

BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN (MUMBAI)

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

REPRESENTATION NO. 45 OF 2026

In the matter of excess billing

Ajay Prabhakar Bhandirge.....Appellant
(Cons. No. 160256480775)

V/s.

Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd.Respondent
Rastapeth Pune (MSEDCL)

Appearances:

Appellant : 1. Ajay Bhandirge
2. Smt. Saraswati Bhandirge

Respondent: 1. Kishore Shinde, Addl. Executive Engineer, B & R S/dn. Kasaba
2. Chandrakant Mohive, Dy. Manager, Rastapeth Dn.
3. Shweta Gonjari, Asst. Accountant, B & R S/dn. Kasaba


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

Date of hearing: 12th May 2026

Date of Order: 26th May 2026

ORDER

This Representation was filed on 15th April 2026 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 dated 10th February 2026 in Case No. 173 of 2025 passed by the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, MSEDCL, Pune Zone (the Forum). The Forum partly allowed the grievance application


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of the Appellant. The operative portion of the order is in Marathi, which is translated into English as under:

The Respondent is directed to:

2. *Cancel the disputed electricity bills for the period from January 2024 to December 2024.*
3. *Revise the electricity bills for the period from January 2024 to December 2024 by considering the average consumption of 175 units per month.*
4. *Withdraw the interest and delayed payment charges levied for the disputed period until issuance of the revised bills.*


Preamble:


2. The Appellant was billed on the basis of actual meter readings up to November 2019. The consumption pattern for the period from December 2018 to November 2019 was as under:

Table 1

Month	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19	Oct-19	Nov-19	Total	Avg./Mth
Meter Status	Normal	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Cons.	89	90	68	38	65	46	67	99	127	108	108	86	991	83

3. Thereafter, from December 2019 to February 2023, the Appellant was billed under “Faulty” meter status on an average consumption of 110 units per month. During the Covid-19 pandemic period, there was an acute shortage of electricity meters. Subsequently, the Appellant purchased a meter bearing Serial No. 12222925, which was installed around February 2023. However, while updating the system records, the meter details were erroneously entered as Meter Serial No. 09612200139 instead of the **actually installed Meter Serial No. 12222925**. *[Note: it is not known where meter No.09612200139 was installed. The Respondent is silent on this issue.]* Accordingly, from March 2023 to December 2023, the Appellant was wrongly billed on the basis of reading of Meter Sr.No. 09612200139 instead of the actually installed Meter Serial No. 12222925. The correction in the meter serial number was done in January 2024.


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Thereafter, the accumulated consumption recorded on the actual meter was charged in the electricity bill issued for January 2024, as detailed below:

Table 2:

Month	Meter Sr. No.	Meter Status	Previous Reading (kWh)	Current Reading (kWh)	Cons. (units)
Mar-23	09612200139	Normal	0	85	85
Apr-23	09612200139	Normal	85	226	141
May-23	09612200139	Normal	226	377	151
Jun-23	09612200139	Normal	377	519	142
Jul-23	09612200139	Normal	519	628	109
Aug-23	09612200139	Normal	628	725	97
Sep-23	09612200139	Normal	725	833	108
Oct-23	09612200139	Normal	833	977	144
Nov-23	09612200139	Normal	977	1115	138
Dec-23	09612200139	Normal	1115	1252	137
Jan-24	02412222925*	Normal	1252* *	5460	4209
Feb-24	02412222925	Normal	5460	5856	396
Mar-24	02412222925	Normal	5856	5856	0
Note :	* 1. The Respondent corrected and entered the exact Meter Sr. No. 02412222925 in the System (software) which reflected in Jan.2024 bill.				
	* * 2. This reading of 1252 kWh is an assumed reading, as the actual reading till Dec.2023 were not available on the installed Meter No. 02412222925.				

4. The Appellant has filed the present Representation challenging the order passed by the Forum. An e-hearing was held on 12th May 2026. The Appellant as well as the Respondent attended the hearing through video conferencing. Both parties were heard at length. The Respondent's submissions and arguments are stated as below. *[The Electricity Ombudsman's observations and comments are recorded under 'Notes'.]*

- (i) The Appellant is a single-phase residential LT consumer since 13.12.2014. The particulars of the electricity connection are tabulated below.




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Table 3:

Appellant	Consumer No.	Address	Sanct. Load	Date of Supply
Ajay Prabhakar Bhandirange	160256480775	SR NO-56/4/2/9 Lane No-12, Nr-Ravi Appt., Vidya Nagar Pin-411048	3 kW	13.12.2014


- (ii) The Respondent stated that on 28.12.2022, while attending the Appellant's off-supply complaint, it was observed that the Appellant's electricity meter had burnt out. The Respondent's Assistant Engineer inspected the Appellant's premises on 28.12.2022. During the inspection, it was observed that the connected load consisted of 4 LED lights, 1 fridge, 1 washing machine, and other miscellaneous load. The total connected load was found to be 0.530 kW. It was also noticed that the neutral link of the meter terminal was burnt.
- (iii) Owing to a shortage of meters during the Covid-19 pandemic period, the Appellant was advised to procure a new meter at his own cost. Accordingly, the Appellant purchased a new meter bearing Sr. No. 12222925, and the Respondent immediately installed the same. However, due to an inadvertent oversight at the field office, Meter Sr. No. 53038696 was erroneously fed into the system, which was reflected in the March 2023 bill. Consequently, from March 2023 to December 2023, the Appellant was billed based on the readings of Meter Sr. No. 53038696, as shown in Table 2.
- (iv) The anomaly came to notice in December 2023 on the basis of the site inspection report. Accordingly, the meter serial numbers were corrected in the January 2024 bill. At the time of correction, the reading of Meter Sr. No. 12222925 was found to be 5460 kWh, which was thereafter updated in the system. *[Note: This reading indicates consumption of 5460 units over 10 months, giving an average of 546 units per month.]* Consequently, the Appellant was billed in January 2024 for 4209 units, being the difference between 5460 (actual consumption) and 1252 units (billed consumption), amounting to Rs. 82,610/-. The said meter further recorded consumption of 396 units in the February 2024 bill. The Appellant did not pay this


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bill even partly. A notice through the system was sent on his registered mobile number, however, the Appellant declined to pay the same. The supply of the Appellant was disconnected (T.D.) on 26.02.2024 after giving proper disconnection notice. The Appellant's allegation that no notice was given is baseless.

- (v) The Respondent stated that no correspondence or complaint was received from the Appellant after 26.02.2024. It is not known from where the Appellant had arranged electricity supply for day-to-day domestic use, as ordinarily no consumer residing in an urban area would continue to remain without electricity supply. There is no further correspondence on record till Feb. 2025. Therefore, the electricity supply of the Appellant was permanently disconnected in March 2025. The meter No. 12222925 was removed, and probably handed over to the Appellant (as he had purchased it), but the Respondent does not have clear information in this regard.
- (vi) The accumulated consumption of 5460 units of the Appellant of Jan. 2024 was split up for the period from March 2023 to Jan. 2024 and credit of Rs. 17,695.76 was given to the Appellant. After the said bill revision, the outstanding dues reduced to Rs.65,840/- in March 2025. The Appellant paid Rs. 50,000/- on 13.03.2025. The balance amount of Rs.15,840/- was not paid.
- (vii) The Respondent's Assistant Engineer inspected the Appellant's premises on 16.04.2025. During the inspection, it was found that Meter No. 12222925 was found installed, the reading of the meter was found to be 5857 kWh. The connection was temporarily disconnected for about 8 months. *(Note: As per the CPL, the Appellant was billed for 0 units from March 2024 to September 2024 and shown as PD from March 2025 to Oct. 2025. A new meter (Sr. No. M82515031537) was installed on 16.10.2025 which is working at present.)*
- (viii) The Appellant filed a grievance application before the Forum on 01.08.2025 praying that Meter No. 12222925 be installed immediately and that the abnormal bill for the period from 30.12.2023 to 30.01.2024 pertaining to the said meter be verified and suitably revised. After that, the Appellant paid Rs. 31,910/- on


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25.09.2025 of outstanding dues of Sep. 2025 as per shown in the CPL on record.
The Respondent installed a new meter (M82515031537) on 16.10.2025.

- (ix) The Forum by its order dated 10.02.2026 partly allowed the grievance application and directed the Respondent to revise the electricity bills for the period from January 2024 to December 2024 by considering average consumption of 175 units per month, and to withdraw the interest and delayed payment charges levied for the disputed period until issuance of the revised bills.
- (x) The Appellant is being billed as per actual reading from 16.10.2025 onwards.
- (xi) The Meter (No. 02412222925) bought by the Appellant is not available in the Respondent's store; it might have been returned to the Appellant when the meter was removed from the site.
- (xii) In view of the above, the Respondent prays that the representation of the Appellant be rejected.

5. The Appellant's submissions and arguments are stated as below.


- (i) The Appellant is a single-phase residential LT consumer since 13.12.2014. The details of the electricity connection are given in Table 1.
- (ii) From 13.12.2014 to 28.12.2022, the Appellant regularly received electricity bills ranging from Rs.700/- to Rs.1,200/- per month. The monthly consumption was generally between 50 to 150 units. All bills were paid regularly and on time without any default.
- (iii) On 28.12.2022, the Appellant noticed that his electricity meter had burnt out and on the same day submitted a written complaint to the Respondent's office. The office staff instructed him to purchase a new meter at his own cost as there was a shortage of meters due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Accordingly, the Appellant purchased a new meter and submitted the purchase receipt. The Respondent installed the new meter on the same day. Thereafter, from March 2023 to 30.12.2023, the Appellant continued to receive regular bills, which were paid on


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time every month. During this period also, the monthly bills remained between Rs.700/- and Rs.1,200/-.

- (iv) On 19.01.2024, the Respondent removed his meter without giving any written notice, however, the same was refixed on 20.01.2024. After the Appellant submitted a complaint before the St. Mary Sub-Division Office, the Respondent installed a new meter bearing Meter Sr. No. 12222925. Subsequently, on 30.01.2024, the Appellant received an electricity bill of Rs.82,610/-. Being aggrieved by the same, he submitted another complaint dated 20.02.2024 requesting verification of the meter and inquiry into the abnormal bill amount, contending that such a huge bill for one month was incorrect. However, instead of resolving the issue, the Respondent again removed the meter on **26.02.2024** without prior notice alleging outstanding dues.
- (v) The Appellant, by letter dated 04.03.2024, requested reinstallation of the meter. Despite repeated visits to the office, no action was taken.
- (vi) Thereafter, on 13.03.2025, Shri Bhujbal from the St. Mary Office and Shri Avchar from the Somji Kondhwa Office called the Appellant to the Somji Office and informed him that the bill amount would be reduced. After some calculations, they asked him to pay Rs.65,840/-. The Appellant objected stating that he had regularly paid all electricity bills. However, according to him, pressure was exerted upon him and he was compelled to pay Rs.50,000/- on 13.03.2025, though there was no fault on his part. The payment receipt was produced on record. According to the Appellant, he suffered financial loss due to the said payment.
- (vii) Thereafter, on 23.04.2025, the Appellant received a letter from the Additional Executive Engineer, St. Mary Sub-Division, demanding payment of the balance amount of Rs.31,910/- after adjusting the payment of Rs.50,000/- already made by him. On verifying the bills carefully, the Appellant noticed that the bill dated 30.12.2023 for Rs.1,320/- related to Meter No. 09612200139, whereas the bill dated 30.01.2024 for Rs.82,610/- related to Meter No. 02412222925, which according to



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- him was not his meter. He therefore contended that the disputed bill did not relate to his electricity consumption and that the error was on the part of the Respondent.
- (viii) The Appellant filed a grievance application before the Forum on 01.08.2025 alleging incorrect and excessive electricity billing. During the pendency of the grievance, the Appellant paid Rs.31,910/- under protest on 25.09.2025 and requested for installation of a meter. Thereafter, only after full payment of the disputed amount, the Respondent restored the electricity supply by installing another meter in October 2025. The Forum partly allowed the grievance application and directed the Respondent to cancel the disputed electricity bills for the period from January 2024 to December 2024, revise the bills by considering average consumption of 175 units per month, and withdraw the interest and delayed payment charges levied for the disputed period until issuance of revised bills.
- (ix) The Appellant contended that the **Forum failed to consider that there was no electricity supply from 26.02.2024, when the meter was removed by the Respondent, till installation of the new meter in October 2025.**
- (x) The Appellant has prayed that the Respondent be directed to:
- Refund Rs.81,910/- with interest.
 - Withdraw the disputed bills from 2023 to 2025, including the bills for the period from January 2024 to December 2024, for which the Forum had directed billing on the basis of 175 units per month.

Analysis and Ruling

6. Heard both the parties and perused the documents on record. The Appellant is a single-phase residential LT consumer since 13.12.2014 having a sanctioned load of 3 kW. The details of the electricity connection are given in Table 3.
7. The Appellant was billed as per actual meter reading from March 2015 to Nov. 2019 (57 months). the Appellant's monthly consumption was comparatively low, around 83 units per


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Secretary
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month, as reflected in Table 1. The Appellant was billed with Faulty Status on average of 110 units per month from Dec. 2019 to Feb. 2023. (39 months).

8. On 28.12.2022 the Appellant's meter had burnt out and, owing to shortage of meters during the Covid-19 pandemic period, the Appellant purchased a meter bearing Serial No. 12222925, which was installed by the Respondent. However, due to inadvertence at the field office, another meter serial number i.e. 09612200139 came to be erroneously entered in the billing system. Consequently, from March 2023 to December 2023, the Appellant was billed on the basis of readings of the wrong meter which amounted to under-billing.


9. The record reveals that in January 2024, after correction of the actual meter serial number, the Respondent issued a bill for accumulated consumption of 4209 units amounting to Rs.82,610/-. The Respondent subsequently distributed the accumulated consumption over the period from March 2023 to January 2024 and granted credit adjustment of Rs.17,695.76. *[Note: This benefit should have been given right in the beginning, instead of issuing an accumulated bill of Rs.82,610/-.]*

10. The following issues arise for determination in the present Representation:

- **Issue 1:** Whether the entire accumulated consumption of 5460 units recorded on Meter No. 12222925 can be validly fastened upon the Appellant for the period from March 2023 to January 2024?
- **Issue 2:** Whether the direction of the Forum to revise the electricity bills by considering consumption of 175 units per month for the period from January 2024 to December 2024 is proper, reasonable, and sustainable?

The Issues are addressed as below:

- **Issue No. 1:** It is evident from the record that the incorrect feeding of the meter serial number was due to the Respondent's error, for which the Appellant cannot be held responsible. However, the actual meter installed at the premises (No.12222925) had recorded cumulative consumption of 5460 units by January 2024. Though this


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai




meter is presently unavailable for laboratory testing and the accuracy of the recorded consumption cannot be conclusively verified, the possibility of substantial fast recording in a digital meter appears remote. In the absence of meter testing, it is not possible to conclusively determine whether the recorded consumption of 5460 units was entirely accurate. Considering the Respondent's admitted mistake, the cumulative meter reading, the Appellant's historical consumption pattern, the connected load found during inspection, and the principles of equity and fair billing, it would be appropriate to revise the disputed bills by considering consumption of 200 units per month for the period from March 2023 to January 2024. Issue 1 is answered accordingly.

- **Issue No. 2:** The Appellant has contended that there was no electricity supply from March 2024 till October 2025. In the facts and circumstances of the present case, the Forum's direction to revise bills considering average consumption of 175 units per month for the period from January 2024 to December 2024 does not appear fully justified. The accumulated consumption actually pertains to the period from March 2023 to January 2024. The assessment made by the Forum therefore deserves to be set aside. Issue 2 is answered accordingly.

11. In view of the above, the order dated 10.02.2026 passed by the Forum is modified. The Representation is partly allowed. The Respondent is directed to

- a. revise the electricity bills for the period from March 2023 to January 2024 by considering consumption of 200 units per month. The Respondent shall give due adjustment of amounts already paid by the Appellant while revising the bills.
- b. Withdraw the assessment of consumption of 175 units per month for the period from January 2024 to December 2024, as directed by the Forum, and revise the bills by considering nil consumption for the period from February 2024 to December 2024.
- c. The interest and delayed payment charges levied on the disputed amount for the aforesaid period shall stand withdrawn till issuance of the revised bill.


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- d. Compliance of this order shall be submitted within two months from the date of issuance of this order.
- e. All other prayers of the Appellant stand rejected.

12. The Representation is disposed of accordingly.

13. Before parting with this Order, the Respondent is advised that whenever accumulated consumption is observed in the meter, the same should be bifurcated month-wise immediately instead of issuing an accumulated consumption bill, so that the Appellant may avail the applicable slab benefit without delay.

Sd/-
(Vandana Krishna)
Electricity Ombudsman (Mumbai)


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai

