

BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN (MUMBAI)

(Appointed by the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission
under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003)

REPRESENTATION NO. 81 OF 2025

In the matter of excess billing

Amin Ali Syed Ali.....Appellant
(C. No. 065510779228)

V/s.

Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd., Malegaon (MSEDCL)..... Respondents

Malegaon Power Supply Ltd. (MPSL), Distribution Franchisee Malegaon

Appearances:

Appellant : 1. Mohd. Shafeeque Mohd. Khushhal
2. Mahmoodal Hasan Shabir Ahmad, Representative

MSEDCL : 1. Jagdish Ingle, Superintending Engineer, Malegaon Circle
2. R. G. Verma, Acting Addl. Executive Engineer

MPSL : 1. Mahendra Reddy, Head Commercial, MPSL
2. Mitravanu Nayak, Head MRBD, MPSL
3. Pavan Disawal, Sr. Executive, MPSL

Coram: Vandana Krishna [IAS (Retd.)]

Date of hearing: 30th September 2025

Date of Order : 7th October 2025

ORDER

This Representation was filed on 29th July 2025 under Regulation 19.1 of the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum & Electricity


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



Ombudsman) Regulations, 2020 (CGRF & EO Regulations 2020) against the Order dated 21st July 2025 passed by the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, MSEDCL, Nashik Zone (the Forum) in Case No. 243/2024. The Forum by its order disallowed the grievance application of the Appellant. The Forum observed that, as per the Meter Testing Report dated 10.11.2022 issued by MPSTL, the meter was found to be accurate and in normal condition. The consumer has been billed on actual consumption from June 2022 onwards, except for the period between March 2023 and June 2023, when bills were issued on an average basis. The MPSTL office has revised the bills twice: (i) for the period January 2021 to June 2022, and (ii) for the period July 2022 to July 2023. The corrected bill was issued and a credit of Rs. 1, 63,087/- was given in April 2024. However, the consumer is irregular in payments, resulting in the accumulation of outstanding dues in the monthly bills.

2. The Appellant has filed the present representation against the order of the Forum. A hearing was conducted on 30th September 2025, in hybrid mode (physical and online via video conference). The Appellant attended the hearing in person, while the Respondent participated online through video conference. Both parties were heard at length. *[The Electricity Ombudsman's observations and comments are recorded under 'Notes' where needed.]*

3. The Appellant's submissions and arguments are stated in brief as below:

- (i) The Appellant is a residential consumer since 27.10.2002. The relevant consumer details are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1:

Name of Consumer	Consumer No.	Address on Bill	Sanctioned load	Date of Supply
Amin Ali Syed Ali	065510779228	S No. 207, P No. 43 Sutarwadi Pin-423203	0.26 KW	27.10.2002


 (Dilip Dumbre)
 Secretary
 Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



- (ii) The Appellant belongs to a poor family and is in a financially critical condition. He was billed on actual meter readings up to March 2020, when billing was carried out by MSEDCL. Thereafter, MPSL took charge as Franchisee, and from January 2021 onwards, the Appellant was incorrectly billed on average basis under the status of *Inaccessible / Reading Not Taken (RNT) / Faulty*. As a result, the Appellant received highly inflated and arbitrary bills. By way of example, he was billed for 832 units in May 2021 (amounting to about ₹5,140/-) and 5,895 units in June 2022 (amounting to about ₹97,306/-). The bills were not properly revised, and while doing so, no adjustment was made towards waiver of total interest and Delayed Payment Charges (DPC). The revised bill issued is therefore not acceptable to the Appellant. The imposition of such exorbitant charges is unjustified, as the liability has arisen solely due to lapses on the part of the Respondent in not billing on actual meter readings, and not due to any fault of the Appellant.
- (iii) The Appellant, despite his financial hardship, made part payments of ₹10,000/- on 26.07.2021, ₹40,000/- on 12.11.2024, and ₹40,000/- on 17.02.2025. He was willing to pay the correct monthly bills; however, the Respondent insisted that at least 80% of the total disputed bill be paid, which was beyond the Appellant's means.
- (iv) The sanctioned load of the Appellant is very limited, consisting of only a few tube lights, fans, bulbs, and one small water pump, shared among four brothers residing together.
- (v) The Appellant approached the Forum, seeking revision of the faulty/average bills for the period January 2021 to September 2025 and withdrawal of total interest and DPC, on the ground that he was not responsible for the wrong billing. However, the Forum, by its order, rejected the grievance.
- (vi) The Respondent contended that the meter box display was blurred, and therefore, actual readings could not be taken. However, it is the Respondent's responsibility to ensure proper rectification, and the Appellant cannot be subjected to wrong billing on this account. Despite repeated visits by the Appellant to the Respondent's office, the billing dispute has remained unresolved for more than four years, with no effective or satisfactory action taken.


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



(vii) In view of the above, the Appellant prays that the Respondent be directed to revise the impugned bills for the period 2021 to 2025 on a reasonable average basis, and to withdraw the entire interest and delayed payment charges levied thereon.

4. The Respondent's submissions and arguments are stated in brief as below.

- (i) MSEDCL, the Distribution Licensee, has appointed *Malegaon Power Supply Ltd. (MPSL)* as its Distribution Franchisee for Malegaon Municipal Area with effect from March 2020. Since then, all operational functions of electricity supply, infrastructure maintenance, customer service, and billing are being carried out by MPSL.
- (ii) The Appellant is a residential consumer (Consumer No. 065510779228) since 27.10.2002. Relevant particulars such as address, sanctioned load, etc., are tabulated in Table 1.
- (iii) During the MSEDCL period, meter readings were generally taken on actual basis. The last payment of ₹6,000/- was made on 26.12.2019. Thereafter the Appellant has been irregular in payment of energy bills. Arrears of ₹38,450/- had accumulated up to December 2020 when actual meter reading was recorded.
- (iv) The glass of the meter box found blurred, hence readings were not visible clearly and therefore for some months bills were raised on average basis with refundable Status, and for some months on actual basis with auto adjustment of average billing. The Appellant was billed under "Inaccessible" Status from Jan. 2021 to April 2021 (4 months) with average of 334 units per month. In May 2021, a bill of 832 units was issued for five months with a credit of ₹12,352/- towards earlier averages. Thus, arrears reduced from ₹27,871/- (April 2021) to ₹22,127/- (May 2021). The consumer paid ₹10,000/- on 26.07.2021.
- (v) In Jun 2022, the consumer was wrongly billed with 5,895 units under "Faulty" Status and charged ₹97,305/- with a "lock credit" of ₹26,898/-. This was totally wrong billing as the meter was working.
- (vi) As per the consumer's complaint dated 08.11.2022, the meter was tested on 10.11.2022. Its accuracy was found within permissible limits, and the recorded readings were correct.
- (vii) A site inspection was carried out on 05.12.2023. During the inspection, the connected load of the Appellant was observed as: Fans – 4 Nos., Lights – 5 Nos., and Motor – 1 No. The


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



meter reading recorded at the site was 22,800 kWh, which coincides with the actual meter reading of 22,823 kWh taken on 14.12.2023 in the monthly billing programme.

- (viii) Considering the entire disputed period, the billing of the Appellant was carefully studied. Accordingly, Bill Revision was carried out as below:

Revision Date: 06.04.2024

- a) Period 1 (Jan-2021 to Jun-2022): The revision accounted for 6,727 units over 18 months, averaging 374 units per month.
 - b) Period 2 (Jul-2022 to Jul-2023): The revision accounted for 5,015 units over 13 months, averaging 386 units per month.
 - c) Accordingly, a total credit of ₹1,64,859/- for both revisions were done in the April 2024 bill. The documents of bill revision are kept on record.
 - d) Subsequently, the consumer made a payment of ₹40,000/- on 12.11.2024.
- (ix) All necessary corrections have been effected and credits for average billing have been duly passed on. Interest debited earlier on account of faulty billing has been automatically reversed by the billing system during bill revisions for the period from **Jan. 2021 to July 2023**.
- (x) **Irregular Payment Habit:** It is submitted that the consumer has been persistently irregular in payment. Waiver of entire interest and DPC is not justifiable as such relief would encourage defaulting habits.
- (xi) During the Covid-19 pandemic (April 2020 to December 2021), the Appellant's actual consumption was higher, ranging from 280 to 390 units per month. However, from January 2022 onwards, the consumption pattern reduced significantly, ranging from 70 to 300 units per month.
- (xii) In light of the above facts (corrective actions already taken), the Respondent prays that the representation filed by the Appellant be rejected.

Analysis and Ruling

5. The parties were duly heard, and all documents on record were carefully examined.


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



6. The Appellant contended that he was wrongly billed under *Inaccessible/RNT/Faulty* status, leading to inflated bills (for example, 832 units in May-2021 (₹5,140) and 5,895 units in Jun-2022 (₹97,306). The subsequent revision did not include waiver of interest and DPC, and is not acceptable as the errors were solely due to the Respondent. Despite hardship, the Appellant paid ₹10,000 (26.07.2021), ₹40,000 (12.11.2024) and ₹40,000 (17.02.2025). He was ready to pay correct monthly bills but the Respondent demanded payment of at least 80% of the arrears which was beyond his means. His load is minimal, only lights, fans, bulbs, and a small water pump shared among four brothers. The Appellant prays for revision of bills for 2021–2025 on a reasonable average basis and withdrawal of the entire interest and DPC.

7. The Respondent contended that the Appellant was irregular in bill payments (after March 2020). Arrears of ₹38,450/- had accumulated till Dec-2020. Due to blurred / opaque glass of the meter box, some of the bills were issued on average basis, however, the credits of average billing were already given by the system. On complaint, the meter was tested on 10.11.2022 and found accurate. Site inspection on 05.12.2023 confirmed that the connected load was small (Fans–4, Lights–5, Motor–1), and the actual reading matched the meter. On 06.04.2024, a final revision was done:

- Jan-2021 to Jun-2022: 6,727 units / 18 months (avg. 374 units).
- Jul-2022 to Jul-2023: 5,015 units / 13 months (avg. 386 units).
- Total credit: ₹1,64,859/- which appears in April 2024 bill.

The Appellant has a persistent history of irregular payments. Waiver of the entire interest and DPC is not justified as it would encourage default.

8. The Electricity Ombudsman has dealt with many cases regarding sudden high billing to consumers due to non-recording of regular meter readings. While the calculation of average consumption in units may be reasonable, the arrears in Rupees become disproportionately high because of accumulated interest and DPC over months or years. Where such lapses occur on the


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



part of the licensee, it is unjust to levy interest and DPC, and it is desirable to pass on some relief as natural justice to the consumers.

9. The long-term billing and consumption pattern of the Appellant has been studied. The consumption The integrated abstract of the billing is tabulated as below:

Table 2:

Year	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21			2021-22			2022-23			2023-24			2024-25			2025-26
Month	Cons. (Units)	Cons. (Units)	Billing Status	Cons. (Units)	Mo nth	Billing Status	Cons. (Units)	Mo nth	Billing Status	Cons. (Units)	Mo nth	Billing Status	Cons. (Units)	Mo nth	Billing Status	Cons. (Units)	Mo nth	Cons. (Units)
Apr	299	479	R.N.T.	161	1	Inac	334	1	Inac	166	1	R.N.T.	128	1	Normal	127	1	234
May	257	236	R.N.T.	161	1	Normal	832	5	Normal	0	12	R.N.T.	128	1	Normal	96	1	165
Jun	280	303	R.N.T.	161	1	Inac	283	1	Normal	5895	1	Faulty	5723	1	Normal	90	1	104
Jul	222	240	Normal	1575	4	Inac	387	1	Normal	472	1	Normal	2643	1	Normal	80	1	96
Aug	225	195	Normal	385	1	Inac	374	1	Normal	462	1	Normal	149	1	Normal	281	1	90
Sep	247	199	Inac	390	1	Inac	193	1	Normal	465	1	Normal	147	1	Normal	293	1	81
Oct	216	207	Normal	728	2	Inac	359	1	Normal	393	1	Normal	149	1	R.N.T.	218	1	
Nov	207	167	Normal	355	1	Inac	345	1	Normal	195	1	Normal	134	1	Normal	378	2	
Dec	172	164	Normal	283	1	Inac	283	1	Normal	165	1	Normal	101	1	Normal	70	1	
Jan	194	139	Inac	334	1	Inac	166	1	Normal	110	1	Normal	75	1	Normal	66	1	
Feb	209	164	Inac	334	1	Inac	166	1	Normal	110	1	Normal	50	1	Normal	77	1	
Mar	192	180	Inac	334	1	Inac	194	1	R.N.T.	128	1	Normal	82	1	Normal	62	1	

*Inac: Inaccessible

The Appellant was billed on the basis of actual meter readings up to May 2021, with the “average bill” status being correctly shown as refundable. However, thereafter, the Appellant was wrongly billed under “Inaccessible” status with **0 units** in May 2022, followed by an abnormal billing of **5,895 units** in June 2022. The Respondent revised this bill correctly on 06.04.2024. Similarly, in July 2023, the Appellant was again wrongly billed—once under “Faulty” status for **5,723 units**, and again under “Normal” status for **2,643 units**. Subsequently, the bills for the period **July 2022 to July 2023** were revised. The credit of Rs. 1, 63,087/- was given in April 2024.

On review of payment records, it is observed that the Appellant was already a defaulter by December 2020, once the MPSL franchisee period started in March 2020. The Appellant paid ₹10,000/- on 26.07.2021, ₹40,000/- on 12.11.2024, and ₹40,000/- on 17.02.2025. These facts establish that the Appellant has been a **continuous defaulter** in payment of electricity bills. Accordingly, it is seen that the Appellant has not approached this Authority with clean hands. He does not deserve cancellation of the entire interest in bills. However, some relief would be justified


 (Dilip Dumbre)
 Secretary
 Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



considering that the default pattern started due to ‘average’ billing and not taking accurate meter readings, leading to accumulation of arrears and interest. There is accumulation of interest from Aug. 2023 onwards till date as shown in the following Table 3.

Table 3

Year	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Month	Current Interest (Rs.)	Current Interest (Rs.)	Current Interest (Rs.)
Apr		1732	915
May		1581	885
Jun		1744	920
Jul		1555	887
Aug	1511	1627	974
Sep	2402	1919	1020
Oct	3387	1704	
Nov	3576	1687	
Dec	3362	1372	
Jan	3845	1372	
Feb	3512	1389	
Mar	3289	798	
Total Interest	24884	18479	5602
Gross Total Interest			48964

Considering the circumstances of the case, it would be in the interest of natural justice to waive off the interest part by 50 % from Aug. 2023 onwards till the date of this order, as the interest was totally waived of at the time of bill revision, specifically for Jan-2021 to Jul-2023.

10. The Forum’s order is set aside. The Respondent is directed to

- Reduce the monthly interest of the Appellant by 50 % from Aug. 2023 onwards till the date of this order, i.e. at the rate of 7.5 % instead of 15 %.
- Allow the Appellant to pay the revised bill in 20 equal monthly instalments without any interest and DPC. If the Appellant fails to pay any instalment, proportionate


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



interest will accrue on the defaulter portion, and the Respondent has the liberty to take action as per law.

- (c) Compliance to be submitted within two months from the date of issue of this order.
- (d) The other prayers of the Appellant are rejected.

11. While parting with this order, it is observed that the Franchisee, *Malegaon Power Supply Ltd.*, failed to comply with the provisions of the **Electricity Supply Code and Standards of Performance Regulations, 2021**. The Respondent did not take proper meter readings of the consumer from March 2020 onwards, and corrective action regarding the blurred meter box was undertaken belatedly. Further, the Respondent failed to act promptly under the recovery mechanism, including initiating disconnection of supply for non-payment of dues. These lapses resulted in the accumulation of substantial arrears, giving rise to the present dispute. The Respondent/Franchisee is therefore **advised to strengthen its operational practices and ensure strict compliance with the applicable Regulations in future.**

12. The representation of the Appellant is accordingly disposed of.

13. The Secretariat of this office is directed that the amount of Rs.25000/- taken as deposit from the Appellant be refunded to the Respondent for adjustment in his bills.

Sd/
(Vandana Krishna)
Electricity Ombudsman (Mumbai)


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai

