 13,008.00 on 03.02.2017 he requested for a check meter which was installed on 09.03.2017 and was finalized on 14.03.2017 and on 03.06.2017 he was given a bill of Rs. 40,460.00 against which he deposited Rs. 20,000.00. When he approached the UPCL office at Sahastra dhara he was directed to the EC road office where on his request for being shown the meter he was informed that the meter had been sent to the Manufacturing Company and it can be shown only when it is received back from them. He has been regularly visiting the offices of the UPCL but has received no relief from either their office or the Forum. The reading in the meter on 14.03.2017 was about 28000 but was recorded as 31140. He has requested that his connection may not be disconnected till disposal of his appeal and neither should he

be charged interest since he has been regularly paying his bills and he is a senior citizen without any job, and his bills may be corrected.

3. The Forum in their order dated 16.08.2017, have mentioned that they obtained a report from the SDO who informed them that the MRI of the meter revealed the same reading i.e. 31140 as was the reading in the meter when it was removed from the premises. Further he has also informed that the tamper report for the said meter has been studied which reveals that the earth load count for the meter is excessive and there is heavy earth leakage in the internal wiring for which the petitioner himself is responsible. The demand for the petitioner has been recorded as 3.45 KW and energy reading is 3404 at the time of checking on 26.07.2017 in the new meter no. 63183014 while the wiring is disorganized. The bills issued to the petitioner reflect the actual consumption. Forum have observed that there is a mismatch between the figures reflected in the MRI and the billing history for the period 01.07.2016 to 28.02.2017.

In this period, while billing history indicates average consumption of under 500 units in most billing cycles, the actual consumption for this period as per MRI has been 6039 units i.e. average consumption per month was 755 units. The Forum have further observed that the average consumption as per new meter from 14.03.2017 to 26.07.2017 has been 712 units per month. The Forum have further held that the average consumption by both the meters have been approximately the same. Further, as per check meter report, the old meter was found OK, and its final reading was 31140 which matches with the MRI reading. The Forum, on the basis of the records was of the view that the average monthly consumption from 03.02.2015 to 03.10.2016 as per billing history was 494 units while as per consumption recorded in MRI from 03.02.2015 to 14.03.2017 the average monthly consumption was 746 units The Forum have also observed that this discrepancy has been due to wrong reporting of readings by the meter reader from 03.02.2015 to March 2017. The Forum therefore ordered that bills for the said period (03.02.2015 to 14.03.2017) be revised on average 746 units per month after allowing adjustments for the payment made and without LPS.

4. Respondent in their written statement have claimed that the order of the Forum is as per provisions of law and should be accepted. They have accepted the claim of the petitioner that he had made a complaint regarding excessive bill and on his request a

check meter had been installed on 09.03.2017 which was finalized on 14.03.2017. While no defect was noted in the old meter, as per established practice of the department, the check meter was retained as the main meter and the old meter was removed and sent to the meter manufacturer for a report. The meter reading at the time of removal was 31074 (as per sealing certificate dated 14.03.2017 the meter reading was 31140 and not 31074 as mentioned in the written statement. In fact 31074 was the reading on 09.03.2017, as per sealing certificate dated 09.03.2017) and the MRI as well as the meter reading are reported to be the same. This as per respondent, reveals that the meter reading was not being wrongly recorded. Respondent have further calculated the consumption over the two year period from 02.12.2014 to 03.12.2016 and the average monthly consumption to be 645 units, while the new meter installed in his premises shows a monthly consumption of 682 units. The tamper report has revealed that there is earth leakage in the house wiring, and the presence of 7 tenants as well as disorganized wiring and leakage in his house for which petitioner is himself responsible. As such they have concluded that the complaint of the petitioner is baseless.

5. Arguments of both parties have been heard and record has been carefully studied. It is clear from the consumer billing history that the consumption from 03.02.2015 to 03.02.2017 was (27243 – 12008) 15235 units, the average being 634 units per month (while the Forum have observed that average monthly consumption, as per billing history, from 03.02.2015 to 03.10.2016, was 494 units) while as per MRI report consumption from 03.02.2015 to 14.03.2017 has been (31140 -12008) 19132 units, the average being 746 units per month. In absence of documentary evidence, there is no ground to support petitioner's contention of his meter showing reading of about 28000 at the time of removal of meter on 14.03.2017. It appears, as also held by the Forum, that the meter readings were either deliberately suppressed or inadvertently wrongly reported because of which billing did not reflect the actual consumption by the consumer. When the same was revealed with the installation of the check meter and the MRI report, accordingly extra bills were raised by the department. As the Forum have already ordered for revision of the bills from 03.02.2015 to 14.03.2017 on average monthly consumption of 746 units, based on MRI report, there is no

justification for revising the bills as requested by the petitioner. The Forum order is appropriate and is upheld. Petition is dismissed.

Dated: 31.10.2017

(Vibha Puri Das)
Ombudsman