

**Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd.'s  
Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum  
Nagpur Urban Zone, Nagpur**

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**Case No. CGRF(NUZ)/033/2007**

**Applicant** : Shri Suryabhan Timaji Pothbhare,  
At Shivaji Nagar,  
Back side of I.T.I.  
Ward No. 5, Mouda,  
Tahsil Mouda,  
Dist. NAGPUR.

**Non-applicant** : MSEDCL represented by  
the Nodal Officer-  
Executive Engineer,  
Division No. -I, NUZ,  
Nagpur.

**Quorum Present** : 1) Shri S.D. Jahagirdar,  
Chairman,  
Consumer Grievance Redressal  
Forum,  
Nagpur Urban Zone,  
Nagpur.

2) Smt. Gouri Chandrayan,  
Member,  
Consumer Grievance Redressal  
Forum,  
Nagpur Urban Zone,  
Nagpur.

3) Shri S.J. Bhargawa  
Executive Engineer &  
Member Secretary,  
Consumer Grievance Redressal  
Forum, Nagpur Urban Zone,  
Nagpur.

**ORDER (Passed on 10.07.2007)**

The present grievance application is filed on 13.06.2007 under Regulation 6.4 of the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum & Electricity Ombudsman) Regulations, 2006 here-in-after referred-to-as the said Regulations.

The grievance of the applicant is in respect of excessive and erroneous energy bills.

Before approaching this Forum, the applicant had filed his complaint on the same subject-matter before the Internal Grievance Redressal Cell (in short, the Cell) on 25.04.2006 under the said Regulations. The Cell, upon enquiry and hearing, informed the applicant by its letter, being letter no. 4449 dated 10.07.2006 that the applicant's meter, being meter no. 8176471, will be tested in the testing laboratory for the purpose of ascertaining its accuracy and necessary action taken as per result of the testing. The applicant was not satisfied with this decision and hence, the present grievance application.

The matter was heard on 03.07.2007.

The applicant's contention is that he had filed his complaints dated 21.01.2005, 27.07.2006 & 29.02.2006 to the non-applicant's officials informing them that excessive billing is done to the applicant with a request to revise his energy bill amounts. He had also requested that readings of his meter be recorded every month and also that his meter may be changed. He added that he had already paid all his energy bills regularly upto 30.11.2005 when his average energy consumption bill used to be in the range of Rs. 90/- to 100/- per month. According to him, no bills were issued to him after 30.11.2005 and that energy bill amounting to Rs.14,630/- came to be issued in the month of

May, 2006. This energy bill amount is not acceptable to him because, according to him, this amount is unjust, improper and illegal.

He has requested that the energy bill amount may be revised so as to be in tune with his monthly average of about Rs.100/-.

A submission was also made by him that meter readings were not recorded by the concerned meter readers between June, 2003 to December 2005 and energy bills on average basis up to 30.11.2005 have already been paid by him.

He lastly prayed that the excessive energy bill amount in question may be revised appropriately.

The non-applicant, on his part, has stated that electricity supply to the applicant's premises was connected on 04.04.2003 after installing meter, being meter no. 6471, for service connection no. 422122897 standing in the name of consumer Shri Suryabhan Potbhare who is the son of the applicant. Energy bills were issued to the applicant as per metered consumption in June 2003, December 2003, June 2004, October 2004, December 2004 & December 2005. The reading of the applicant's meter was noticed to be on a higher side and hence, fresh meter reading was recorded on 24.01.2006 by the concerned Jr. Engineer. At that time the current reading of the applicant's meter was 4797 which was the same as recorded earlier by the meter reader. It was there upon concluded that reading taken in December 2005 at the same level was correct. Thereupon, the applicant made his complaint about the meter reading on 26.01.2006. The concerned S/Divisional Engineer furnished to the applicant detailed information about the reading etc. However, the applicant refused to make payment of the energy bill amount. A slab benefit has also been

given for the billing months upto December 2005. Accordingly, a revised bill was sent to the applicant on 02.05.2006 payment of which is still outstanding. Since the applicant requested for replacing his meter, being meter no. 8176471, a new meter, being meter no. 2235830, was installed replacing his old meter on 08.06.2006 and the applicant's old meter was sent to the meter testing laboratory for testing purpose. As per result of the meter test, the applicant's meter is found to be fault-free. He has produced a copy of testing report dated 15.06.2006 which is on record. He added that the Cell, upon enquiry and hearing, had rightly ordered for testing of the applicant's meter and that looking to the text of the testing report, there is no substance in the applicant's grievance.

It is a matter of record that the bills on average basis were issued to the applicant intermittently upto November 2005. The applicant's CPL (Consumer Personal Ledger) also reveals that readings were not recorded by the concerned meter readers though they were supposed to visit the applicant's premises at least once in two months for reading and recording purposes. The CPL also reveals that between April 2005 and November, 2005 the same quantum of previous and current readings is shown. It is in the month of December 2005 that the current reading of 4797 was read and recorded and there upon the applicant was billed for total consumption of 4248 units for the past period of 12 months. This has resulted into charging the applicant for the differential amount of energy bills in the previous period of 12 months as only average bills were issued earlier. It is also a matter of record that requisite slab benefit has been given to the applicant in the billing month of December 2005. The non-applicant has made his

bonafides clear by making a statement that the reading of the applicant's meter was checked second time on 24.01.2006 in order to confirm that current reading of 4797 was recorded correctly by the concerned meter reader in December 2005. The non-applicant found that the recorded meter reading of 4797 was correct. This position clarifies that the applicant had consumed electricity during the past period of 12 months prior to December 2005 but he was not billed appropriately for want of correct & timely readings of his meter. In this respect, this Forum hold the view that the concerned meter readers who failed to record the reading of the applicant's meter at least once in two months should be identified and appropriate action be taken against them for their lapse. May that be the case, the fact remains that the applicant's meter was not found defective. This is clear from the meter testing report dated 15.06.2006 a copy of which has been produced on record by the non-applicant. Since the meter was functioning alright, the applicant is bound to pay the arrear of energy charges as reflected in the applicant's energy bill. The applicant's request to revise the energy bill amount of Rs.14,600/- which includes past arrears so as to be in tune with his average monthly consumption cannot be acceptable by us for the simple reason that the applicant has been billed correctly in the billing month of December, 2005 and onwards as per his actual consumption in the past.

On the point of testing of meter, the applicant was repeatedly asked by us whether the applicant's old meter was tested in his presence. The applicant every time assertively stated that he was present at the time when his meter was tested on 15.06.2006. The bonafides of the non-applicant are thus clear.

We find that nothing wrong has happened in the present case in respect of energy bill issued to the applicant except that the concerned meter readers ought to have recorded in the past readings of the applicant's meter at-least once in two months regularly.

The applicant's old meter has also been replaced on 08.06.2006 by a new meter as requested by the applicant.

In the result, we hold that there is no substance in the applicant's grievance.

The present grievance application, therefore, stands rejected.

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| Sd/-   | Sd/-                           | Sd/-                     |
| <b>(S.J. Bhargawa)</b>                                     | <b>(Smt. Gauri Chandrayan)</b> | <b>(S.D. Jahagirdar)</b> |
| Member-Secretary   | MEMBER                         | CHAIRMAN                 |
| <b>CONSUMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM</b>                  |                                |                          |
| <b>MAHARASHTRA STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION CO LTD's</b> |                                |                          |
| <b>NAGPUR URBAN ZONE, NAGPUR.</b>                          |                                |                          |

**Member-Secretary**  
**Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum,**  
**Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co.Ltd.,**  
**Nagpur Urban Zone, NAGPUR.**