

**THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN, UTTARAKHAND**

Branch Manager  
Uttarakhand Gramin Bank  
Dudhli, Doiwala,  
Distt. Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Vs

The Executive Engineer,  
Electricity Distribution Division,  
Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd.  
Doiwala, Distt. Dehradun, Uttarakhand

Representation No. 06/2020

**Order**

**Dated:** 23.03.2020

Being aggrieved with Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Garhwal zone (hereinafter referred to as Forum) order dated 14.01.2020 in his complaint no. 75/2019 before the said Forum against UPCL through Executive Engineer, Electricity Distribution Division, Doiwala, Dehradun (hereinafter referred to as respondent) Branch Manager, Uttarakhand Gramin Bank, Dudhli, Distt. Dehradun (hereinafter referred to as petitioner) has preferred this appeal for correction of his bills from May 2019 to December 2019.

2. The petitioner has stated that he has a electricity connection no. DW64104059161 in the branch of the Bank. Assessed bill from the month of May 2019 were being due to meter being defective which were excessive as compared to the consumption for the years 2015 to 2018. He has further stated that on his complaint of defective meter, the department replaced the defective meter on 25.09.2019 vide sealing certificate no. 034/193 dated 25.09.2019 at initial reading 99, while the test lab has recorded the date of change of meter as 25.10.2019 at 0 (zero) initial reading and RDF bill from 0 (zero) initial reading was also sent. He has requested that bills from the month of 05/2019 to December 2019 be revised on the basis of actual consumption of 14 units per day.

3. The Forum in their order have observed that as per billing history the meter reading on 25.05.2019 in the existing meter was 39111. On 14.06.2019 NA bill was issued. On 29.08.2019 bill on the basis of meter reading 42771 was issued. In the next billing cycle the meter reading was 43338 on 18.09.2019, which was the final reading recorded in the meter and the meter had become IDF on this reading. Regular bills as per tariff order were not issued from 25.05.2019 to 18.09.2019. The defective meter was replaced by a new meter on 25.09.2019 at initial reading 99. In view of their observations the Forum was of the view that bill for the period 18.09.2019 to 25.09.2019 needs to be issued on the average for last 3 months' consumption which comes 14 units per day and thereafter bills from 25.09.2019 till date needs to be issued on actual consumption recorded by the new meter and they have accordingly ordered. To issue bill from 18.09.2019 to 25.09.2019 @ 14 units per day and from 25.09.2019 on actual meter consumption recorded by the new meter taking initial reading 99 units. The revised bill as their order be issued after adjustment of the payments made and without levy of LPS.
4. The respondent, Executive Engineer has submitted his written statement vide his letter no. 305 dated 22.02.2020, wherein he has submitted that the defective meter of the petitioner was replaced on 25.09.2019 at initial reading 99, but the test lab inadvertently advised the meter change date as 25.10.2019 at 0 (zero) initial reading to the billing system, which was subsequently corrected and the bill w.e.f. the date of replacement of meter till date was revised as per rules and after revision the bill amount Rs. 8,045.00 has reduced to Rs. (-) 1,167.00. He has requested that in view of his submissions the petition be dismissed. He has substantiated his submissions with documentary evidences such as billing history, ledger, photocopy of the old and revised bills and copy of the sealing certificate for replacement of meter.
5. The petitioner has submitted his rejoinder vide his letter dated 02.03.2020 wherein he has submitted that the old meter being defective was showing no display from May 2019 to 25.09.2019 when the meter was replaced. The bill after 25.09.2019 has since been revised but bills from May 2019 to September 2019 were issued on the basis of assessment which was excessive in comparison to actual consumption and therefore he has reiterated that bills from May 2019 till September 2019 may be ordered to be revised .

6. Hearing in the case was fixed for 18.03.2020, Shri Sandeep Kumar Singhal, Branch Manager, the petitioner himself and Shri Kuldeep Singh Bisht, SDO appeared on behalf of the respondent. Both parties submitted their oral arguments. The petitioner submitted that he had applied for a check meter in the month of 09/2019 but instead of installing a check meter his meter was replaced alleging that since the meter has become defective so it has been replaced without installing a check meter. When pointed out to explain the assessed units 216 shown in the bill from 29.08.2019 to 19.01.2020 the respondent's representative could not explain and categorically admitted that these assessed units have been included in the bill by an inadvertent mistake and a revised bill by deleting these assessed units and allowing credit for the cost of these units shall be issued shortly.
7. The documents available on file have been perused and arguments from both parties have been heard. Following facts of the case have been observed
  - i) A 3 KW connection was released to the petitioner on 20.05.2012 when meter no. 0045878 was installed. There is no dispute about billing till the month of 05/2019 when a metered consumption bill for 403 units was issued. NA bill for the month of 06/2019 was issued for assessed consumption of 489 units. No bill was issued for the month of 07/2019. A metered consumption bill for 3660 units from reading 39111 to 42771 was issued for the month of 08/2019 in which adjustment of NA bill issued in the month of 06/2019 was allowed and thus the metered consumption billed in the month of 08/2019 (3660 units) is the consumption for 3 months i.e. 06/2019, 07/2019 and 08/2019 and not for the month of 08/2019 only. Bill for September 2019 was issued for 567 metered units from reading 42771 to 43338 on 18.09.2019. Bill for the month of 10/2019 was issued for RDF on assessed 398 units. In this bill present and previous readings that pertained to old meter have been shown, while this meter had already been replaced on 25.09.2019 and it is therefore established that the meter change was not advised to the billing system till issue of this bill on 21.10.2019. Subsequent 2 bills for the month of 11/2019 and 12/2019 have been issued for 627 and 956 units respectively as per readings obtaining in the new meter installed on 25.09.2019. Bill for the month of January 2020 has been issued for 2054 units and bill for February 2020 has been issued for a

metered consumption of 352 units as per new meter. Dues as per this bill are Rs. 8,045.00 including arrear of Rs. 5,396.00.

- ii) The respondent having noted the mistake committed by them in issuing the bills from 08/2019 to January 2020 have revised the bill for the period 29.08.2019 to 19.01.2020 for 2054 units [567 leftover units of the old meter + 1271 units (1370 reading on 19.01.2020 – 99 initial reading) recorded by the new meter till 19.01.2020 + 216 assessed units] total dues as per this bill have been shown as Rs. 34,177.00 including arrears Rs. 19,624.00. The respondent have further submitted details of the said bill amounting to Rs. 34,177.00 and payments amounting to Rs. 35,344.00 made by the petitioner and as such net payable amount up to the month of 01/2020 has been worked out as Rs. (–) 1167.00, i.e. credit to the petitioner.
- iii) The revised bills issued by the respondent up to the month of January 2020 showing a credit of Rs. 1167.00 to the account of petitioner appears to be correct except the cost of 216 assessed units included in the bill for the period 29.08.2019 to 19.01.2020 which is admitted as a mistake by the respondent and have committed to rectify this mistake.
- iv) The petitioner in the arguments have pleaded that the consumption of 3660 units shown in the bill of 08/2019 is very high as compared to his average consumption of about 400 units per month of 14 units per day. As clarified above and is evident from the billing history this consumption of 3660 units is for 3 months viz 06/2019, 07/2019 and 08/2019 and not for the month of 08/2019 only. It is further noted from the billing history that consumption in the corresponding months in the year of 2017 and 2018 was 3565 units and 3492 units respectively. It shows that their consumption in the months of June, July & August happens to be very high in each year as compared to their average consumption in other months of the year and therefore his objection is not maintainable and is therefore overruled.
- v) As regards his oral objection during hearing on 18.03.2020, that although he had applied for a check meter in the month of September 2019, but his meter was replaced on 25.09.2019 without installing a check meter so correctness of

the old meter could not be ascertained. It is clarified that firstly his objection is not sustainable for want of any documentary evidence of his request for check meter and secondly the respondent have acted promptly to check his meter when they visited his premises on 25.09.2019 and found that the meter had already stopped and have thus replaced the meter, as an IDF meter on 25.09.2019 and obviously there was no sense for installing a check meter on a defective meter.

vi) Regarding his averment that the meter had become defective in the month of May 2019, it is clarified that the meter was working till 18.09.2019 when reading shown in the meter was 43338 against the reading 39111 as on 25.05.2019. The same reading was found in the meter on 25.09.2019, when checked in the lab, although it could not be read by the staff at site at the time of its replacement. It is therefore established that meter had become defective only on 18.09.2019 at 43338 and the respondent have replaced this defective meter on 25.09.2019 (within 7 days only) promptly and within the stipulated time as allowed in the relevant Supply Code Regulations, 2007.

vii) Veracity of the old meter also stands verified from the consumption pattern as clarified above.

8. The respondent are therefore directed to make necessary rectification in the revised bill and issue a rectified bill after allowing credit for these 216 assessed units. The grievance of the petitioner stands redressed in view of the revised bill prepared by the respondent and no further relief is admissible. The petition is dismissed. Forum order stands modified as per this order.

Dated: 23.03.2020

(Subhash Kumar)  
Ombudsman