

## THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN, UTTARAKHAND

Shri Keshav Panwar  
S/o Shri Gambhir Panwar  
B-Block, Saraswati Vihar,  
Near Water Tank, Ajabpur Khurd,  
Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

Vs

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

Representation No. 27/2018

### **Order**

Date: - 19.09.2018

The petitioner, Shri Keshav Panwar has filed this petition against the order dated 09.07.2018 of the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Garhwal zone (hereinafter referred to as Forum) in complaint no. 49/2018.

2. Petitioner's case in brief is that he has applied for and received commercial connection no. CD 67166218935 in January 2017. However, he continued to stay in Tehri till June 2018 and the shop remained closed. On arrival in Dehradun in June 2018 he approached the Electricity department in order to pay his bill. When he requested for a bill he was shocked to receive a bill of Rs. 21,410.00. When he requested the department to investigate he was given an enhanced bill of Rs. 29,151.00 instead of reducing it. When he enquired from the AE he was told by the JE that the meter had no display and on 11.04.2018 without informing the petitioner his meter was removed and a new meter installed in its place. Petitioner maintains that despite his repeated requests his bill was not reduced even when the lineman, JE were fully aware that his shop had remained closed and there had been no consumption of electricity which would justify a bill of Rs. 29,151.00. Petitioner, not having received any relief from the department, approached the Forum. Before the Forum the department took the stand that his meter was installed inside his shop

whereas according to him, his meter had always been installed on the pole outside his shop. Forum, without paying any heed to petitioner's averment that his shop had remained closed, passed an order for recovery of dues as per reading of the new meter when his shop is consuming electricity. This is grossly unfair and unreasonable and therefore petitioner has requested for amendment in his bills and giving him justice.

3. Forum, in their order dated 09.07.2018, have recorded the respondent's report that since the shop remained closed from January 2017 to April 2018 and the meter was installed inside the shop, meter reader could not record the reading. It is only when the petitioner approached the department regarding bills, that the meter reader was again sent to the site who reported that there is no display in the meter and therefore the meter was changed on 11.04.2018. Forum observed that the bills for the entire period January 2017 to April 2018 were on normative basis and as the shop was closed, this was neither reasonable nor according to rules. Since the old meter had shown no display and a new meter was installed on 11.06.2018 (correct date of replacement of meter being 11.04.2018). Forum held that it will be reasonable and justified if the bills for the period 21.01.2017 to 11.06.2018 are modified as per the actual average consumption of the new meter. Forum ordered accordingly.
4. Respondent in their written statement dated 30.08.2018 have stated that while petitioner has a 2 KW connection from 21.01.2017 but because his shop was continuously closed and he had not established contact with the department for nearly 18 months, paid no bills during this period, and no reading could be taken of his connection, when his shop opened in April 2018 subdivision took a reading and found the meter defective. Accordingly, on 11.04.2018 his meter was changed and as per regulations, normative bills @ 150 units/KW/month were issued which is correct. Petitioner filed a complaint against this bill issued as per Regulations before the Forum and Forum have ordered amendment of the bill as per actual consumption in the new meter against which order, petitioner have filed this appeal before the Ombudsman.
5. Both parties have been heard and the record, including the file of the Forum, have been carefully perused. Petitioner has filed photographic evidence to show that his meter was installed outside the shop on the pole. He also brought evidence in the

shape of a neighbour to prove that his shop remained closed, the meter was installed outside on the pole and there has been no consumption by him, since release of the connection on 21.01.2017. It is admitted by both parties that the shop remained closed, respondent were unable to produce the sealing certificate of the meter when it was installed on 21.01.2017 and details of where it had been obtained from except for recording that it had been repaired and was received from the Lab by the predecessor of the present JE. The sealing certificate dated 21.01.2047 is however available on Forum's file and a copy thereof has also been submitted by the respondent vide their letter no. 2836 dated 12.09.2018. It is clear that while the respondent had been remiss in not recording readings and taking action as per rules for no display meter for a full 16 months, petitioner has also remained unavailable for either paying bills or reporting non receipt. In the light of the fact that the meter was defective since it has shown no display on 11.04.2018 when meter was replaced and being a new connection there is no previous history of consumption to go by, the Forum order directing modification of bill for the period 21.01.2017 to 11.06.2018 as per the actual average consumption of new meter is correct in principle. However, the date of change of meter has been incorrectly recorded in the Forum order as 11.06.2018 whereas the meter was changed as per sealing certificate on 11.04.2018. Accordingly, the bill for the period 21.01.2017 to 11.04.2018 be modified as per average consumption recorded in bill of the first 3 billing cycles, of per the new meter installed on 11.04.2018 as per the sealing certificate. With this modification Forum order is upheld. Petition is disposed off. Compliance be ensured in the next billing cycle.

Dated: 19.09.2018

(Vibha Puri Das)  
Ombudsman