

BEFORE THE VIDYUT OMBUDSMAN

Present

K.Sanjeeva Rao Naidu
Vidyut Ombudsman

Dated: 19 -04-2011

Appeal No. 7 of 2011

Between

Sri Billa Kota Lakshmi Ganapathi
S/o/Subba Rao, Mogalikuduru Sivaru
Pedda veedhi, Jaggannapeta (V) – 533249.
EG Dist.

... Appellant

And

1. Asst Engineer/Operation/ Nagaram
2. Asst Divisional Engineer/Operation/ Rajolu
3. Asst. Accounts Officer/ERO/ Rajolu
4. Divisional Engineer/Operation/ Amalapuram

....Respondents

The appeal / representation filed on 03.03.2011 of the appellant has come up for hearing before the Vidyut Ombudsman on 08.04.2011 at Visakhapatnam, appellant being absent. Sri V.Nageswara Rao, AE/O/Nagaram for respondents present and having stood over for consideration till this day, the Vidyut Ombudsman passed / issued the following :

AWARD

The appellant filed a complaint before the Forum stating that he received CC bill with an abnormal amount of Rs.6774/- on 09.10.10 for 2 months for his SC No.560, Mogalikuduru and he is suspecting that the meter is creeping and requested the Forum to make his grievance redressed.

2. The respondent No.1 filed his written submissions as hereunder:

"The Registered consumer Sri Billakota Laxmi Ganapathi having 1 No Service connection SC.No: 0511-000560 Cat -I for domestic purpose. The consumer complained before Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum as AE/Op/Nagaram is not responding to my complaint about abnormal bill during the month of 10/2010. Due to heavy work load (As I am also in-charge to Razole Section), I didn't attend the above service inspection personally. But, I send the Mogalikuduru distribution Line Man to inspect and intimate the meter condition and check reading. The Line Man inspect the service and intimated that the meter condition is normal and the check reading is as follows:

M.No. 1B2375026

Make: HPL

Cap: 5-20A

Check Reading: 3831 as on 24.10.2010

The Line Man also suggested the consumer to pay the total amount as the meter condition was normal. The consumer has paid the total CC bill on 11.11.2010. Hence, he didn't inspect the meter personally as the reason for abnormal bill may be suppressive reading (Intentionally by the consumer).

The consumer has noticed some reasons for abnormal bills by Electronic Energy meters in News Papers. Based on the reasons known, through news papers, he put a complaint before "Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum" to get financial benefit.

Based on the letter received vide reference cited above, I personally inspect the meter on 07.01.2011. The condition of the meter is normal to the best of my knowledge. The check reading and connected load particulars are as follows.

M.No. 1B2375026

Make: HPL

Cap: 5-20A

Check Reading: 4115 as on 07.01.2011

Colour TV -----1 No.

Frize----- 1 No.

Pump Motor-----1 No. (1/2HP)

Fans----- 4 Nos.

Bulbs----- 4 Nos.

Tube Lights-----1 No.

Mixi-----1 No.

CFL Lamps-----3 Nos.

Plug Pains-----4 Nos.

*The above facts were informed to cosumer. Also suggested to attend Meter Testing at MRT, Bommur duly producing a DD for an amount of Rs.50/- towards challenging fee in favour of Divisional Engineer/Transformers/APEPDCL/ Rajahmundry vide **Lr.No.AAE/Op/Nagaram/F.No. , D.No.16/11/ Dated: 10.01.2010.** But, the consumer has refused to take the letter."*

3. After hearing both sides and after considering the material placed before the Forum, the Forum observed as hereunder:

- *“The Complainant Consumer is liable to pay the CC Charges already raised as per the bills issued as there is a suppressed reading found in the existing meter now revealed after commencing Spot billing by a new Spot Billing Agency.*
- *If the Complainant Consumer is not agreeing with the consumption recorded, he can pay the challenging fee for MRT testing, the respondents will act accordingly.*
- *With the above directions CG.No.448/10-11 is disposed off.”*

5. Aggrieved by the said order, the appellant preferred this appeal questioning the same that he has been receiving the bill more than the actual usage and inspite of that AE/O/Nagaram has not been attending to his complaint and the respondents have thrown the blame on the bill readers as if the reading is suppressed by him and the Forum has failed to consider these aspects and disposed of the petition by giving a direction to the appellant for paying the challenging fee for MRT testing etc.

6. Now, the point for consideration is, “whether the order of the Forum dt.28.01.2011 is liable to be set aside or modified ? If so, on what grounds?”

7. The appellant has failed to attend before this authority inspite of the notice issued to attend at Visakhapatnam on 08.04.2011. Whereas, Sri V.Nageswara Rao, AE/O/Nagaram attended before this authority and stated that the order passed the Forum is on sound lines and the appeal preferred by the appellant is liable to be dismissed.

8. It is clear from the record that the consumer has paid CC bills up to the end of October 2010. The premises was inspected by the respondent and found that the meter was normal to the best of his knowledge. This has been also informed to the appellant and also requested him to attend meter testing at MRT, Bommur duly producing a DD for an amount of Rs.50/- towards challenging fee in favour of DE/Transformers/APEPDCL /Rajahmundry through his letter dt.10.01.2011. He did not attend before the Forum to test the meter by producing the DD as suggested by

the respondents. The Forum observed that there is a suppressed reading in the meter against SCNo.560, Mogalikuduru, Nagaram Mandal as it was revealed by the spot billing agency. The Forum has also suggested the appellant to pay the challenging fee and to appear before the MRT for meter testing by following the procedure contemplated. No effort is made by the appellant on those lines for the reasons best known to him. He has simply mentioned in the appeal grounds that he is prepared to pay the amount of Rs.50/- after disposal of the petition by sending DD as suggested by the ADE.

9. In the light of the above said discussion there are no merits in the appeal grounds except a stray line mentioned in the grounds of appeal about his willingness to pay Rs.50/- towards challenging fee for MRT testing. He has allowed considerable length of time to pass for testing of meter at MRT station, Bommuru. Now he expressed his willingness to pay DD for Rs.50/- for the testing of the meter. It is proper at this stage for this authority to direct the respondents to permit him to test the meter by following the procedure as suggested by the respondents in the letter dt.10.01.2011.

10. Hence, this authority is directing the respondents to test the meter after receiving the DD if paid and filed before the authority for testing the same.

11. This testing of meter cannot operate as a stay of payment of arrears. The appellant has to pay the entire amount raised in the bills and if there is any defect in the meter the same can be worked out at a later date by adjusting the amount in future bills. The respondents are directed to act accordingly basing on the result of the MRT, provided the appellant has approached to test the meter.

12. With the above said observations, the appeal is disposed accordingly.

This order is corrected and signed on this day of 19th April 2011

VIDYUT OMBUDSMAN