

**BEFORE THE CONSUMER GRIEVANCES REDRESSAL,
FORUM (CGRF), GOVERNMENT OF GOA,
ELECTRICITY DEPARTMENT, VIDYUT BHAVAN,
4TH FLOOR, VASCO, GOA.**

Complaint / Representation No. 05/2024/256

Shri. Shabbir Khalif,
H.No. Sy. No. 82/5,
Orda, Candolim,
Bardez - Goa.

..... Complainant

V/S

1. The Chief Electrical Engineer,
Electricity Department,
Government of Goa,
Vidyut Bhavan, Panaji - Goa.

2. The Executive Engineer,
Electricity Department,
Div -VI, Mapusa A, Goa.

3. The Assistant Engineer,
Electricity Department,
Div -VI, S/D- IV,
Candolim - Goa.

..... Respondents

Dated : - 10/03/2024

ORDER

1. This order shall dispose the complaint/representation received on 09.02.2024 filed by the complainant. The complainant is a resident of Candolim Goa and is availing an LTD connection under CA no. 60007089455; he is aggrieved by the exorbitant bill for Rs. 3,29,575/- dated 02.02.2023 raised by the licensee Department.

Case of the complainant.

2. In a nutshell, the complainant's case as culled from his complaint is that he paid the pending arrears of Rs. 18644/- on 30.01.2023 under the OTS Scheme. Soon thereafter, he received a bill dated

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02.02.2023 for Rs.3,29,575/-. The consumption recorded in the bill was not commensurate with the actuals. The exorbitant bill has affected his monthly budget and also raises questions on the accuracy and transparency of the billing system. He seeks this Forum's intervention in rectification of the bill.

Case of the Licensee Department.

3. Per contra, the Department contested the complaint and entered its para-wise comments through the third respondent. Succinctly, it is their case that the disputed billed amount of Rs. 3,29,575/- was for the period from 15.09.2021 to 10.11.2021 for total consumption of 70879 units. Following the consumer's complaint, the meter was sent for testing to the MRT lab and found to be OK and within permissible limits. The consumer was billed as per consumption and therefore is liable to clear the amount.

Hearing.

4. I heard the parties at length on videoconference at which time Shri. Abdul Walikar appeared for the complainant while Shri. Savio Ferrao AE represented the Department.

Findings.

5. I perused the records and gave due consideration to the submissions advanced by the parties.
6. The Department produced the consumption statement between 18.09.2019 to 07.01.2024. It indicates consumption of 70879 units on 09.11.2021. Otherwise, the statement shows an average monthly consumption of about 862 units in the six preceding cycles. There was a whopping 8000% surge in consumption in a single cycle (between meter reading dates 15.09.2021 and 09.11.2021). Such a massive surge is abnormal by any standards. Even though the MRT test result may have shown the meter to be 'OK', the consumer would have to be given the benefit of doubt in these peculiar circumstances. More so in view of the fact that the average

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consumption recorded by the new meter was a paltry 76 units in the first six cycles between 10.11.2021 and 13.12.2022.

7. In view of the foregoing facts and circumstances, I have no hesitation to set aside the disputed bill dated 02.02.2023. The said bill will have to be revised based on the average consumption recorded in the three billing cycles prior to 02.02.2023.

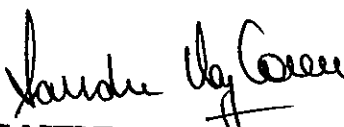
Order.

8. In view of the foregoing, I pass the following order:

- a) This complaint is allowed.
- b) The bill no. 10001946972 dated 02.02.2023 is hereby set aside.
- c) The said bill shall be revised considering the average consumption of three prior billing cycles, and a revised bill shall be issued within 30 days from the receipt of this order. The consumer shall pay the revised bill amount within 15 days of its receipt failing which DPC etc. shall be applicable.
- d) Department shall report compliance of this order to the Registry of this Forum within 45 days.

This complaint stands disposed accordingly.

9. The Complainant, if aggrieved, by non-redressal of his/her grievance by the Forum or non-implementation of CGRF order by the Licensee, may make an Appeal in prescribed Annexure-IV, to the Electricity Ombudsman, Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for the State of Goa and UTs, 3rd Floor, Plot No.55-56, Service Road, Udyog Vihar, Phase-IV, Sector-18, Gurugram-122015 (Haryana), Phone No.:0124-4684708, Email ID: ombudsman.jercuts@gov.in within one month from the date of receipt of this order.


SANDRA VAZE CORREIA
(Member)