

BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN (MUMBAI)

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

REPRESENTATION NO. 39 OF 2026

In the matter of high bill

Rajasbai Tatyaba Gaikwad Appellant
(Consumer No. 162220001342)

V/s.

Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd., (MSEDCL) Ahilyanagar Respondent
(MSEDCL)

Appearances:

Appellant : Tushar Gaikwad, Grandson

Respondent: 1. Yogesh Chavan, Executive Engineer, Ahilyanagar UCR Dn.
2. Umakant Sapkale, Dy. Executive Engineer, Ahilyanagar Rural Sub. Dn.
3. Dundar Galande, Deputy Manager, Ahilyanagar UCR Dn.

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


Date of hearing: 8th May 2026

Date of Order: 25th May 2026

ORDER

This Representation was filed on 8th 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 11th November 2025 in Case No. 85 of 2025 passed by the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Nashik Zone (the Forum). The Forum rejected the grievance application of the Appellant.

2. Aggrieved by the order of the Forum, the Appellant has filed this representation. An e-hearing was held on 8th May 2026 through video conferencing. Both the parties were heard


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at length. The Respondent'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 (No. 162220001342) since 08.01.1977. 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	Date of Inspection	Theft Amount Bill	Outstanding dues in March 2025
Rajasbai Tatyaba Gaikwad	162220001342	At. Pokhardi, Post. Shendi Tal. & Dist: Ahilyanagar	1 KW	08.01.1977	11.08.2025	Rs.14,980/-	Rs. 16,420/- towards outstanding electricity dues and Rs. 14,980/- towards theft of energy, aggregating to a total amount of Rs. 31,400/-

- (ii) According to the Appellant, she had been receiving exorbitant electricity bills since March 2024. After making a payment of Rs. 1,850/- on 17.03.2024, the consumer stopped paying the electricity charges regularly, resulting in accumulation of arrears amounting to Rs. 40,379/- as of September 2024.
- (iii) In order to redress the grievance, the Respondent carried out a bill revision on 26.09.2024 for the period from December 2023 to September 2024. During this said period, the recorded consumption increased from 6,391 kWh to 9,340 kWh, resulting in consumption of 2,999 units over 10 months. Slab benefit at the rate of **300 units per month** was extended on the said consumption for the aforesaid period, pursuant to which an amount of Rs. 6,633/- was withdrawn from the electricity bill.
- (iv) It is pertinent to note that, the Appellant's electricity bills for the period from May 2013 to February 2021 were also revised by considering an average consumption of 42 units per month for 94 months, and a credit amounting to Rs. 1,27,235.61 was passed on to the Appellant on 24.07.2025.
- (v) The Appellant challenged the accuracy of the meter and paid the requisite meter testing charges in November 2024. The staff of the Respondent removed the said meter for testing purposes and handed it over to the Testing Team on 25.11.2024. The meter was tested by the Testing Team on 26.11.2024. The test results revealed



 (Dilip Dumbre)
 Secretary
 Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



that the meter was not functioning properly. The remarks recorded by the Testing Team are reproduced below:

“Without load, the meter reading was running in reverse and also changing automatically in forward and backward directions. The meter pulse blinking was normal and the pulse test was found to be satisfactory. However, the meter display was faulty. The meter reading was continuously changing even without any load.” This clearly indicates that the meter was tampered with by applying some external force so as to prevent proper recording of consumption. The Appellant, therefore, did not approach for testing of the meter with clean hands.

- (vi) Subsequently, bill revision for the months of October and November 2024 was carried out on 29.11.2024, and an amount of Rs. 21,313/- was withdrawn by considering average consumption of 31 units per month.
- (vii) Further, after replacement of the meter in January 2025, the consumer was also granted lock credit of Rs. 10,862/- towards the bill for December 2024. Thus, according to the Respondent, the grievance of the consumer stood redressed in all respects. However, the consumer failed to pay the outstanding electricity charges and, therefore, the electricity supply was disconnected in March 2025 due to arrears amounting to Rs.30,986/-.
- (viii) The Appellant filed a grievance application before the Forum on 06.06.2025. During the pendency of the said grievance proceedings, a routine inspection was carried out by the concerned Section Office on 11.08.2025, wherein it was detected that the consumer was dishonestly drawing electricity through a direct hook connection. Accordingly, a prima facie case of theft of electricity under Section 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003 was found, and a spot inspection report was prepared in the presence of the consumer. Consequently, a system-generated theft assessment bill amounting to Rs. 14,980/- came to be issued to the consumer on 18.08.2025.
- (ix) Meanwhile, the hearing before the Forum was conducted on 13.08.2025, and the Forum passed an interim order directing restoration of electricity supply upon deposit of 50% of the outstanding amount. (The issue of theft was not there before the Forum.) The consumer deposited an amount of Rs. 15,000/-. However, the


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai




concerned office was unable to restore the electricity supply on account of the detection of theft of electricity, since the theft assessment amounting to Rs.14,980/- had not been paid by the consumer. Apart from the regular arrears, the consumer/accused was also required to pay the theft assessment amount for restoration of the electricity supply.

- (x) At the time of detection of the theft case, the connected load at the premises of the Appellant was found to consist of one 60-watt bulb, three 20-watt LED lights, two 60-watt fans, one television of 150 watts, and one mixer of 500 watts, aggregating to a total connected load of 890 watts.
- (xi) The Forum by its order dated 11.11.2025 rightly rejected the grievance application of the Appellant.
- (xii) As of March 2026, an amount of Rs.16,420/- towards regular electricity charges and an amount of Rs.14,980/- towards theft assessment remained outstanding against the consumer.
- (xiii) In view of the above, the Respondent prays that the representation of the Appellant be rejected.

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

- (i) The Appellant has been an LT consumer bearing Consumer No. 162220001342 since 08.01.1977. The particulars of the electricity connection are set out in Table 1.
- (ii) The Appellant paid all revised electricity bills up to March 2024. Thereafter, **exorbitantly high bills were issued from April 2024 onwards**, due to which the Appellant stopped paying the monthly bills. The Appellant had made verbal complaints regarding the abnormal billing; however, the Respondent informed the Appellant that the bills had already been revised and that the subsequent bills were based on actual meter readings.
- (iii) At the request of the Respondent, the Appellant paid an amount of Rs. 5,000/- on 25.09.2024, and paid the requisite meter testing charges in November 2024. The meter was tested on 26.11.2024, and the meter was found to be faulty.


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai




- (iv) The consumption pattern of the Appellant was in the range of 40 to 50 units per month, as observed by the Section Office during inspection. The total connected load at the premises is as under:

Particulars	Quantity	Capacity	Total Load
Bulb	1	60 W	60 W
TV	1	150 W	150 W
LED	3	20 W	60 W
Fan	2	60 W	120 W
Mixer	1	500 W	500 W
Total Load			890 W

However, despite the limited connected load and low consumption pattern, the Appellant was billed for excessively high consumption from April 2024 to November 2024 as below:

Month	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24
Cons. (Units)	178	214	219	329	889	656	973	311

- (v) The defective meter was immediately replaced by the Respondent. The Appellant was initially billed on average consumption basis in December 2024; however, the average consumption of 647 units reflected in December 2024 was subsequently revised by the system. Thereafter, the Appellant was billed on actual consumption basis of 29 units and 64 units in January 2025 and February 2025 respectively.
- (vi) The Appellant filed a grievance application before the Forum on 06.06.2025. Pursuant to the interim directions issued by the Forum, the Appellant deposited an amount of Rs. 15,000/- on 18.08.2025. The alleged inspection dated 11.08.2025 and the subsequent theft assessment proceedings have no nexus with the grievance pending before the Forum relating to the disputed electricity bills and disconnection of supply. The alleged theft case under Section 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003 is based merely on a provisional/system-generated theft assessment bill of Rs. 14,980/-


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Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



and cannot deprive the Appellant of the benefit of the interim order passed by the Forum.


- (vii) The Forum, by its interim order dated 13.08.2025, had specifically directed restoration of electricity supply upon deposit of 50% of the outstanding dues. Therefore, the Respondent was duty bound to restore the electricity supply forthwith. The refusal of the Respondent to restore the electricity supply despite compliance with the Forum's order amounts to willful disobedience of the interim order and is arbitrary, illegal and unjustified.
- (viii) In view of the above, the Appellant prays that the Respondent be directed to:
- Revise the electricity bills for the period from April 2024 to November 2024 by applying suitable average consumption so as to grant appropriate relief to the Appellant;
 - Reconnect the electricity supply of the Appellant forthwith;
 - Pay compensation of Rs. 50,000/- towards mental agony, inconvenience and harassment caused to the Appellant; and
 - Take appropriate action against the erring officials/staff of the Respondent responsible for the grievances of the Appellant.

Analysis and Ruling

4. Heard the parties and perused the documents on record. The Appellant is an LT Residential consumer bearing Consumer No. 162220001342 since 08.01.1977. The particulars of the electricity connection are set out in Table 1.

5. The dispute principally relates to allegedly excessive electricity bills issued during the period from April 2024 to November 2024, consequential disconnection of supply, and non-restoration of supply despite compliance with the interim order passed by the Forum.

6. The record reveals that the Respondent itself carried out bill revision on 26.09.2024 for the period from December 2023 to September 2024 by extending slab benefit on differential consumption of 2,999 units and granted relief of Rs. 6,633/-. It is further evident that, upon


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the Appellant challenging the correctness of the meter, the meter was removed and tested on 26.11.2024. The testing report clearly recorded that the meter display was faulty and that the meter reading was changing automatically in forward and backward directions even without load. The Respondent thereafter revised the bills for October and November 2024 by granting average billing benefit and withdrew an amount of Rs. 21,313/-. Further lock credit of Rs. 10,862/- was also granted for December 2024 after replacement of the meter.

7. Thus, the material on record conclusively establishes that the meter installed at the premises of the Appellant was defective and was not recording consumption properly during the disputed period. Once the meter itself was found to be faulty and the Respondent had already granted partial revisions and credits, the grievance raised by the Appellant regarding excessive billing cannot be said to be wholly baseless.

8. At the same time, the Appellant admittedly stopped paying electricity bills regularly from April 2024 onwards, resulting in accumulation of arrears. It is also not disputed that the Respondent had already extended substantial credits and revisions from time to time. Therefore, the Appellant cannot be completely absolved of liability towards payment of legitimate electricity charges based on reasonable average consumption.

9. The consumption pattern placed on record shows that the connected load of the Appellant was only 890 watts comprising one bulb, LED lights, fans, television and mixer. The historical consumption pattern of the Appellant was also comparatively less. After replacement of the defective meter, the consumption recorded in January 2025 and February 2025 was only 29 units and 64 units respectively.

10. The Consumer Personal Ledger (CPL) of the Appellant for the period from April 2023 to March 2026 are summarized below:


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai




Year	2023-24		2024-25		2025-26	
Month	Meter Status	Cons. (units)	Meter Status	Cons. (units)	Meter Status	Cons. (units)
Apr	Live	138	Live	178	PD	0
May	Live	207	Live	214	PD	0
Jun	Live	214	Live	219	PD	0
Jul	Live	150	Live	329	PD	0
Aug	Live	120	Live	889	PD	0
Sep	Live	139	Live	656	PD	0
Oct	Live	129	Live	973	PD	0
Nov	Live	118	Live	311	PD	0
Dec	Live	93	Live	647	PD	0
Jan	Live	107	Live	29	PD	0
Feb	Live	112	Live	63	PD	0
Mar	Live	152	PD	0	PD	0
Total		1679		4508		
Avg. /Mth		140		410		

11. Considering the nature of connected load, historical consumption pattern, and subsequent actual consumption after replacement of the meter, this Authority finds that revision of the disputed bills from April 2024 to November 2024 on the basis of a typical average consumption of 90 units per month would meet the ends of justice.

12. As regards the theft assessment proceedings under Section 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003, the same arise out of a separate inspection dated 11.08.2025 conducted during pendency of the grievance proceedings before the Forum. The issue involved in the present representation pertains to disputed billing arising out of defective metering and consequential disconnection. The provisional/system-generated theft assessment bill dated 18.08.2025 cannot defeat the interim order passed by the Forum directing restoration of supply upon deposit of 50% of the outstanding dues.

13. The Forum, by interim order dated 13.08.2025, had specifically directed restoration of electricity supply upon deposit of 50% of the outstanding amount. Pursuant thereto, the Appellant deposited Rs. 15,000/-. Once the Appellant complied with the condition imposed by the Forum, the Respondent ought to have restored the electricity supply, subject to the


 (Dilip Dumbre)
 Secretary
 Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai




Appellant complying with other statutory formalities. However, the Section 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003 does not permit to restore the electricity unless and until the Appellant pays theft charges. However, this Authority is not inclined to adjudicate upon the merits of the theft assessment proceedings initiated under Section 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003, as the same fall within a separate statutory mechanism and are beyond the scope of the present representation.

14. The prayer of the Appellant seeking compensation of Rs. 50,000/- and action against officials does not merit consideration in the facts and circumstances of the case, particularly when the Respondent had already granted substantial revisions and credits after detection of the defective meter. It is clarified that this order shall not affect the independent proceedings, if any, initiated by the Respondent under Section 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003 in respect of the alleged theft assessment dated 18.08.2025, and the same shall be decided in accordance with law.

15. In view of the above discussion, the representation deserves to be partly allowed. The Respondent is directed to

- a) Withdraw the bill revision of Dec. 2023 to Sep. 2024 (credit of Rs. 6633.07) & bill revision of Oct. 2024 & Nov. 2024 (Credit of Rs. 21313.44)
- b) Bill the consumer as per actual reading from Dec. 2023 to March 2024.
- c) Revise the electricity bills of the Appellant for the period from April 2024 to November 2024 by considering average consumption of 90 units per month.
- d) After giving effect to the aforesaid bill revision and after adjusting all payments and credits already granted, the Respondent shall issue a revised bill to the Appellant within two weeks from the date of this order.
- e) The Appellant has to pay the theft amount of Rs. 14,980/- and statutory charges with formality of new connection (as permanent disconnection period is more than 6 months), & pay 20 % of the revised bill amount; upon such payment, the supply of the Appellant be restored.


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



- f) The Appellant may be granted 5 equal monthly instalments without DPC and interest to pay the revised bill. If the Appellant fails to pay the monthly instalment along with its current bill, the Respondent is permitted to recover the interest proportionally for the failure period, and to take action as per the law in force.
- g) Compliance to be submitted within two months from the date of issue of this order.
- h) Other prayers of the Appellant are rejected.

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

Sd/
Vandana Krishna)
Electricity Ombudsman (Mumbai)



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