

**CONSUMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM,
AMRAVATI ZONE, AKOLA.**

*“Vidyut Bhavan”,
Ratanlal Plots,
Akola: 444 001
Tel.No.2434476*

Dt- 08/10/2013

Complaint No.79/2013

In the matter of grievance of excessive elecgrtricity bill

Quorum :

Shri T.M.Mantri,	Chairman
Shri P.B.Pawar,	Secretary
Shri A.S.Gade	Member

Smt. Urmila Pradmakar Mishra (Con.No.310240646772) ... Complainant

...VS...

The Executive Engineer, MSEDCL Urban Dn.Akola ... Respondent

Appearances:

Complainant Representative: Shri Ravindra D. Surekha

Respondent Representative: Shri V.K. Kasat, Dy.Executive Engineer

1. The complainant has approached this forum in respect of her grievance for issuing of bill of Rs. `7968/- for April/Mat-2013. The complainant's grievance is that she is a consumer since 1988 and remitted the electricity bills regularly. The details have been given about the equipments under user with averments that on an average the bill of 40-70 units used to come. However, thereafter, above referred excessive bill came to be issued for which the complaint has been lodged. The electricity meter in the premises has been replaced twice by the N.A. licensee upon depositing all the requisite charges but no decision has been taken about excessive bills. Even it has not been informed about the checking of the meter.

2. It is alleged that if the history of the last 3/4 years looked into it will reveal that there is less consumption of the electricity so also during the relevant months of the last year. However excessive bills for these two months of April and May-2013 came to be issued. Even the meter, which was installed after May-13, is showing less consumption. The concerned documents have been filed alongwith the complaint with a request that to revise the bills and correct bills be issued, as per the consumption of last 3/4 years and the complainant is ready to make payment thereof. Documents came to be filed alongwith the complaint.

3. After receipt of the notice reply came to be filed on behalf of the N.A. licensee, belatedly, narrating the steps taken about the grievance of the complainant . Earlier meter was burnt and after making the complaint by the complainant new meter has been installed. In view of the grievance of the complaint dt 3/5/2013 that the meter is fast, she has been asked to pay the fees of Rs. 150/- which was deposited and the said meter was sent for testing by fixing other meter. The complainant's meter found to be OK while testing on 8/5/2013. In view of the complainant's grievance that the other meter installed is also fast, she has been given quotation for meter testing charges, which was deposited on 31/5/2013. That meter was also sent for checking and it was found to be OK as per the report. The N.A. has further stated that on 28/5/2013 the consumer has taken other meter in the same premises in the name of Omprakash Padmakar with average consumption of 60 units so also the average consumption of complaint meter 349696 is also of 60 units per month. It is stated that considering the consumption for April and May the bill issued to the complainant is correct and it will not be just and proper to revise the bill as per the consumption of the last year as alleged. There is no merit in

the complaint and the bills issued to the complainant being correct the complaint be disposed off . That bunch of documents came to be filed with reply.

4. The matter was kept for hearing . Heard Shri Sureka the learned representative for the complainant and Shri Kasat Dy.Executive Engineer on behalf of the N.A. licensee.

5. On going through the records and submissions made it is clear that the complainant is consumer of the N.A. licensee since about 25 years. The copy of C.P.L of the complainant is filed on record for the period January-12 onwards till August-13. If one considers the readings there in, it is clear that except in these two months of dispute i.e. April and May, 2013 the normal user is much less and even during the course of arguments it has been submitted that after installation of the last meter, the consumption is as usual in the normal range i.e. about 60 units and that has not been disputed.

6. It is worthwhile to note that the record clearly shows that the first complaint was made by the complainant on 18/3/2013. The meter was replaced on 20/3/2013. It is also not in dispute that an amount of Rs. 600/- towards meter cost was recovered from the complainant on 20/3/2013 and new meter was installed. Here it is pertinent to note that the complainant had made grievance that this new installed meter is fast. Rs. 150/- has been recovered from the complainant towards testing charges of the said meter and other meter was installed. On 31/5/2013, the complainant has made a grievance that this meter is also fast. Rs. 150/- has been recovered from the complainant towards the testing charges and other meter was installed on 31/5/2013. According to the complainant the reading on this lastly installed

meter is as normal and she has no grievance about the reading therein. The question now remains about the grievance of the complainant for the bills of April and May, 2013 for 878 and 993 units respectively.

7. As per the N.A. the meter terminal of first meter (meter No. 159653) was burnt. New meter was installed. The other two meters for which the complainant has made grievance, alleged to be fast, have been also removed by recovering the testing charges of Rs. 150/-, each time. According to the complainant, inspite her grievance, neither she has been called at the time of meter inspection nor the meters have been inspected in her presence. Copies of the meter testing report also clearly shows that none of them bears the signature of the complainant and it has been admitted that neither the complainant has been asked to remain present at the time of testing nor signatures have been obtained on the testing report. The learned representative of the complainant has submitted that even the alleged testing report filed on record as Annexure 4 and 6 with the reply clearly shows that there is variance in the readings as well as scoring and overwriting. Even the same has not been signed by the meter tester. In Annexure-4 with the reply, in front of "reading figure" 01456KWH is mentioned whereas in the Tabular Form the figure "1457" is mentioned under "IR" whereas "1458" under "FR". Similarly, in the Annexure-6, figure "0894KWH" is mentioned in front of reading, whereas in tabular form "895" under "IR" and "896" under "FR" is mentioned. This report clearly shows that there are scoring and overwriting in the figures mentioned under the column under "At Load" and "Pulses to be taken". Admittedly, an amount of Rs. 600/- has been recovered from the complainant towards cost of meter and subsequently Rs. 150/- on two occasions, for meter testing charges.

8. As already observed above, according to the N.A., in the meter No. 159653, the meter terminal was alleged to be burnt. No details have been placed on record from the side of the N.A. as to what was actual problem in the said meter and what was actually burnt. If one goes through the C.P.L. filed on record by the N.A., it clearly shows that the readings have been continuously recorded by the said meter. As per the reading in the C.P.L. the consumption and units for January-13 was 71 (4383 to 4454), in February-13, 47 units (4454 to 4501)P, in March-13, 47 units (4501 to 4548), for April 887 units (0 to 887) and adjustment units shown as 3. Whereas, of May-13, 993 units (0 to 422 and adjustment of 571 units. Whereas for June-13, the units are 69 (0 to 69). As far as readings from July-13 onwards, there is normal consumption of units. In the meter replacement report of meter No.159653 dt. 20/3/2013, the reading is shown as 4551. So this clearly shows that adjustment of 3 units shown in CPL of April-13 is towards the difference of 4548 to 4551. If one considers these entries in CPL, it is clear that the said meter was recording consumption of units till it was removed at the time of reading 4551 regularly, So, one finds substance in the submission made on behalf of the complainant that the consumption of the units till March-13 as shown in the CPL is as per the actual consumption. The consumption of 887 units and 993 units, shown for April and May-13 respectively. Admittedly, that time new meters were installed and the complainant has made grievance about the same being fast on two occasions and they have been replaced by collecting the testing charges. The complainant's grievance about not testing the meter in presence as well not providing the testing report found to be justified on the basis of available material on record. As soon as the third meter (No. 349696) installed on 31/5/2013, the reading of June-13 is of 69 units and subsequently the reading for July-13 onwards are as per the normal

consumption of the complainant, as alleged by her ,that has not been disputed from the side of the N.A.

9. No doubt, on behalf of the N.A. it has been tried to orally argue that in April -13 and May-13 there might be more user of electricity on account of summer and coolers might have been used in the premises. However, there is nothing in support thereof. Even in reply, there is no whisper in that respect. Admittedly, there is no inspection report about the alleged high user of the electricity, more particularly, for these two months. The said oral argument is without any plea in reply and without anything in support on record.

10. The learned representative of the N.A. has submitted that at the fag end of May-13, i.e. on or about 28/5/2013, new meter (No. 2752) has been installed in the name of Omprakash Padmakar Mishra and referred to Annexure-8, the electricity bill of August-13 of said Omprakash Mishra, the said bill plainly shows that there is consumption of 60 units for July and August-13. If one considers that, because of this new meter there is less consumption from the earlier meter of the complainant, it is clear that it is only of 60 units. The learned representative of N.A. has submitted that the complainants consumption is of 60 units. But, even if, one goes to the extent on agreeing with the submission made by the learned representative of the N.A., the reading is in the range of 120 units per month of both these meters.

11. There seems to be some substance in the complaint/submissions made on behalf of the complainant about the excessive meter reading. From the CPL, the consumption of the electricity for April-12 and May-12 i.e. similar summer period of earlier year, is in the range of 40 units. The copy of CPL: filed on record from the side of N.A. from January-12 onwards clearly shows that

except two months in dispute i.e. April and May-13, the consumed units are below the range of 60 units, per month. The record clearly shows that the complainant had made grievance on number of occasions and by making payment of charges tried to resolve her grievance. Non-inspection, non-checking of the electricity meter, in presence of the complainant specially when there was serious dispute from the complainant side, non-providing of testing report clearly supports the grievance raised on behalf of the complainant. After installation of meter 349696 on 31-May-2013, again the user of the consumption is in the normal range. So it clearly reveals from the record that there is some substance in the grievance of the complainant. Making of payment of Rs. 900/- (Rs. 600 towards new meter, Rs. 150/- each time on two occasions, within a period of two months, clearly shows that there is something requiring the complainant to make grievance, otherwise nobody would have incurred this unnecessary expenses. The complainant has no grievance for the readings since June-13 onwards and even during the course of arguments it has been reiterated that the bills are in the range of normal consumption. In fact, in the background and facts and circumstances, it was for N.A. to put forth all documents and justifiable explanation, which is not coming from the side. This forum is therefore inclined to accept that there is some substance in the grievance. Subsequently, this forum is of the view that to pass the order so as to meet the ends of justice and following order will serve the said purpose. With such observations, this forum proceeds to pass the following unanimous order.

ORDER

- 1) That complaints NO. 79/2013 is hereby partly allowed.
- 2) The concerned office of the N.A. licensee is directed to revise the impugned bills of April and May-2013, for 887 and 993 units respectively and to issue correct bill of average consumption on the basis of last preceding 12 months i.e. in the range of 60 units per month and complainant to deposit the amount immediately on receipt of such bills.
- 3) In the circumstances parties to bear their own costs.
- 4) That the Compliance report to be submitted within a period of one month from the date this order.

Sd/-
(A.S.Gade)
Member

Sd/-
(P.B.Pawar)
Secretary

Sd/-
(T.M.Mantri)
Chairman