

**MAHARASTRA STATE ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION CO. LTD.**  
**KONKAN ZONE RATNAGIRI**  
**Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum Ratnagiri**

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Consumer case No. – 12/2018

Date :- 01/11/2018

**Ebrahim Nuruddin Khalpe**  
**At/post. Makhjan,**  
**Tal; Sangmeshwar**  
**Dist Ratnagiri**

} **Complainant**

**Executive Engineer**  
**Maharashtra State Elec.Dist.Co.Ltd.**  
**Ratnagiri Division**

V/S

} **Opposite Party**

**Quorum of the Forum**

}  
1) **Mrs. Pushpa S. Tawde**  
**Chairperson**  
2) **R.P.Chavan**  
**Secretary Member**  
3) **Mr. S.B. Mainkar**  
**Member**

**On behalf of consumer**

}  
1) **Mr. N.E. Khalpe**  
2) **Mr. Raees Khalpe**  
**(Representative)**

**On behalf of opposite party**

}  
1) **Mr. Farid Pirjade**  
**I/C Dy EE, SDO**  
**Sangmeshwar**  
2) **Mr.Santosh K. Aayre**  
**(AA)Sangmeshwar**

Mr. Ebrahim Nuruddin Khalpe is the LT Residential consumer with consumer no. 223140001049. Since the consumer Ebrahim Nuruddin Khalpe expired, MR. N. E. Khalpe representative of the Consumer has made the application and filed complaint before this Forum on 1st November 2018 in Form A regarding excessive electricity bill received by him and requested to revise the bill.

The complainant made oral complaint to officer of the branch office, Aarvali and hence the spot inspection was done. According to spot inspection report the meter was prima facie reported to be in order and the reading on the meter was 12801 kwh. Complainant was of the opinion that reading was excessive and hence he made an application for testing of the meter on 2<sup>nd</sup> may 2018. Meter testing report received on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 revealed that the meter was in order. Accordingly the bill of Rs.16387.86 was sent for approval to Kalyan office. Complainant was not satisfied with the report and made the complaint to sub-division Sangmeshwar on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The said office replied to the consumer regarding his grievances by letter dated 14 June 2018 and explained that though the meter status was shown as faulty in bill, it was punched wrongly by the Meter Reading Agency to whom the said work was assigned and the meter testing report revealed that the meter is in order. The office also assured the consumer that the necessary action against the Meter Reading Agency for punching faulty status will be taken. It was also pointed out to the consumer that the average unit is calculated by the computerized system on the basis of units consumed for preceding three months and not on the basis of the average units of preceding six months. (i.e.  $287+0+383/3=223$  unites). Complainant did not satisfy with the explanation given by the said office. Hence made complaint vide his letter dated 15.06.2018 to the consumer cell, Ratnagiri. He has stated as follows:-

He noticed that since September 2017 reading of the meter shown is 223 units per month (with meter status faulty) which in his opinion is excessive. The fact was brought to the notice of the officer of the branch office, Aarvali and thereafter consumer made application for testing of the meter at the behest of the MSEDCL. The meter was checked and found to be correct and in order. However consumer raised the query why the meter was showing faulty status for last 8 months i.e. from September 2017 to April 2018 and he also did not agree with the meter reading. Hence he pursued the matter with the office of the Deputy Executive Engineer,

sub- division Sangmeshwar. Deputy Executive Engineer by his letter dated 14.06.2018 replied to the consumer regarding the grievances raised by him in his letter dated 12.06.2018. Against this explanation by the Deputy Executive Engineer Sangmeshwar the consumer filed the complaint to Internal Grievance Redressal Cell, Ratnagiri on 15 June 2018. IGRC in its order dated the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 stated that the meter sent for testing and meter shown in CPL appears to be different. It further ordered to constitute the committee to revise the disputed bills and directed to calculate the bill amount for the months before testing of the meter by taking into consideration the average units of last one year and for the months after testing of meter by taking in to consideration the actual meter reading.

Consumer disagreed with the IGRC's order and has filed complaint before this Forum on 1st November 2018 in Form A regarding excessive electricity bill received by him and requested to revise the bill.

This forum requested the executive Engineer Ratnagiri to submit its explanation regarding the grievance of the consumer along with necessary documents within ten days from the receipt of the letter of this Forum.

Accordingly Deputy Executive Engineer, Sub division Sangmeshwar by its letter dated 29 Nov 2018 stated the action taken by the MSEDCL on the issue as below :-

दि. १०.०४.२०१८ रोजी ग्राहकाच्या तोंडी तक्रारीनुसार शाखा कार्यालय आरवलीचा स्थळ परिक्षण अहवाल प्राप्त झाला. त्यानुसार दि. १०.०४.२०१८ रोजीचे रिडींग -१२८०१ kmh होते. ग्राहकाने दि. ०२.०५.२०१८ रोजी मिटर तपासणी करणेबाबतचा अर्ज शाखा कार्यालय आरवली येथे केला.

जुना मिटर तपासणीसाठी दिल्याने सदर ठिकाणी नविन मिटर दि. ०३.०५.२०१८ रोजी बसविण्यात आला. आणि त्यानुसार (New meter no .५३-७५५३३५६१ IR-० kmh , Old meter no. १०-००१४३४००, FR, १३०२२ kmh)

दि. २५.०५.२०१८ रोजी मिटर तपासणी अहवाल उपविभागास प्राप्त झाला. अहवालानुसार मिटर सुस्थितीत असल्याने रिडींगप्रमाणे सदर ग्राहकाच्या देयकाचा +B ८० रु. १६३८७.८६ मंजूरीसाठी RD कल्याण कार्यालयास पाठविण्यात आला.

दि. १२.०६.२०१८ रोजी ग्राहकाने उपविभागास तक्रार दाखल केली सदर तक्रारीबाबत दि. १४.०६.२०१८ रोजी ग्राहकास खुलासा देण्यात आला. सदर खुलासा मान्य नसल्याने ग्राहकाने अंतर्गत ग्राहक तक्रार निवारण येथे दि. १५.०६.२०१८ रोजी तक्रार दाखल केली.

दि. १३.०७.२०१८ रोजी अंतर्गत ग्राहक तक्रारनिवारण कक्ष, रत्ना. यांचे पत्र क्र. ३२५० दि. ११.०७.२०१८ तक्रारसंबंधीची सुनावणीस दि. २१.०७.२०१८ रोजी हजर राहणे बाबतचे पत्र या कार्यालयास प्राप्त झाले दि. ०१/१०/२०१८ रोजी अंतर्गत ग्राहक तक्रार निवारण कक्ष, रत्नागिरी यांचा आदेश क्र. ४२६० दि. २६/०९/२०१८ या कार्यालयास प्राप्त झाला. सदर आदेशामध्ये उपविभागांतर्गत कमिटी स्थापन करण्यात येवुम जुन्या मीटरचे मागिल एक वर्षाचे सरासरी व नवीन मिटर लावल्यापासुन प्रत्येक महिन्याचे युनिट घेऊन सरासरीप्रमाणे बिल दुरुस्ती करुन देण्यात यावे असे सूचित केले. सदर आदेशानुसार दि. ०९.१०.२०१८ रोजी उपविभागांतर्गत कमिटी स्थापन करण्यात आली. कमिटी मधील निर्णयानुसार B-८०(-) रु. २१४९४.५६ कशाप्रकारे भरण्यात येणार आहे याचा

खुलासा IGRF कडे दि. ११.१०.२०१८ रोजी सादर करण्यात आला. त्याप्रमाणे दि. १७.१०.२०१८ रोजी B८० (-) रु. २१४९४.५६ भरण्यात आला.

दि.०८.१०.२०१८ रोजी (धनंजय औं ढकर) अधीक्षक अभियंता (बिंलींग) यांचे पत्र क्र. ०२३२८५ दि. ०१.१०.२०१८ प्राप्त झाले (विषय मिटर तपासणी करणेबाबत) सदर पत्राबाबतचा खुलासा दि. १०.१०.२०१८ रोजी सादर करण्यात आला.

## Arguments

The matter was scheduled for hearing on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018. On behalf of consumer Shri. N.E. Khalpe and Mr. Raees Khalpe presented the case and opponent MSEDCL was represented by Shri Mr. Farid Pirjade, I/C Dy EE, I/C SDO, Sangmeshwar and Mr.Santosh K. Aayre (AA)Sangmeshwar.

Consumer narrated the facts as stated in his letter dated 15 June 2018 and also submitted letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018 giving his say on complaint. Consumer argued that the meter was removed for testing in his absence without informing him and he believed that he has received testing report of some other meter instead of his meter. Consumer has also raised the query regarding how the bill amount for 8 months i.e from Sept 2017 to April 2018 was calculated .Consumer has also requested to know what action against the Meter Reading Agency is taken for mentioning faulty serial no of meter and to know in brief how the calculation of average unit is made to arrive the bill amount. He also submitted that the photos of the meter reading on the bill are also not clear and requested to take appropriate steps to print the same so as to appear it very clear and visible.

Opponent MSEDCL officer while arguing relied on the written explanation given by it vide letter dated the 29th Nov 2018 written to this Forum. He agreed that meter no printed on the bill was 00143400 but he submitted that it was wrongly punched on the bill by Meter Reading Agency. When actual inspection was done ,the number on the meter was 1429257 which tallies with the photos of meter taken in the year of 2013. He also brought to the notice of the Forum that the serial no. of meter on the testing report and the no. on the actual meter is same. So meter sent for testing is of the consumer which bears no 1429257.

Forum at this junction of argument intervened and directed the MSEDCL to show the meter which was sent for testing to confirm the serial number of meter. Regarding the removal of the meter in absence of the consumer the officer pointed out that there was no response to the calls made by the opponent for his presence while removing the meter. Hence the meter was removed in his absence and sent for testing.

As far as revising the bills for the month of September 2017 to April 2018 is concerned, opponent submitted that as per the order of IGRC the

committee was constituted and the bills were revised on the basis of average unit of last preceding 12 months for the months of September 2017 to April 2018 and on the basis of actual meter reading shown on the meter for the months after the testing of meter. Accordingly the difference of Rs 21194.60 /-was shown in the bill for Nov 2018.

Regarding action for punching wrong serial meter no. on the bill, opponent submitted that Photo Meter Reading Agency has been warned for this mistake and that the action as per rule will be taken against the said agency.

After considering the complaints and arguments of the consumer and opponent the points under consideration are as fallow.

- 1) Whether the meter tested on 22nd May 2018 and the meter of which reading was taken before testing and removal from the premises of consumer is the same?
- 2) Whether the bills need to be revised for the months of September 2017 to April 2018

### **Reasoning**

The matter was heard. After considering the documents on record and the arguments made by the consumer and opponent, the Forum came to the conclusion as follows.

1. On considering the point raised before the Forum regarding the serial no of meter, Forum felt it necessary to confirm no. on the meter. The photo of bill for December 2013 show the same meter no. However, recent photograph were called for to ascertain whether the meter is changed in the meantime. The photographs were received but meter no. was not visible as the sticker of consumer no. was pasted on the glass exactly where from the meter no. can be seen. Therefore the meter sent for testing was called for inspection and verification of meter serial no ,regarding which dispute was raised by the consumer. The meter brought by A. H. Lawande Meter Tester ,Ratnagiri Meter Testing Unit was inspected in presence of secretary and member of Forum. The sticker was partially removed by Meter Testing Unit to get the Serial No. of meter to record in the meter Testing Repot. It is also noticed that the Serial no. appearing on the said meter is found to be 1429257 and final reading appearing on the meter is 13027 kwh. (last reading at consumer premises was 13022kwh)

In view of this Forum came to the conclusion that the meter reading taken by the Reader during the months of September 2017 to April 2018 are taken from the meter belonging to the consumer no. 223140001049.

Thus it can be safely concluded that the meter serial no. written on the meter tallies with the meter no. of which readings are disputed by the consumer.

2. Since the meter was found to be in order after testing, the debit to the extent of consumption of 3274 units (13022-9748) was raised after adjusting the average consumption of 1784 units (223X8) and the resultant amount was shown in bill for the month of June 2018 as arrears to the tune of Rs.16387.86. Since consumer was not satisfied with the bill amount, he filed the complaint before IGRC . IGRC agreed that there is contradiction between the meter serial number appeared on the CPL and on the meter sent for testing. It was also ensured that the number punched on the C.PL. or on the bill by the Photo Meter Reading Agency was wrongly punched. This fact has already been agreed by the MSEDCL in its written letter and also during the argument at the time of hearing. The contradiction or the difference between the serial no. of the meter as appeared on the bill and as appeared on the actual meter sent for testing has been examined and verified by the Forum and in view of this, Forum is of the opinion that the reading taken for the month of September 2017 and reading taken after the testing of meter is taken from the same meter No.1429257.

Hence there is no doubt about the truthfulness of the readings taken from that meter having serial no. 1429257. Accepting this fact, as per IGRC order, the MSEDCL appointed the committee and calculated the units for the months of September 2017 to April 2018 (i.e 8 months )on the basis of average of 12 months preceding September 2017 and on the basis of average consumption after new meter installation in May 2018. The average unit of 110 is considered for calculation of units for the said period. The total debit raised was Rs 13212.81 for average consumption of 1784 units for 8 months while average consumption as per order amounted to Rs.8406.11 resulting in net difference of Rs. 4806.70. The total amount of Rs 21194.56 is shown as credit to the consumer in the bill for the month of October 2018 considering the debit raised of Rs 16387.86 in the months of August2018.

Thus it appears that the justice has been done to the consumer by the MSDCL by the above referred calculation and appears to be correct and does not call for intervention by this forum. However for no fault of consumer, the consumer was required to apply for sending the meter for testing and to peruse the matter so as to find out correctness of the calculation of the bill amount and the truthfulness of the meter reading, it would be logical and just to refund to consumer the fees paid by him the consumer for testing of meter.

## Order

- 1) Bills for the disputed months i.e. from the September 2017 to April 2018 have been rightly corrected as per IGRC order dated the 26 September 2018 Hence consumer complaint is dismissed.
- 2) MSEDCL is directed to give details to consumer/occupier in respect of disputed bills
  - (a) of all sums paid by consumer and its adjustments against energy bills,
  - (b) of the debit raised in the month of August 2018 after meter is tested and found in order.
  - (c) of the credits given / adjustments done as per IGRC order;
- 3) MSEDCL is directed to refund meter testing fee of Rs 180/- to consumer within 8 days from the date of receipt of this order
- 4) Compliance of above be reported to Forum within 15 days from the date of receipt of this order.

If consumer is not satisfied with the decision he may file representation within 60 days from the date of receipt of this order, to the Electricity Ombudsman, at the following address.

Secretary,  
Electricity OMBUDSMAN,  
Maharashtra State Electricity Regulatory Commission,  
606/608, Keshava Building,  
Bandra Kurla Complex,  
Mumbai – 400 051.  
Phone No.022 – 2659 2965.

**Shri. R.P. Chavan**  
**Secretary**  
**Ex.Engineer,C.G.R.F.**  
**Konkan Zone**

**Smt.Pushpa S. Tawde**  
**Chairperson ,**  
**C.G.R.F.**  
**Konkan Zone**

**Suhas B Mainkar**  
**Member (CPO)**  
**C.G.R.F.**  
**Konkan Zone**

**Date : 31/12/2018**  
**Place : Ratnagiri**

