

		Date	Month	Year
1	Date of Receipt	30	06	2025
2	Date of Registration	04	07	2025
3	Decided on	21	08	2025
4	Duration of proceeding	48 days		
5	Delay, if any.			

BEFORE THE CONSUMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM
B.E.S. & T. UNDERTAKING

(Constituted under section 42(5) of the Electricity Act 2003)

Ground Floor, Multistoried Annex Building,

BEST's Colaba Depot

Colaba, Mumbai - 400 001

Telephone No. 22799528

Grievance No. A-522-2025 dtd. 04/07/2025

Mr. Shrenik Narendrakumar BaldotaComplainant

V/S

B.E.S.&T. UndertakingRespondent

Present Coram : Hon'ble Chairman (CGRF) : Mr. M.S. Gupta

Hon'ble Independent Member : Mrs. A.A. Acharekar

Hon'ble Technical Member : Mr. J.W. Chavan

On behalf of the Complainant : Mr. G.S. Raut

On behalf of the Respondent : BES&T Undertaking

1. Mr. S.N. Pawar, Divisional Engineer, Customer Care 'A' Ward

2. Mr. M.Y. Sadaddekar, Asst. Engr.2, Customer Care 'A' Ward

Date of Hearing : 13/08/2025

Date of Order : 21/08/2025

JUDGEMENT

1. The grievance of the complainant is regarding high electricity bill and denial of benefit of Amnesty Scheme.
- 1.1 The Complainant's case in short compass is that the Complainant was having an electric meter no. N163388, Consumer A/c no. 332-269-004 in the flat no. 6, 2nd floor, 117, Baldota Bhavan, New Marine Lines, Mumbai - 400020 (for short "the said premises").
- 1.2 The Complainant was having two separate meters for flat no. 5 & 6. The meter at flat no. 5 is in the name of the Complainant having A/c no. 332-269-003, while the meter in flat no. 6 was in the name of Rahul N. Baldota and the Complainant.
- 1.3 The Complainant further submitted that flat no. 6 was let out to one New Moon Hospitality Pvt. Ltd. on leave & license basis, who left the premises without paying electricity charges in the month of May 2018. For this reason, the arrears got accumulated and the said meter no. N163388 was removed for non-payment on 15/03/2019. The Complainant further submitted that the Respondent has failed to respond his several letters including request for meter test report and re-audit of the account. He had also requested the Respondent to settle his account by availing Amnesty Scheme 2023. On 21/04/2023, the Respondent asked the Complainant to pay the outstanding under Amnesty Scheme. Unfortunately, the Complainant could not avail the said benefit as his accountant left his job and could not inform him about the said letter of the Respondent.
- 1.4 It is further submitted by the Complainant that the premises no. 5 & 6 were merged with the permission of MCGM in June 2024. He received a notice on 19/12/2023 from the Respondent regarding unauthorized extension of load. On 05/09/2024, the Complainant submitted another request letter to the Respondent to avail Amnesty Scheme. However, it was denied by letter dtd. 07/03/2025 on the basis of Audit's remark dtd. 10/10/2024 regarding unauthorized extension of load. Hence, the Complainant submitted that he is ready to pay outstanding amount by availing benefit of Amnesty Scheme to settle the dispute once for all.
- 2.0 The Respondent does not dispute the contention of the Complainant regarding installation of two separate meters in flat no. 5 & 6 of Baldota Bhavan. The meter no. N163388 of flat no.6 was removed on 15/03/2019. The said meter was tested in its lab and found OK in accuracy test. On 18/04/2023, the Respondent issued a letter to the Complainant to avail the benefit of Amnesty Scheme 2023 but the Complainant did not avail the said benefit. On 08/12/2023, site inspection was carried out and it was noticed that supply was given to meter removed premises from meter no. N163387. However, action as per Section 126 of Electricity Act, 2003 for unauthorized extension was not taken as the Complainant has submitted a letter stating that both the premises are owned by him and they are merged in single premises. The Respondent has been issuing bills showing amount payable of premises no. 5 & 6 till date. It's management (Audit Dept.) has refused to give benefit of Amnesty Scheme 2024. Hence, the Complainant has to pay all outstanding bills of both the electric meters.

- 3.0 From rival contentions of the parties following points arise for our determination with findings thereon for the reasons to follow :

Sr. No.	Points for determination	Findings
1	Does the Complainant prove that the Respondent has charged high electricity bill in respect of A/c no. 332-269-004, meter no. N163388 ?	No
2	Does the Complainant prove that he is eligible for the benefit for Amnesty Scheme 2024 ?	Yes
	What order ?	As per final order.

REASONS

- 4.0 We have heard both the parties and their representatives. We have carefully gone through the documents filed by them.
- 4.1 The representative of the Complainant, during the course of argument submitted that the test report of the meter no. N163388 provides that testing status is defective and testing / tampered remark as battery defective. So according to him the said meter was defective and reading taken from the said meter is liable to be discarded. As against this, the Divisional Engineer of the Respondent submitted that the accuracy test and status of registered test were found OK and therefore minor defects will not affect the actual meter reading. It is observed that the test report of the meter shows "Testing Status" as defective, which needs to be replaced with clear remarks related to effects of the minor battery defective issue not affecting the actual meter reading. The said system generated reports need to be rectified.
- 4.2 On careful consideration of the chart submitted by the Respondent in respect of the said meter from September 2016 to June 2025 indicates that the total current bill amount has been subsequently reduced from October 2018 i.e. after his licensee left the said premises where the said meter was installed. This is a telling circumstances against the contention of the Complainant that meter was not showing accurate meter reading. Had it been a fact that the meter was defective in recording actual meter reading, the current bill from the said meter would not have been substantially reduced after its licensee vacated the premises. Irrespective of all his contentions


discussed above, the representative of the Complainant fairly conceded that the Complainant is ready to pay outstanding in respect of the removed meter after availing benefit of Amnesty Scheme 2024.


- 4.3 As against this, Respondent submitted that on the basis of Audit's report, the Respondent has denied the Complainant to avail the said benefit and accordingly it was informed to the Complainant.
- 4.4 Indisputably, by letter dtd. 21/04/2023, the Respondent informed the Complainant and his brother Rahul that they are eligible for Amnesty Scheme 2023 and they have to pay only Rs. 2,23,500/- and not Rs. 3,34,430/-, after waiving Delay Payment Charges (DPC) and Interest On Arrears (IOA). The Complainant has submitted that as his accountant left his job and could not inform him about the said letter, he was not able to avail the benefit of said scheme within schedule time period. Later on, the Complainant requested the Respondent that he is ready to pay the outstanding amount by availing the benefit of Amnesty Scheme and to settle the account once for all. Further, by letter dtd. 03/01/2025, the Respondent informed the Complainant that the said premises is found connected with electric supply provided through meter no. N163387 but as per its management's decision the full amount was decided to be recovered, hence, it's proposal for waiver of DPC & IOA was rejected.
- 4.5 Worthname to note that the Complainant has applied for availing the benefit of Amnesty Scheme 2024 well within time. The Complainant was even otherwise eligible to avail the said benefit, as accepted by the Divisional Engineer of the Respondent during the hearing. However, the only issue in this matter is that it's Audit Dept. has opined that the meter removed premises has been given supply unauthorizedly from the adjacent premises. There is some disparity between the contentions of the Respondent, as at one juncture it has come with the contention that it had not taken any action for unauthorized extension of load for flat no. 5 & 6, as both the premises were merged by taking proper permission from MCGM and at another juncture it has contended that as it's Auditor opined that benefit has not been given under the said scheme owing to unauthorized extension of load, it has rejected the request of the complainant for availing the benefit of the said Scheme. Apparently, it seems that there was no question of unauthorized extension since both the premises were merged by the Complainant and his brother after taking requisite permission from the MCGM, which is the competent authority. As both the premises are merged, the extension load to flat no. 6 from flat no.5 now does not arise. The Respondent has debited the outstanding of electricity bill of flat no. 6 to the electric meter of flat no. 5 on the pretext that, both the premises are owned by the Complainant. In such eventuality when the Forum has asked a simple question to Divisional Engineer, whether the Respondent is ready to provide a separate meter (i.e. removed meter in the premises originally billed in flat no. 6), he submitted that as the premises are merged, now no separate meter can be provided. Consequently, the Forum is of the view that the Complainant is very well eligible to avail the benefit of Amnesty Scheme 2024.

- 4.5 Foregoing discussion clearly indicates that the submission of the Complainant regarding high bill is not acceptable in the light of the meter testing report and details sheet of monthwise billing of the relevant report in respect of the removed meter. Similarly, the Complainant is entitled to avail the benefit of Amnesty Scheme 2024. Hence, the Respondent can be directed to provide him the benefit of the said Scheme.
- 5.0 Consequently the Forum comes to the conclusion that point no. 1 is answered in the negative and point no. 2 in the affirmative. Accordingly, we pass following order as answer to point no.3.

ORDER

1. The Grievance No. A-522-2025 dtd. 04/07/2025 is partly allowed.
2. The Respondent is directed to issue revised bill imparting benefit of Amnesty Scheme 2024 to the Complainant within next two billing cycles and the compliance report shall be submitted to the Forum immediately.
3. The Respondent is further directed to rectify the system generated remarks with more clarity against electric meters found partially defective in testing.
4. The Complainant is directed to make the payment promptly on receipt of the revised bill.
5. Copies of this Order shall be provided to all concerned parties.


(Mr. Jitendra W. Chavan)
Technical Member


(Mrs. Anagha A. Acharekar)
Independent Member


(Mr. Mahesh S. Gupta)
Chairman

