

	Date	Month	Year
1	Date of Receipt	07	06 2024
2	Date of Registration	10	06 2024
3	Decided on	08	08 2024
4	Duration of proceeding	59 days	
5	Delay, if any.	—	

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

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

Ground Floor, Multistoried Annex Building,
BEST's Colaba Depot
Colaba, Mumbai - 400 001
Telephone No. 22799528

Grievance No. A-501-2024 dtd.10/06/2024

Smt. Vanita Jain & Mr. Harshvardhan JainComplainant

V/S

B.E.S.&T. UndertakingRespondent

Present

Chairman

Coram : Mr. M.S. Gupta, Chairman

Member

1. Mrs. Anagha A. Acharekar, Independent Member
2. Mrs. Manisha K. Daware, Technical Member

On behalf of the Respondent : 1. Mr. S.N. Pawar,
2. Mrs. K.M. Jarode

On behalf of the Complainant : Smt. Vanita Jain

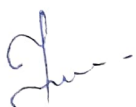
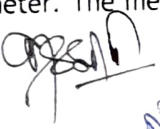

Date of Hearing : 18/07/2024

Date of Order : 08/08/2024

(Handwritten signatures)

Judgment

- 1.0 The grievance of the complainant in this case is that the respondent has illegally charged exorbitant electric bills for the month of March and April 2024.
- 1.1 The complainant's case, in brief, as mentioned in the complaint as well as during the course of argument is that she is having electricity connection bearing consumer no. 306-043-007 since last 35 years. For the month of March and April 2024, she received electricity bills of Rs. 61,210/- which are significantly higher than her average bills of the past years which were around Rs. 6,000/- to 7,000/- per month only. She is a single parent and residing with her son in the flat where the said meter is installed. There is no change in her consumption. On the contrary during March and April 2024 she was travelling, being wedding in her family. To ensure that there is no use of electricity at her end, she has checked all her appliances for fault / excessive energy consumption. She requested the forum for direction to the respondent to issue fresh bill as per average consumption of electricity.
- 2.0 The respondent in its reply as well as during the course of argument contended that the consumption recorded in the month of March 2024 was 1620 units while average consumption per month for last one year is 709 kwh. The said meter no. M208447 was tested on site on 24/04/2024 and it was found OK. As the complainant was satisfied, a letter was issued to her to pay arrears of electricity bill and the case was closed. Again on 10/05/2024, second high bill complaint was given by the complainant. Site investigation carried out and meter was tested on site on 17/05/2024 with calibrated reference standard meter in presence of the complainant. The meter accuracy was found within permissible limit. The complainant was not satisfied with the said site testing report. Accordingly, new meter no. M196146 was installed by replacing the old meter on 22/05/2024.
- 2.1 The respondent further contended that the official testing of meter no. M208447 (old meter) was carried out in its testing laboratory at Meters Dept. on 27/05/2024 which was witnessed by the complainant and meter was found OK in accuracy dial test. However, the consumer was not satisfied with test result. Therefore, the respondent had downloaded data of half hourly energy consumption and sent to manufacturer to check the data for any abnormality. But it was noticed that the meter is recording energy properly and recorded maximum energy at night and mid-night time. As per consumption history of April 2024, uses were 2680 units. Since the old meter was found OK in accuracy under various tests, there was no recommendation for any amendment. Therefore, it was observed that the complainant is billed correctly as per units consumed / recorded on meter. The meter is not found defective in official

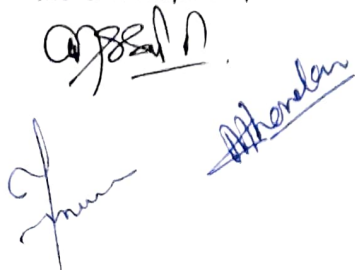
testing. Lastly, the respondent requested to dismiss the grievance as the meter no. M208447 was found to be within limit of accuracy.

- 3.0 We have heard both the parties and perused the record. On careful consideration, following points arise for our determination with findings thereon for the reasons to follow.

Sr. No.	Points for determination	Findings
1	Whether the electricity bill of Rs. 61,210/- charged to the complainant by the respondent for the period from March 2024 to April 2024 is correct ?	Affirmative
2	What order ?	As per final order.

REASONS

- 4.0 The complainant has vehemently argued that during the month of January and February 2024 her electricity consumption bill was around Rs. 6,000/-to-7,000/- per month. However, immediately thereafter for the month of March & April 2024 her electricity bill has been exorbitantly increased to Rs. 61,210/-. She also submitted that from 24/02/2024 to 04/03/2024 as well as 12/04/2024 to 25/04/2024, she along with her son were out of Mumbai and therefore the consumption of electricity during this period ought to have been NIL. She also submitted that during last year of the same period her electricity consumption bill was much more less than of the present one.
- 4.1 As against this, the representative of the respondent duly submitted that since they received a complaint of exorbitant bill, they got tested the electricity meter not only at the site where the meter is installed but also at their Meters Department's testing lab. On both the occasions, the said meter's status of accuracy test, status of registered test and testing status are found OK. No abnormalities have been noticed in any detailed testing.
- 4.2 The officer of the respondent further submitted that if the complainant was not satisfied with these testing reports, she could have got the said meter tested from the certified government laboratory. But the said remedy was not availed by the complainant. We have carefully gone through detailed load survey energy report from January 2024 till 09/05/2024. The said report is not only in respect of everyday consumption but also it depicts every half an hour consumption of electricity in the premises of the complainant. Had there been any fault / defect in the electric meter, the consumption pattern ought to have been abnormal till meter replacement. During



the scrutiny of the load survey report submitted by the respondent, it was observed that the electricity consumption pattern during the disputed period from March 2024 to April 2024 was linear as the consumption was observed higher than requisite load pattern intermittently. The Technical Member of the forum has meticulously analyzed the said load survey report and found that it is absolutely correct. Hence, we unanimously come to the conclusion that there is no discrepancy in the said report to discard the same. At the most we can say that the complainant was having an opportunity or remedy to get the meter rechecked or retested from any of the authorized testing lab (as suggested by the respondent, after testing the meter twice at site as well as lab of the BEST) but it was not availed by the complainant.

- 4.3 In such circumstances, the forum finds that it is beyond its purview to hold investigation in respect of the non consumption of electricity in the said premises during the aforementioned period as claimed by the complainant.
- 4.4 The complainant has neither challenged the testing report nor produced any other document or justifiable evidence to discard its authenticity. Hence, relying on the above said testing report, we come to the conclusion that the respondent has issued proper consumption bill for the month of March and April 2024 by taking all appropriate measures of testing the disputed meter and replacing the same on the request of the complainant. At the most, applying the principal of natural justice, the complainant may be given liberty again to get the said meter tested from any authorized government laboratory. Eventually, point no. (1) is answered in the affirmative. We pass the following order as answer to point no. 2.

ORDER

1. The Grievance No. A-501-2024 dtd.10/06/2024 is dismissed.
2. The complainant is at liberty to get the old meter no. M208447 tested from any authorized government laboratory.
3. Copies of this order be given to all the concerned parties.


(Smt. Manisha K. Daware)
Technical Member
CGRF BEST


(Smt. Anagha A. Acharekar)
Independent Member
CGRF BEST


(Shri Mahesh S. Gupta)
Chairman
CGRF BEST