

THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN, UTTARAKHAND

Shri R. S. Shukla
C – 154, Nehru Colony,
Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Vs

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

Representation No. 46/2019

Order

Dated: 24.10.2019

Being agreed with Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Garhwal Zone (hereinafter referred to as Forum) order dated 30.08.2019 in his complaint no. 46/2019 before the said Forum against Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd. through Executive Engineer, Electricity Distribution Division (South), Dehradun (hereinafter referred as the respondent), Shri R. S. Shukla (hereinafter referred to as a petitioner) has preferred this petition / representation on behalf of his wife Smt. Shanti Shukla, a consumer of UPCL for connection no CD17112038653 for 5 KW domestic load.

- 2 The petitioner has stated that he had filed a complaint to the Forum for correction of a bill for the period from 15.05.2019 to 22.07.2019 as the said bill was issued for a period of 68 days and for the last 8 days he was billed at the highest slab @ of Rs 5.65 per unit and he sustained a loss of about Rs 450.00. He has averred that this irregularity has happened as the meter reader does not take meter readings after every 2 months. As the meter reader has not been directed to perform his duty rightly due to which the bills have not been issued as per billing cycle of 2 months (60 days). The Forum was requested in the complaint to order for correction of the bill for 60 days consumption but the Forum did not appreciate the facts of the case and dismissed the complaint without considering merits of the case. Hence this petition is being filed with the request that matter be considered on merits and justified relief be granted.

3. The Forum have dismissed the complaint on the grounds that it was not practically possible to grant the relief requested for by the complainant.
4. The respondent, Executive Engineer has submitted written statement vide letter no 2823 dated 03.10.2019 wherein he has stated that the petitioner has not sustained any loss due to billing on actual number of days instead of fixed 60 days in a billing cycle. He has further stated that under manual billing it is not possible to issue bills of thousands of consumers on a single stipulated day and bills to the domestic consumers are being issued for 60 days or so. He has requested that based on the practical aspects of the problem the Petition may kindly be dismissed.
5. The Petitioner has submitted his rejoinder on 07.10.2019. While not agreeing with respondent's reply in Written Statement, he has reiterated his averments in his petition and have again stated that even if the readings are taken for a period of more than 60 days, the bill can still be issued for consumption for 60 days on pro rata basis and over billing can thus be avoided by doing so, and he has again submitted that his disputed bill for the period 15.05.2019 to 22.07.2019 be got revised for 60 days consumption instead of 68 days.
6. Hearing in the case was held on 21.10.2019. Both parties were present Shri R. S. Shukla the petitioner argued his case as per his petition and rejoinder and requested that the disputed bill be ordered to be revised for 60 days consumption. The respondent was represented by Shri Sunil Kumar, SDO and argued that in view of manual billing the readings taken at site are available only for the dates on which such reading are taken and bills are accordingly issued at site and since the consumption for 60 days in any billing cycle, if readings are taken for a period of less than or more than 60 days are not available, it would not be possible to revise the bill for 60 days consumption as requested for by the Petitioner.
7. The documents available on file have been perused and arguments from both the parties were heard. It is found that the disputed bill from 15.05.2019 to 22.07.2019 issued for 68 days is not consistent with the billing cycle of 2 months (60 days), and hence the petitioner's stand that he has suffered a loss of about Rs. 450.00 on account of billing at higher rate of Rs. 5.65 per unit due to billing for 68 days appears justified. The respondent's stand that due to practical problem in manual billing it is not always

possible to take reading after 60 days in each billing cycle also appears to be reasonable. However it is the duty of the respondent to issue bills strictly for a period of billing cycle, which in instant case is 2 months (60 days), being bi-monthly billing. As regards the question whether the petitioner or the respondent's have sustained any loss or not due to billing for more than 60 days in any billing cycle or less than 60 days for any other billing cycles, is a matter of examination by the respondent on financial year to year basis and such a study cannot be conducted here by this office. Such being the case the respondent are directed to revise the three number bills issued from 13.03.2019 to 15.05.2019, 15.05.2019 to 22.07.2019 and 22.07.2019 to 26.09.2019 as shown in the billing history, but with corrected units 1196 for the bill from 22.07.2019 to 26.09.2019, on the basis of average of the total units billed in the said three cycles. Further billing be done strictly as per prescribed billing cycle. Forum order set aside. The Petition is accordingly disposed off.

Dated: 24.10.2019

(Subhash Kumar)
Ombudsman