

BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN (MUMBAI)

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

REPRESENTATION NO. 174 OF 2022

In the matter of suggestion in billing format

Tejas Sudhakar Tungare Appellant

V/s.

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

Appearances:

Appellant : Tejas Sudhakar Tungare

Respondent : 1. Manish P. Dekare, Addl. Exe Engineer, Kalyan
2. M. S. Gawale, Addl. Exe Engineer
3. K. J. Pansare, Asstt. Accountant

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

Date of hearing: 27th December 2022

Date of Order: 6th January 2023

ORDER

This Representation was filed on 23rd November 2022 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



(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary

Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai




dated 28th September 2022 passed by the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, MSEDCL Kalyan Zone (the Forum).

2. The Forum, by its Order dated 28.09.2022 dismissed the grievance application in Case No. K/E/061 of 2022-23.

3. The Appellant has filed this representation against the order of the Forum. The e-hearing was held on 27.12.2022 through video conference. The Appellant and the Respondent were heard at length. The Appellant's written submission and arguments in brief are stated as below: -

- (i) The Appellant is a Commercial consumer (No. 020024069851) at Shop No. 12, Ground Floor, Anant Tirth Co-op Society, Opposite Ram Mandir, Parnaka, Kalyan (W).
- (ii) The Appellant received the electricity bill of August 2022 regarding which he has various queries/grievances which are listed below:
 - a) A clarification for his bill for the month of Aug 2022, as to how "Net Arrears" amounting to Rs.5.10 have been calculated; what is the basis for the same?
 - b) How the "Adjustments" amounting to Rs.(-)11.60 have been calculated, what is the basis to calculate the same?
 - c) How the "Total Arrears" amounting to Rs.(-)6.50 are calculated?
 - d) Why in the Marathi version of the bill, the details of "Thakbaki" / "Jama" are shown without cancelling one? This is confusing.
- (iii) When he tried to get answers to these questions by calling the Licensee's "Consumer Facility Centre" it took at least 3 attempts to get connected. When it got connected, the person who answered the call was not able to answer the specific queries asked by the Appellant, therefore, he requested him to get connected to his senior, but the call got disconnected.



(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



- (iv) The Appellant then filed his grievance before the Forum on 22.08.2022 for clarity in his personal bill as well as improvement of billing system so that the above points are clear.
- (v) An e-hearing was held in the office of the Forum on 14.09.2022. The Appellant requested to introduce the Coram of the Forum. However, the Members of the Forum refused to give their introduction, i.e., individual names. On the contrary, the Forum declared that the Appellant is rude and after some communication the hearing was completed.
- (vi) The Forum, by its Order dated 28.09.2022 dismissed the grievance application. The Appellant was surprised to see that without giving an opportunity of hearing in detail, the Forum issued the order. The Forum failed to understand the basic issue of the grievance.
- (vii) The Appellant has approached this Appellate Authority with the following prayers:
- to cancel the order of the Forum and direct the Respondent to remove the same from the website.
 - to provide the photographs of members of the Forum on the website so that the Appellant can identify the Members of the Forum.
 - to give an opportunity to give suggestions for the content of the format of the bill.

4. The Respondent filed its reply on 16.12.2022. The e-hearing was held on 27.12.2022 through video conference. The Respondent's submission and arguments in brief are stated as below: -

- The Appellant is a Commercial consumer (No. 020024069851) at Shop No. 12, Ground Floor, Anant Tirth Co-op Society, Opposite Ram Mandir, Parnaka, Kalyan (W).
- The Appellant filed the grievance before the Forum asking for the clarification about the terminology such as "Net Arrears, Adjustment, Total Arrears" etc. mentioned in the electricity bill of August 2022.


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



- (iii) The Respondent has already provided the detailed explanation and the calculations for the electricity bill of August 2022, which is reproduced below:-

.. ..

Sr. No.	Description	Amount(Rs.)
1	Appellant's month bill of July 22 generated	1122.37
2	Balance amount of previous bill	2.73
3	Total (1122.37+2.73)	1125.10
4	(-) bill paid by consumer on 11.7.2022	1120.00
5	Net arrears (Thakbaki)	5.10
6	prompt payment discount granted	9.28
7	digital prompt payment discount of previous bill (July 22)	2.32
8	Total discount availed by consumer	11.60
9	total arrears (6.50) is the adjustment between prompt payment discount	6.50
10	prompt payment discount	11.60
11	Previous balance Arrears (Thakbaki).	5.10
12	Total remaining credit or (Jama)	6.50



(Dilip Dumbre)
 Secretary

Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai




- (iv) It is clearly stated in the bill that when it comes to balance arrears it is 'Thakbaki' and if the bill amount shows credit from the previous bill, it is 'Jama/ Samayojit Rakkam' which is shown as (-) negative. Therefore, there is no question of any confusion or vague information to the consumer. This is nothing but common sense. Each and every column / row of the table in the bill is systematically classified. The bill of consumer is system generated with basic input data of the consumer. There is minimum manual interference while generating the bills. If the Appellant has any suggestion to improve the billing system, it will be welcomed as feedback.
- (v) The Appellant's grievance does not fall within the definition of "Grievance", provided in Regulation 2 (e) of CGRF & EO Regulations 2020. The said definition is reproduced below:

"Grievance" means any fault, imperfection, shortcoming or inadequacy in the quality nature and manner of performance, which has been undertaken to be performed by Distribution Licensee in pursuance of a license, contract, agreement or under Electricity Supply Code or in relation to standards of Performance of Distribution Licensees as specified by the Commission and includes inter alia Grievances in respect of noncompliance of any order of the Commission or any action to be taken pursuance thereof, which are within the jurisdiction of the Forum or Electricity Ombudsman, as the case may be."

From the above definition, the Appellant's grievance is neither fault, imperfection, shortcoming or inadequacy in the quality nature and manner of performance performed by Distribution Licensee. The Appellant only wants clarification regarding the format of the bill. Hence, it is not a grievance in terms of the above definition and not maintainable before this grievance redressal mechanism.

- (vi) The Consumer Facility Centre (CFC) is provided for coordination of complaints of consumers with the respective departments of the Respondent and their further


(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



process. The billing calculation and explanation is handled by billing expertise. Hence, the Appellant's complaint against the operator has no justification.

(vii) Therefore, it is prayed that, representation of the Appellant be rejected.

Analysis and Ruling

5. Heard the parties and perused the documents on record. The Appellant is a Commercial consumer (No. 020024069851) at Shop No. 12, Ground Floor, Anant Tirth Co-op Society, Opposite Ram Mandir, Parnaka, Kalyan (W). The Appellant is not quite clear with his August 2022 electricity bill and requires some clarification about the terminology such as "Net Arrears, Adjustment, Total Arrears" etc. Initially, the Appellant had contacted the CFC of the Respondent. However, was not able to get to the concerned executive, finally decided to approach the Grievance Redressal Mechanism.

6. The Appellant filed the grievance before Forum asking for the clarification about the terminology such as "Net Arrears, Adjustment, Total Arrears" etc. in the electricity bill of August 2022. Most of the queries raised by the Appellant have been clarified by the Respondent.

7. The Forum, by its Order dated 28.09.2022 dismissed the grievance application by observing as below:

"The grievance mentioned by the consumer cannot be termed as grievance. He required some information regarding the terms mentioned in the bill and also demanded some calculations on Aug 2022 bill. Consumer should have applied to the licensee as per RTI Act for the want of this information. There is nothing in the consumer application which can be termed as grievance instead he is seeking some information which can be easily called by him with simple RTI application for this wasting of forum's time is not acceptable."



(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary

Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai



8. During the course of the hearing, it was mutually agreed that the Respondent may arrange a fair discussion in their office, as the Appellant intends to give suggestions for improvement in the billing system, so as to create greater transparency between the consumer and the Licensee. The Respondent agreed and said that the Appellant is welcome for discussions at the office of the Respondent with a scheduled appointment. Both the parties agreed accordingly. It was also agreed that the website of the Forum should be updated with names and photos of the members.

9. In view of the above, nothing sustains in the Appellant's representation and hence it is disposed of accordingly.

Sd/
(Vandana Krishna)
Electricity Ombudsman (Mumbai)



(Dilip Dumbre)
Secretary
Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai

