BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN (MUMBAI)

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

REPRESENTATION NO. 114 OF 2019

In the matter of billing

Mrs. Sheela Naresh Nikam..... Appellant

V/s.

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

For Appellant : 1. Vinod Naresh Nikam, Representative

For Respondent : 1. P.D.Annachatre, Executive Engineer, Vashi
2. V.M.Sonkusare, Dy. Ex.Engineer

Coram: Mr. Deepak Lad

Date of Order: - 13th June 2019

ORDER

This Representation is filed on 24th April 2019 under Regulation 17.2 of the Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum & Electricity Ombudsman) Regulations, 2006 (CGRF Regulations) against the Order dated 13th February 2019 passed by the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, MSEDCL Bhandup Zone (the Forum).

Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai M.E.R.C.

2. The Forum, by its Order dated 13th February 2019 has allowed the application. The operative part of the order is as below:-

> *"2. The applicant has to pay the bill issued in the month of July 2017 along with arrears by deducting the charges of interest and penalty. The applicant shall be liberty to pay the outstanding amount by way of the monthly instalment along with the regular bill.*
> *3. The respondent shall pay the cost of Rs. 1000 to the applicant and will be adjusted in the electricity bill."*

3. Aggrieved by the Order of the Forum, the Appellant has filed this representation stating in brief as below: -

The Appellant is a residential consumer (No.000220226719) at Room No. 549, Sector 15, Koparkhairane, Navi Mumbai from 16.11.1998. The Appellant was paying the electricity bills regularly till July 2017. All of a sudden, the Appellant received an excess bill for 4130 units of Rs. 59780/-in the month of September 2017. She filed complaint about the bill and literally apprised each and every concerned official of the subdivision. However, the attitude was non courteous besides being non cooperative. The bill was not revised by the Respondent despite personal follow up. The Appellant, therefore, filed grievance in Internal Grievance Redressal Cell (IGRC) on 15.09.2017 but no action was taken. Then the Appellant approached the Forum on 08.03.2018. The Forum allowed the application and directed to waive interest and delay payment charges (DPC) with cost of Rs.1000/-. The Appellant made total payment of the bill under protest. The Appellant prayed that the Respondent be directed to pay compensation of Rs. 15000/- to 20000/-.

4. The Respondent filed written reply through its letter dated 07.06.2019 which states as below: -

i. The Appellant is a residential consumer (No.000220226719) from 16.11.1998.
ii. The old meter of the Appellant was replaced on 09.05.2016 as display counter faulty.
iii. The meter replacement details were not fed in the system till September 2017 therefore the bill was issued on average basis for the period June 2016 to August 2017.
iv. The bill for the month of September 2017 was generated after having updated the system with meter replacement details. This bill was for 4130 units for Rs. 59780/-.
v. This was a sort of accumulated bill for the entire consumption of 4130 units from the date of replacement of meter till the date of reading in September 2017.

Electricity Ombudsman Mumbai M.E.R.C.

vi. This bill was immediately revised in October 2017 with appropriate credit for the units charged and by giving slab benefits spread over the accumulation period.

vii. However, the Appellant approached the Forum and as per the order of the Forum, the interest and DPC were waived of. The cost of Rs. 1000/- awarded by the Forum is being passed through the ensuing bill of the Appellant.

viii. Whenever the Representative of the Appellant visited the subdivision, he always talked arrogantly. On one occasion he crossed all limits of decency and finally the Respondent had to seek police protection.

5. I heard both the parties. The first hearing took place on 10.06.2019 and the second one on 13.06.2019. From the arguments of the Appellant during the hearing, I noted that the Appellant was disgusted with the casual and highly non-cooperative attitude of the billing staff / officials of the Respondent. It is also observed that despite his grievance, he has paid all bills notwithstanding the act of omission on the part of the Respondent. When the Appellant completely explained the position through the Consumer Personal Ledger (CPL) in the second hearing, the Appellant was fully satisfied with the explanation. He further submitted that had this been explained properly during his visit to subdivision office, he would not have taken pains to approach the undersigned. In token of having resolved the issue, both the parties (MSEDCL and Representative of the Appellant) submitted joint undertaking.

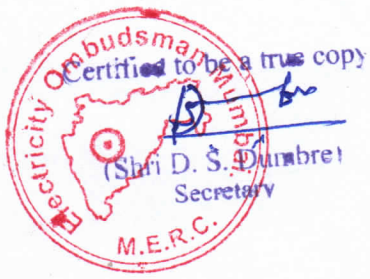
In view of the above, MSEDCL is directed to adjust the cost of Rs. 1000/- awarded by the Forum through the ensuing bill of the Appellant. Further, interest and DPC, levied, if any is hereby waived of.

6. Representation is accordingly disposed of.

7. No order as to cost.

8. Respondent is directed to report compliance within two months from the date of the order.

Sd/
(Deepak Lad)
Electricity Ombudsman (Mumbai)



Certified to be a true copy
(Shri D. S. Dumbre)
Secretary