

THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN, UTTARAKHAND

Shri Vijay Singh
S/o Shri Shiv Mangal Singh
Bwanpuri, Parwatiya Colony,
Sitarganj, Distt. Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand

Vs

The Executive Engineer,
Electricity Distribution Division,
Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd.
Sitarganj, Distt. Udham Singh Nagar, Uttarakhand

Representation No. 27/2020

Order

Dated: 23.12.2020

Being aggrieved with Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Udham Singh Nagar zone (hereinafter referred to as Forum) order dated 06.10.2020 in his complaint no. 27/2020-21 against UPCL through EE, EDD, Sitarganj Shri Vijay Singh S/o Shri Shiv Mangal Singh R/o Bwanpuri, Parwatiya Colony, Sitarganj has preferred this appeal for correction of his disputed bills.

2. The petitioner Shri Vijay Singh A consumer of UPCL for connection no. 881S314194108 for 2 KW load has filed a petition dated 12.10.2020 and a subsequent petition dated 16.10.2020. He has filed a complaint before the Forum in which the Forum has passed order dated 06.10.2020. Initially he had a connection of 1 KW and average consumption per bill varied from 119 units to 181 units per bill. In the year 2020 the load was got enhanced to 2 KW. Bill for the month of May 2020 was received for 2250 units which is too high in comparison to the normal consumption mentioned in the earlier bills and it is about 6 to 7 times. The department have submitted before the Forum that the meter was found OK in check meter study. Regarding high consumption reported in the disputed bill the opposite party have submitted that it might have been due to correct reading having not been reported earlier and these may be the accumulated units. He has requested that the disputed bills be got corrected on the basis of the average consumption mentioned in the bills

for the last 3-4 years. He has stated that average bill for a sum of Rs. 1700.00 to 1800.00 were being received before and after this disputed bill for the period from 14.03.2020 to 21.05.2020 for Rs. 12,600.00 for a consumption of 2276 units. According to him this high consumption has been shown in the meter due to jumping.

3. The Forum after hearing both parties and perusal of the records have concluded that in the past it appears that bills have not been issued on actual consumption but on the basis of assumed consumption resulting into accumulation of consumption in the meter which was reflected in the bill for the month of May 2020 when actual reading was taken. Since there is no fault in the meter and its veracity is established by check meter study, it is clear that this high consumption in the bill for the month of May 2020 is the accumulated consumption. Having concluded as such they have dismissed the complaint vide their impugned order dated 06.10.2020.
4. The respondent Executive Engineer has submitted a written statement dated 06.11.2020. A check meter no. 443386 was installed at connection no. 881S3184-194108 of the petitioner on 21.08.2020 but due to disappearance of display in the check meter, another check meter no. 444543 was installed on 29.08.2020, the same was finalized on 24.09.2020 as the variation between the consumptions recorded by the 2 meters i.e. check meter and the existing meter was less than 3%, hence check meter was removed as the existing meter was found correct and therefore the old meter left at site. The respondent has stated that as the meter is found working correctly as per check meter study and the bills are being issued on metered consumption and the Hon'ble Forum has dismissed the complaint so the bills are correct.
5. The petitioner has submitted a rejoinder dated 18.11.2020. Wherein he has stated that the department has not clarified as to how 2250 units have been consumed in 45 days as shown in the bill May 2020. The appliances installed at the residence have duly been informed to the department and due to low voltage available AC cannot work, neither heaters are used in the Summer month of May, then there is no justification of such high consumption. He had asserted that if the department could reply to these queries, he was ready to pay the bill but nothing had been clarified by the department.
6. 07.12.2020 was fixed for hearing, the petitioner vide his letter dated 05.12.2020 has shown his inability to personally appear in view of corona and non availability of

Train services. He has requested that the Ombudsman shall be pleased to pass a judicious and impartial order and have requested for exemption for personal appearance. Another date for hearing was fixed for 15.12.2020. The earlier date was postponed for 15.12.2020 on the requests of the respondent but they did not appear for arguments on this date also as such 23.12.2020 was fixed for orders.

7. A perusal of the records available on the file shows that the petitioner has a 2 KW connection. His average bills prior and after the bill from March 2020 to May 2020 have been for a sum of Rs. 1700 to 1800 and consumption ranging from 400 to 468 units per bill, while the disputed bill for the month of 05/2020 is for Rs. 12,600.00 for a consumption of 2276 units. Although the respondents have stated that as per check meter study the meter is found working correctly and all the bills including the disputed bills are for metered units only, the disputed bills is also a correct bill and no correction is called for. The Forum has also relied upon the submissions of the respondents and have held the disputed bill as correct one and have dismissed the complaint.
8. But in view of the contracted load of 2 KW and his past consumption of the order of 400 to 468 units per bill amounting to Rs. 1700-1800.00 per bill, the disputed bill is definitely an inflated bill. The consumption shown in this bill certainly is not of the duration of the disputed bill being from 14.03.2020 to 21.05.2020 while veracity of the existing meter is established as per check meter study but this high consumption reported in this bill is due to accumulation of the past consumption during which period the actual meter readings obtaining in different billing cycles have not been reported but bills have been issued on assumed meter readings reported by the meter readers.
9. It will therefore be logical and justified if bills w.e.f. the date of installation of the existing meter till 21.05.2020 (up to which date the disputed bill has been issued) are revised on the basis of average monthly consumption arrived at from the total consumption recorded in the meter during the aforesaid period. The respondents are therefore directed to work out such average monthly consumption and issue a revised consolidated bill for the entire period on appropriate tariffs, without LPS and after adjustment of the payments made by the petitioner against the bills issued for the

above period. Such a consolidated bill be issued within 15 days from the date of this order. Petition is allowed. Forum order is set aside.

Dated: 23.12.2020

(Subhash Kumar)
Ombudsman