

# BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN (MUMBAI)

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

## REPRESENTATION NO. 41 OF 2026

In the matter of excessive billing for accumulated consumption and alleged non-use

Tuljabhavani Industries (Prop: Aparna S Bhumkar) ..... Appellant  
(Cons. No. 266777026003)

V/s.

Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd... Respondent  
Kolhapur Urban Dn (MSEDCL)

Appearances:

Appellant : Shivling Bhumkar, Husband

Respondent: Ashok Jadhav, Executive Engineer, Kolhapur Urban Dn.

**Coram: Vandana Krishna [I.A.S. (Retd.)]**


Date of hearing: 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Date of Order: 25<sup>th</sup> May 2026

### Order

This Representation was filed on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026 under Regulation 19.1 of the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum and Electricity Ombudsman) Regulations, 2020 (CGRF & EO Regulations 2020) against the order dated 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026 in Case No. 01 of 2026 passed by the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Kolhapur Circle (the Forum). The Forum has rejected the grievance application of the Appellant.

2. Aggrieved by the order of the Forum, the Appellant has filed this representation. A hearing was held on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2026 when the Appellant was physically present whereas the

  
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Respondent attended through video conferencing. Both the parties were heard at length. The Appellant's submissions and arguments are as below. *[The Electricity Ombudsman's observations and comments are recorded under 'Notes' where needed.]*

- (i) The Appellant has been an LT consumer bearing Consumer No. 266777026003 since 19.08.2006. The particulars of the electricity connection are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1:

Name of Consumer	Consumer No.	Address	San. Load	Date of Supply	Purpose	Excess Billing in Oct. 2025 month
Tuljabhavani Industries (Aparna S. Bhumkar)	266777026003	PL No. 7B-2433-586-2, MIDC Shirol, Tal: Hatkangale, Dist.: Kolhapur	18 HP	19.08.2006	Industrial (Engineering Workshop)	Rs.1,38,410/- was billed for 15,895 units in Oct. 2025 despite the alleged non-use of the premises.

- (ii) The Appellant was engaged in the business of an engineering workshop. However, the industrial unit/workshop was closed down in March 2019 (about 7 years ago), and according to the Appellant, there has been no use of the premises thereafter till date. The photographs placed on record indicate that the gala premises remained completely closed. Despite the alleged non-use of the premises, the Respondent issued a bill of Rs.1,38,410/- towards consumption of 15,895 units in October 2025.
- (iii) The Appellant argued that all electricity bills towards fixed charges have been regularly paid and that the Appellant intends to sell the said property. It is further contended that the key of the premises was available with the watchman, Mr. Rama Koli, for the purpose of meter reading. CCTV footage of the adjacent unit belonging to Bhimrao Khade is available and can be verified to establish that the industrial unit of the Appellant has not been used for the last seven years.
- (iv) The Appellant addressed a letter dated 01.12.2025 to the Additional Executive Engineer, Billing & Revenue Sub-Division, requesting revision of the impugned bill. However, according to the Appellant, no revision of the bill was carried out.

  
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- (v) Aggrieved thereby, the Appellant filed a grievance application before the Forum on 05.01.2026 seeking revision of the bill. The Forum, by its Order dated 13.02.2026, rejected the grievance application. The Forum failed to appreciate that the industrial unit had remained completely closed for the last seven years and that there was no possibility of such consumption, as the machinery had already been sold and the remaining machinery was lying in a deteriorated condition.
- (vi) The Appellant prays for cancellation of the supplementary/additional bill of Rs.1,38,410/- raised towards alleged consumption of 15,895 units in October 2025.


3. The Respondent's submissions and arguments are as below.

- (i) The Appellant is an industrial consumer having a sanctioned load of 18 HP since 19.08.2006. The particulars of the electricity connection are tabulated in Table 1. The Appellant was engaged in the business of an engineering workshop.
- (ii) The Appellant was billed as per the recorded meter readings up to April 2019, wherein the actual consumption recorded was only 5 units, i.e. 69,874 – 69,869 units. Thereafter, from May 2019 to September 2025, the Appellant was billed for zero consumption units. During the hearing the Respondent contended that the premises remained locked for all these years, hence meter readings could not be taken. Sample photographs have been placed on record indicating that the industrial unit remained locked, as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2:

Date	Time (Hrs. Min. Sec.)	Date	Time (Hrs. Min. Sec.)
01.05.2024	14.57.30	30.09.2024	08.19.58
31.05.2024	09.25.26	30.12.2024	19.44.07
30.06.2024	13.25.41	03.03.2025	11.49.21
31.07.2024	09.26.55	31.03.2025	07.34.17
31.08.2024	08.40.23	31.07.2025	15.11.29

- (iii) An actual meter reading could only be taken on 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2025. The Appellant was subsequently billed on the basis of the actual meter reading of 85,769 kWh, which was found on meter on 05.11.2025 at 12:15:55 hrs, after the lock was found removed for the purpose of meter reading. Accordingly, consumption of 15,895

  
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units, i.e. 85,769 – 69,874 units, came to be billed for an amount of Rs.1,38,410/- in October 2025.


- (iv) The Appellant visited the office of the Respondent on 19.11.2025 and lodged a complaint regarding the high bill. Pursuant thereto, the Respondent carried out a site inspection on 19.11.2025. During the inspection, the meter reading parameters were found as set out in Table 3 below:

Table 3:

Sr. No.	Name of Consumer	Consumer No.	Meter Details		
			Make	Sr. No.	Capacity
1	Tuljabhavani Industries	266777026003	Secure	MS 110145	3 phase 10-60 A
2	<b>Readings Parameters</b>				
Particulars	KWH	KVAH	Lag	lead	KVA MD
Cumulative	85769	88665	26928		0
A Zone	8822	8835			0
B Zone	44899	46479			0
C Zone	24907	26134			0
D Zone	7139	7215			0

The industrial unit was found to be completely closed, and no electrical appliances were found connected at the site.

- (v) The Appellant paid meter testing charges of Rs.940/- on 18.11.2025, pursuant to which the said meter was sent for testing on the same date. The meter was tested on 20.11.2025, and the test results indicated that the meter was functioning properly and was found to be in order. Hence, revision of the bill of the Appellant was not possible technically.
- (vi) Aggrieved thereby, the Appellant filed a grievance application before the Forum on 05.01.2026 seeking revision of the bill. The Forum, by its Order dated 13.02.2026, rejected the grievance application. The said rejection was proper and justified.
- (vii) The Respondent, therefore, prays that the present Representation filed by the Appellant be dismissed

  
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## Analysis and Ruling

4. Heard the parties at length and perused the documents placed on record. The Appellant is an LT industrial consumer bearing Consumer No. 266777026003 since 19.08.2006. The electricity supply was being utilized for operating an engineering workshop. The dispute pertains to the supplementary/additional bill of Rs.1,38,410/- raised in October 2025 towards alleged consumption of 15,895 units.

5. Apparently, the Appellant's industrial unit remained closed for a considerable period from May 2019 to September 2025, and the Respondent issued bills showing zero consumption units. The Respondent has placed on record sample photographs from 2024 and 2025 indicating that the premises was locked, due to which actual meter readings could be taken. However, at this stage it is impossible to establish whether the premises was unused since 2019 or not. On 05.11.2025, the actual meter reading of 85,769 kWh was recorded after access to the meter became available, and accordingly the accumulated consumption of 15,895 units was billed.

6. The principal contention of the Appellant is that the industrial premises had remained closed for nearly seven years and that there was no possibility of such consumption, particularly when the machinery had been sold or was lying in deteriorated condition. Reliance has also been placed on the alleged CCTV footage of the adjacent premises to contend that the industrial unit was never operational during the relevant period. However this CCTV footage was not actually shown in the hearing.

7. On the other hand, the Respondent has contended that the impugned bill was raised on the basis of the actual meter reading physically recorded on the meter. The Respondent further submitted that upon the complaint of the Appellant, a site inspection was carried out on 19.11.2025 and thereafter the meter was tested in the accredited testing laboratory on 20.11.2025. The test results confirmed that the meter was functioning properly and was found to be within permissible limits.

  
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8. Upon consideration of the material placed on record, this Authority finds that the impugned bill is based on the cumulative actual meter reading available on the meter and not on any average or provisional assessment. The meter testing report also establishes that the meter was technically correct and functioning properly. In the absence of any cogent technical evidence demonstrating that the meter was defective, tampered with, or recording erroneous consumption, the meter reading recorded on the meter carries evidentiary value and cannot be discarded merely on the basis of the Appellant's assertion that the premises remained closed.

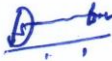
9. During the inspection carried out on 19.11.2025, the Respondent found the meter installed and functioning and the cumulative reading recorded therein. Therefore, merely because the premises were unused for an indeterminate period would not by itself invalidate the recorded meter consumption.

10. The Forum has considered the relevant aspects of the matter and has passed a reasoned and speaking order. No infirmity is found in the findings recorded by the Forum warranting interference with the assessment of consumption and consequent billing. Hence, the prayer of the Appellant seeking cancellation of the supplementary/additional bill cannot be granted.

11. However, considering that the disputed amount appears to have accumulated over a prolonged period during which meter readings could not be recorded due to the premises remaining locked, and further considering the financial implications involved, this Authority is of the view that limited relief deserves to be granted to the Appellant in the interest of equity.

12. The prayer of the Appellant seeking cancellation of the supplementary/additional bill of Rs.1,38,410/- is rejected. However, the Respondent is directed to

- a) Withdraw the interest and delayed payment charges levied on the bill amount of Rs.1,38,410/-(Oct. 2025 bill) from October 2025 till the date of this Order.
- b) The Respondent shall permit the Appellant to pay the impugned bill amount in 10 equal monthly instalments without levy of DPC and interest during the instalment period. In the event of default in payment of any instalment along with the current

  
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electricity bill, the Respondent shall be at liberty to recover the applicable interest proportionately for the default period and take action in accordance with law.

- c) Compliance of this Order shall be submitted within a period of two months from the date of issuance of this Order.
- d) Other prayers of the Appellant stand rejected.

13. The Representation stands disposed of accordingly.

14. The Secretariat of this Office is directed to refund the deposit amount of Rs.25,000/- to the Respondent for adjustment in the ensuing electricity bills of the Appellant.

Sd/  
(Vandana Krishna)  
Electricity Ombudsman (Mumbai)

  
(Dilip Dumbre)  
Secretary  
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai

