

BEFORE THE VIDYUT OMBUDSMAN

Present

**K.Sanjeeva Rao Naidu
Vidyut Ombudsman**

Dated: 06-10-2010

Appeal No. 38 of 2010

Between

Sri MVM Muralikrishna
10-182, Padmaja Nivas
Palla Venkatarao Street
K.Agraharam, Amalapuram – 533201.

... Appellant

And

1. Assistant Engineer / operation /Amalapuram
2. Assistant Divisional Engineer / Operation / Amalapuram
3. Divisional Engineer/Operation/ Amalapuram
4. Accounts Officer/ERO/ Amalapuram

....Respondents

The appeal / representation dt. 11.08.2010 received on 16.08.2010 of the appellant has come up for final hearing before the Vidyut Ombudsman on 07.09.2010 for respondents represented by Sri A.Sunil Kumar, AE/Op/Town/Amalapuram and appellant absent, heard and having stood over for consideration till this day, the Vidyut Ombudsman passed / issued the following:

AWARD

The appellant filed a complaint before the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (Forum), APEPDCL that the digital meters already existing to the service connections were changed with new digital meters on 06.03.2010 for no reason. The monthly consumption readings were taken on 06.04.2010 and shown an

abnormal increase and not consistent with his consumption and such consumption was never recorded in the last 3 years and he prayed for replacement of meters.

2. The respondent No.3 has submitted their submissions as hereunder:
- (i) orders were issued by the competent authority to replace all the meters on 11 kV high school feeder by DE/O/Amalapuram.
 - (ii) As per instructions, the existing meters on the said feeders were started replacing from March last week onwards.
 - (iii) The meters of the said services have been replaced as per the instructions cited during April 1st week.
 - (iv) The consumption pattern for the above 3 nos services is more or less equal prior to the replacement and there is no abnormal variation in his consumption after replacement of the meters.
 - (v) As part of implementing of new technology of taking meter readings through MRI, the existing meters in his locality have been replaced with the technology compatible to take MRI readings.
 - (vi) The consumption pattern of the 3 nos services before and after the replacement meters is herewith enclosed.

Old Meter Consumption					New Meter Consumption			
Sc.Nos.	Dec/09	Jan/10	Feb/10	Mar/10	Apr/10	May/10	Jun/10	Jul/10
14315	82	87	78	86	123	96	118	61
14316	48	64	68	70	153	113	98	148
55329	98	98	124	89	122	148	109	157

3. The respondent No.4 has submitted his written submissions as hereunder:
“With reference to the above cited the consumer of SC Nos. 14315, 14316 and 55329 of Amalapuram (Town) filed a complaint against erroneous meter reading at Forum of Redressal of Consumer Grievances.

As per availability of ERO, Amalapuram records the meters of the said services were changed on 06.04.2010 under Elymer High Accuracy Meter

changing programme, no abnormalities found in the meter readings and also in the billing.

In view of the above, the Photostat copies of consumer's representation and CG No. 30/10 of EG Dist are herewith transmitted for favour of taking further action and onward submission to CGRF, Visakhapatnam for finalization of the case."

4. After hearing both sides and after considering the material placed before the Forum, the Forum observed that on seeing the consumption pattern through RAS application no abnormal variations in consumption has been observed and found that there is no grievance.

5. Aggrieved by the said order, the appellant preferred this appeal, questioning the same, that the records would show that the new meters are required to be tested beyond doubt to his satisfaction and it is only settlement and that the meters fixed are inferior quality and the department should attend the fault and therefore impugned orders is liable to be set aside.

6. Now, the point for consideration is, "whether the impugned order, dated 21.07.2010, is liable to be set aside? If so, on what grounds?"

7. The appellant has sent a letter stating that he is unable to attend and requested that the grounds of appeal may be treated as his arguments and Sri A.Sunil Kumar, AE/Town/Amalapuram, who appeared on behalf of the respondents before this authority stated that the impugned order is in accordance with the procedure and there are no grounds to interfere with the same and the appeal preferred by the appellant is liable to be dismissed.

8. The only grievance of the appellant is that the meters fixed to his premises are of the inferior quality and the same have to be replaced and if at all there is

no possibility to change the meters, the same can be tested in his presence and that it is the only settlement. The Forum has failed in identifying the grievance and rejected the request made by the appellant. The grievance submitted by the appellant is genuine and if the consumer has any doubt, it is for the authority to remove the same instead of allowing him to continue the doubt cropped up in his mind throughout. He has not stated that he is not going to pay the charges. The only request made by him is to replace the meter with a new one or test the same in his presence. Hence, I feel that the request made by the appellant is justified and the impugned order is liable to set aside.

9. In the result, the appeal is allowed directing the respondents to test the meter in the presence of the appellant by obtaining his acknowledgement of presence and if the meter is found defective the same may be replaced with new meter.

10. The compliance of the report shall be submitted to this authority within 30 days from the date of receipt of this order.

This order is corrected and signed on this day of 6th October 2010

VIDYUT OMBUDSMAN