

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

Complaint/Representation No. 06/2020 /56

Smt. Samantha Oliveira Fernandes,
2nd Floor, Solanki Vatika,
Alto Betim Road, Porvorim,
Goa - 403521.

..... 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 - Goa.
3. The Assistant Engineer,
Electricity Department,
Div - VI, S/D II,
Porvorim - Goa.

..... Respondents

Present:

1. Complainant present in person
2. Shri. Sydney D. S. Costa

..... for the Respondent

Dated: - 29/06/2020.

ORDER

Per Smt Sandra Vaz e Correia, Nominated Member.

1. The case of the complainant in a nutshell is that she owns a shop at Alto Betim that was operated since October 2019. Prior to that, the

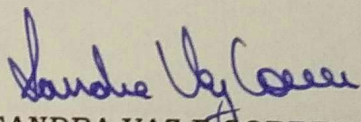
Sandra Vaz e Correia

average bills were in range of Rs. 80/-. The bill for October 2019 was Rs. 498/-, however it spiked to Rs. 32600/- in following month in bill dated 07.12.2019. There was only a refrigerator, two ceiling fans and four tube lights in operation. The next bill dated 16.01.2020 was for Rs. 9594/- in addition to the previous arrears of Rs. 32600/-. She wrote a letter dated 11.02.2020 to the Executive Engineer Div. VI Mapusa; in reply, Department alleged that the consumption recorded by the meter had been verified and found in good condition. The following month saw a bill of Rs. 44912/- that included previous arrears and DPC of Rs. 853/-. She prays for setting aside the alleged exorbitant bills and for restraining the Licensee Department from disconnecting the supply.

2. Per contra, the Licensee Department in its reply filed through Asst Engineer (Com), Porvorim stated that billing was done as per actual consumption of metered units by the consumer and as per prevailing procedures. The bill dated 07.12.2019 for Rs. 32600/- (September/October 2019) was for actual consumption of 5423 units for 41 days, while the bill dated 16.01.2019 of Rs. 9080/- (November 2019) was for 1535 units. Department was willing to send the meter for testing to MRT Laboratory. There was no intention to disconnect the supply. During pendency of the complaint, the meter was sent for testing to MRT Lab and tested in the presence of the consumer and its condition was found to be okay.
3. I heard the parties via video conference call on 17.06.2020. The complainant appeared in person while Shri Sydney D. S. Costa AE (Com) represented the Licensee Department. Both sides stated that they had no objection to a single member disposing the complaint. Department was requested to submit consumption statement prior and post the disputed bills before the next date.
4. The statements were emailed to this Forum on 22.06.2020. In the said communication, it was also informed that there were some technical issues faced by MRT with respect to downloading the meter data.

Sandeep V. Gore

5. I perused the records and gave due consideration to the submissions advanced by the parties. The statement furnished by the Department indicates a sharp drop in consumption to an average of 335 units in the quarter post the disputed bills i.e. from 07.12.2019 to 19.03.2020, as compared to monthly average of about 2783 units earlier. Although the MRT test report dated 29.04.2020 indicates the meter condition as "OK" and percentage error of meter found within permissible limits, the covering letter states that software for HPL make meters was not available (with MRT) and hence downloading of meter consumption could not be done. This, in my opinion, casts a doubt on the accuracy and correctness of the test. It is also noted from the billing statement that the meter has been changed during the last billing cycle.
6. In view of the foregoing, my considered opinion, the ends of justice would be met if the two disputed bills (dated 07.12.2019 and 18.01.2020) are revised considering the average consumption recorded in the three subsequent billing cycles i.e. from 07.12.2019 to 19.03.2020. Department is directed to revise the said two bills as above and report compliance to the Forum within 30 days from receipt of this order. The complaint stands disposed accordingly.


SANDRA VAZ E CORREIA
(Member)