

BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN (MUMBAI)

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

REPRESENTATION NO. 101 OF 2025

In the matter of excess recovery of Service connection charges in place of PD consumer

Deepali Rajiv Mundada.Appellant
(Cons. No. 049017472843)

V/s.

Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd., Nashik Urban 1 Dn.... Respondent
(MSEDCL)

Appearances:

Appellant : Rajiv Mundada, Consumer's Husband

Respondent: 1. Bhagwan Kharate, Addl. Ex. Engr, Nashik - 1 Dn.
2. Prashant Khandekar, Dy. Manager, Nashik - 1 Dn.
3. Hemant Kumar Chaure, Addl. Ex. Engr, Satpur MIDC Sub. /Dn.


Coram: Vandana Krishna [IAS (Retd.)]

Date of hearing: 5th December 2025

Date of Order : 10th December 2025

ORDER

This Representation was filed on 14th October 2025 under Regulation 19.1 of the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum & Electricity Ombudsman) Regulations, 2020 (CGRF & EO Regulations 2020) against the Order


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dated 1st October 2025 in Case No. 68 of 2025 passed by the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, MSEDCL, Nashik Zone (the Forum). The Forum, by its order, disallowed the grievance.

2. Aggrieved by the order passed by the Forum, the Appellant has filed this representation. An e-hearing was held on 5th December 2025 through video conference. Parties were heard at length. The Appellant's submissions and arguments are stated as below: [*The Electricity Ombudsman's observations and comments are recorded under 'Notes' where needed.*]


- (i) The Appellant has been a residential consumer since 12.03.2024. The details of the electricity connection are provided in Table 1.


Table 1:

Appellant	Consumer No.	Address on Bill	Sanct. Load	Date of Supply
Deepali Rajiv Mundada	049017472843	3, Manmandir Apartment, Plot No. 28, 4th Lane, Lavate Nagar, Near City Centre Mall, Nashik (M Corp.)	10 KW (3 Phase Residential)	12.03.2024

- (ii) The Appellant purchased the said flat from Mr. Nirjay Sabhanarain Singh (Consumer No. 049017725954). The previous electricity connection stood permanently disconnected, and the meter had been removed. After purchasing the flat, the Appellant applied for a new electricity connection under online Application No. 53896655, requesting a load of 10 kW. The load was sanctioned, survey was carried out and the estimate was approved on 01.03.2024. The Appellant immediately paid the requisite charges through the online payment facility as follows:-

Table 2:


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Estimate/Firm Quotation Details		
Head	Cost Head Description	Amount
03	FIRST SECURITY DEPOSIT	4500
02	SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES	7790
25	PROCESSING FEE	170
32	GOODS AND SERVICE TAX	1433
	Total Amount	13893

And

Table 3:


Additional Estimate/Firm Quotation Details		
Head	Cost Head Description	Amount
03	FIRST SECURITY DEPOSIT	8250
22	SUPERVISION CHARGES	99
32	GOODS AND SERVICE TAX	18
32	Total Amount	8367

- (iii) The Appellant paid a total amount of Rs. 22,260/- (Rs. 13,893 + Rs. 8,367). Out of this, the Security Deposit component was Rs. 12,750/- (Rs. 4,500 + Rs. 8,250). The Appellant's grievance is that **MSEDCL levied excessive Service Connection Charges of Rs. 7,790/-, despite the fact that the entire electrical infrastructure already existed at the premises and the Respondent only installed the meter on the same infrastructure.**
- (iv) There is no option in the online application system to indicate that the infrastructure is already available. As a result, consumers are compelled to pay the standard amount of Rs. 7,790/-, even when not applicable. Based on site conditions and existing infrastructure, the Service Connection Charges ought not to have exceeded Rs. 1,500/. The Assistant Engineer should have revised the estimate according to the **MERC Supply Code, which mandates lower charges where infrastructure already exists.** *[Note : We have checked; MERC approved charges are actually uniform even if infrastructure already exists.]*


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- (v) The Appellant lodged an online complaint (No. 0000031270332) regarding this issue. The response dated 11.04.2025 simply stated: *"Please contact the concerned Section Office."* When the Appellant personally approached the Section Office, no assistance was provided.
- (vi) The Appellant thereafter filed a grievance before the Forum on 11.04.2025. The Forum, by its impugned order, rejected the grievance. The Forum failed to appreciate the core issue namely, why the Respondent levied such high Service Connection Charges despite existing infrastructure. The first hearing was scheduled after an inordinate delay of more than one year. Earlier, a hearing was fixed on 25.08.2025, and intimation was emailed on 21.08.2025. When the Appellant attended the Forum, he was informed that the hearing had been postponed. No reason was assigned. Ultimately, the Forum passed a one-sided order.
- (vii) The Forum failed to appreciate that:
- the entire supply infrastructure already existed;
 - as per the MERC Supply Code, only nominal Service Connection Charges are applicable in such cases;
 - if the Distribution Licensee can enhance estimates based on site conditions, there must also be a mechanism to reduce the estimate when justified;
 - procedural limitations cannot be used to burden the consumer with unjust charges.
- (viii) In view of the above submissions, the Appellant prays that the Respondent be directed to
- a) refund the excess Service Connection Charges of Rs. 7,790/-, along with applicable GST, with interest at 18%;
 - b) pay compensation of Rs.10,000/- for mental agony and physical hardship caused.


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3. The Respondent's submission and arguments are stated as follows:

- (i) The said premises earlier had an electricity connection (Consumer No. 049017725954) in the name of Mr. Nirjay S. Singh. This connection had been permanently disconnected for more than six months, with no outstanding dues. In the system records, the status of this old consumer appears as "Permanently Disconnected (PD)."
- (ii) The Appellant applied for a new residential connection with a sanctioned load of 10 kW on 26.04.2025. A survey was carried out immediately, and it was confirmed that the supply to the premises was through the underground system. In the Nashik Municipal Corporation area, LT supply is provided through underground networks, and therefore all new connections in this region are sanctioned accordingly. The system-generated firm quotation (Tables 2 and 3) reflected Service Connection Charges of Rs. 7,790/-, generated through the Web Self Service Portal on 26.04.2025. *(Note: The system seems to have mistakenly reflected the Service Line Type as "Overhead." Overhead charges are actually lower than for underground supply.)* This quotation was issued to the Appellant, who paid the amount. After completing statutory requirements, including submission of the test report, the Appellant's supply was released on 12.03.2024.
- (iii) Since the Appellant's connection is part of the underground system, there is no basis for refunding the Service Connection Charges. The system does not permit alteration of charges on an ad-hoc basis, and field offices have no authority to modify system-generated entries. The Appellant has disputed the Service Connection Charges applicable to the underground system.
- (iv) The Respondent relies upon the MSEDCL Circular dated 20.05.2023 regarding the Schedule of Charges (SoC) for various services of MSEDCL, effective from 1st April 2023. This circular is based on the MERC Multi-Year Tariff Order for the Control Period, issued in Case No. 226 of 2022 on 31.03.2023. The relevant excerpts of the circular are reproduced below:


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“Sub: *Schedule of Charges (SoC) for various services of MSEDCL (with effect from 1st April-2023.)*

Ref: *Case of Final True Up of FY 2019-20, FY 2020-21 & FY 2021-22, Provisional True Up for FY 2022-23 and Revised Tariff & Projection for FY 2023-24 to FY 2024-25 under Section 62 of The Electricity Act, 2003 and MERC MYT Regulations, 2019 Order dt. 31st March - 2023, (Case No. 226 of 2022)*

The Maharashtra State Electricity Commission (MERC or Commission) has put in place the MERC (Electricity Supply Code and Standards of Performance of Distribution Licensees including Power Quality) Regulations, 2021 (herein after called as Supply Code Regulations, 2021). Accordingly, each Distribution licensee in the State of Maharashtra has to submit the proposal of "Schedule of Charges" for various services before the Commission to fulfil its obligation to supply electricity under the Electricity Act 2003 and other relevant Regulations during tariff determination in accordance with clause 19 of Supply Code Regulations, 2021.

Basically, these charges are for the recovery of investments made for availing supply of electricity (from the distributing main to the applicant's premises) and various other services (such as releasing temporary supply, change of name, meter testing on request, shifting the utility services on request, Installation inspection & testing of meters etc.) provided to the consumers. Income from these charges forms a part of the non-tariff income of DISCOMs.

The Commission vide order under ref. above has approved the revision in "Schedule of Charges" payable by the consumers for various services provided by the MSEDCL. Such schedule of charges shall be applicable with effect from 1st April - 2023. The approved Schedule of charges (SoC) under different heads is as under: —


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1. SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES FOR OVERHEAD & UNDERGROUND SUPPLY:

1.1. The service connection charges will be charged separately for Overhead & Underground as per construction method of service line.

1.2. The overhead & underground service connection charges are broadly classified into two categories viz. LT Supply and HT Supply and further well classified in different load slabs and will be applicable as per Annexure-A (for Overhead)/ Annexure-B (for Underground).

1.3. The Commission has given the approval to recover the road opening charges on an actual basis as it varies from area to area. The Commission vide order under ref. above has approved the revision in "Schedule of Charges" payable by the consumers for various services provided by the MSEDCL. Such schedule of charges shall be applicable with effect from 1st April - 2023. The approved Schedule of charges (SoC) under different heads is as under:

Annexure-A


1. SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES FOR NEW OVERHEAD CONNECTION:

Table 4

CATEGORY		APPROVED CHARGES (₹)
Low Tension (LT) Supply		
a. Single Phase		
i	For load upto 0.5 KW	1410
ii	For Load above 0.5 KW to upto 7.5 KW	1840
b. Three Phase		
i	Motive power up to 27 HP or other loads up to 20 kW.	7,790

Annexure-B

2. SERVICE CONNECTION CHARGES FOR NEW UNDERGROUND CONNECTION :


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Table 5


CATEGORY		APPROVED CHARGES (₹)
Low Tension (LT) Supply		
a. Single Phase		
<i>i</i>	<i>For load upto 0.5 KW</i>	3,680
<i>ii</i>	<i>For Load above 0.5 KW to upto 7.5 KW</i>	8,230
b. Three Phase		
<i>i</i>	<i>Motive power up to 27 HP or other loads up to 20 kW.</i>	14,940

Note:

1. The road opening charges vary from area to area hence will be levied on actual basis.

2. The GST will be levied extra as per applicable rates.

- (v) In the present case, the Schedule of Charges amounting to Rs. 7,790/- was system-generated by treating the connection as an overhead supply. As per the applicable circular, the correct charge for an underground system is Rs. 14,940/-. However, no additional recovery will be made from the Appellant at this stage considering the present circumstances.
- (vi) It is noted that although the Appellant was billed for service connection charges applicable to an overhead system, the power supply is actually provided through an underground network. **Even a tapping connection from either an overhead or underground system is chargeable strictly as per the applicable Schedule of Charges. Accordingly, the new connection provided in place of the old PD connection was also chargeable as per the prevailing Schedule of Charges.**
- (vii) In view of the above, the Respondent prays that the representation filed by the Appellant be rejected.


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Analysis and Ruling

4. Heard the parties and perused the documents on record. The Appellant has been a three-phase residential consumer since 12.03.2024. The consumer's statistical data is detailed in Table 1.

5. The Appellant contended that she purchased a flat whose earlier electricity connection was permanently disconnected and the meter removed. After purchase, she applied on the WSS portal for a new three-phase 10 kW connection on 26.04.2025, and the estimate was approved on 01.03.2024. She immediately paid Rs. 22,260/- (Rs. 13,893 + Rs. 8,367), including a Security Deposit of Rs. 12,750/-. Her grievance is that MSEDCL levied excessive Service Connection Charges of Rs. 7,790/- despite the entire infrastructure already existing, as only the meter was installed. The online system has no option to indicate existing infrastructure, compelling consumers to pay the standard Rs. 7,790/- even when the charge should not exceed Rs. 1,500/- based on site conditions. The Appellant therefore seeks refund of the excess Service Connection Charges of Rs. 7,790/- with applicable GST and 18% interest, along with Rs. 10,000/- compensation for mental agony and hardship.

6. The Respondent contended that the Appellant applied on 26.04.2025 for a new 10 kW residential connection, and the system-generated quotation (Tables 2 and 3) showed Service Connection Charges of Rs. 7,790/- because the system incorrectly logged the service line type as "Overhead." This actually amounted to a lower cost for the Appellant. The Appellant paid the amount, and supply was released on 12.03.2024 after completion of formalities. The Respondent relies on the MSEDCL Circular dated 20.05.2023 issued under the MERC MYT Order in Case No. 226 of 2022, prescribing Rs. 7,790/- for three-phase overhead and Rs. 14,940/- for three-phase underground connections up to 20 kW, with road-opening charges and GST extra. In this case, although supply is through the underground network, the system treated the connection as overhead and generated Rs. 7,790/-, and no additional recovery will be made. As per the Schedule of Charges, even tapping inside the meter cabin, extension of load, or a new meter installation is chargeable as per the Schedule of Charges. Hence the new connection


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replacing the old PD supply was chargeable as per the applicable Schedule. Accordingly, the Respondent prays that the representation be rejected.

7. The Commission, in its Tariff Order dated 31.03.2023 in Case No. 226 of 2022, has approved the Schedule of Charges, including the applicable rates for both overhead and underground connections.

Table 6:

Approval of Final Truing-up for FY 2019-20, FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22, Provisional Truing-up for FY 2022 23 and Revised Projections & Tariff for FY 2023-24 to FY 2024-25 for MSEDCL		
Table 9-5: Service Connection Charges for New Overhead Connection approved by Commission.		
CATEGORY		APPROVED CHARGES (₹)
<i>Low Tension (LT) Supply</i>		
<i>a. Single Phase</i>		
<i>i</i>	<i>For Load up to 0.5 kW</i>	<i>1,410</i>
<i>ii</i>	<i>For Load above 0.5 kW and up to 7.5 kW</i>	<i>1,840</i>
<i>b. Three Phase</i>		
<i>i</i>	<i>Motive power up to 27 HP or other loads up to 20 kW.</i>	<i>7,790</i>

8. The underground charges cited by the Respondent are in line with the Schedule of Charges approved by the Commission. As per the approved Schedule of Charges, various activities such as tapping inside the meter cabin, extension of load, and installation of a new meter are all chargeable. This is irrespective of whether previous infrastructure already exists or not. The MERC has intentionally allowed a uniform rate of recovery in all such cases, instead of individually calculating fresh infrastructure costs in each case, as this would lead to practical difficulties in implementation, disputes and delays. Therefore, the Appellant's request for a new connection, which effectively replaced the earlier PD supply, also attracted charges in accordance with the applicable Schedule.



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9. Considering the above facts, the Applicant's obligation to pay service connection charges is firmly established. The Forum's decision in this matter is well-reasoned, based on applicable regulations, and is therefore upheld.

10. The representation is rejected and disposed of accordingly.

Sd/
(Vandana Krishna)
Electricity Ombudsman (Mumbai)


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
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