

CONSUMER GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL FORUM

CENTRAL REGION

(Formed under Section 42(5) of the Electricity Act 2003)

220 kV Substation Compound, HMT Colony P.O., Kalamassery, Pin – 683 503
Phone No. 0484-2556500 Website: cgrf.kseb.in, Email: cgrf.ekm@gmail.com,
CUG No. 9496008719

Present

(1) Smt. Sheeba. P
(2) Sri. Biju Varghese

Chairperson
3rd Member

Petitioner

Sri. Skariya Joseph Alexander,
 Mattam House, Muhamma P.O.,
 Alappuzha

Respondent

The Assistant Executive Engineer,
 Kerala State Electricity Board Ltd,
 Electrical Sub Division,
 SL Puram.
 (Electrical Section, Muhamma)

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No.CGRF-CR/OP No.65/2023-24 Date:30.12.2023.

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ORDER

Background of the case:

Sri. Skariya Joseph Alexander, the petitioner, holds two electric connections with consumer numbers 1155192000654 and 1155194016070 under the jurisdiction of Electrical Section, Muhamma. The assigned tariffs for these connections are LT I A for domestic purposes and LT-VA for agriculture purposes, respectively. Notably, Consumer Number 1155194016070 is part of the beneficiary list of Krishi Bhavan, and the electricity bills for this consumer number are being paid by Krishi Bhavan.

On 01.09.2023, the petitioner mistakenly made a payment of Rs.1793/- through online payment mode against the demand for the agriculture purpose connection, instead of paying the electricity bill for their domestic connection. Upon realizing the error, the petitioner made several requests to the licensee,

urging either a refund of the amount wrongly paid to the agriculture connection or an adjustment against the demand of their domestic connection.

Unfortunately, on 28.11.2023, the licensee rejected the petitioner's request, citing the absence of any advance payment towards the petitioner's agriculture connection. Consequently, the petitioner has lodged a complaint before this Forum seeking resolution.

Version of the Petitioner:-

On 01.09.2023, the petitioner has mistakenly made an online payment of Rs.1793 to his consumer number 1155194016070, of which the tariff is LT-VA for agriculture purpose and the payments of electricity bills, therefore, are being made by the Krishibhavan. The payment, actually, was intended to be made to his consumer number 1155192000654 which is a domestic connection. The petitioner has submitted a request on 26.09.2023 to the Office of the Assistant Engineer, Electrical Section Muhamma, hoping either refund of mistakenly paid amount or an adjustment of the same in the bills of his other consumer number 1155192000654. Another request was also made to the Assistant Engineer on 06.10.2023 with an intension of forwarding the same to the Office of Chief Engineer, IT.

But the petitioner has received a reply on 28.11.2023 from the Office of the Assistant Engineer informing that no advance payment can be found remaining in the account of consumer number 1155194016070 and hence the request of petitioner cannot be considered for. Hence the complaint before the Forum.

Version of the Respondent:-

The respondent admits that the petitioner has mistakenly made an online payment of Rs.1793/- on 01.09.2023 to KSEBL against the demand of consumer number 1155194016070, instead of his other consumer number 1155192000654. The former connection is under tariff LT-VA, the payment of electricity bills of which are being paid by the Krishibhavan. The respondent has received the request of the petitioner on 26.09.2023, in which the petitioner has demanded either to refund or to adjust the wrongly made payment against the account of his other consumer number 1155192000654. Since no adjustment in online collection is possible from the Section Office, the request has been made to 'Orumanet' support

system on 27.09.2023 with the same demand. On 06.10.2023, the respondent has received another request from the petitioner which was intended to address the Chief Engineer, IT with the same issue. On 18.11.2023, the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division Cherthala replied to the petitioner that since there is no advance amount in the account of consumer number 1155194016070, mistakenly remitted amount cannot be refunded. The respondent has made another request to the 'Orumanet' support system on 16.12.2023 raising the same matter, which also ended futile.

Additional statement of fact

The respondent further reported that the amount paid online was credited to the arrears outstanding and no advance amount left in the account of consumer number 1155194016070. The petitioner was made the payment through the Bharath Bill Payment System (BBPS), which is a single point platform managed by National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI). Since the payment can only be initiated from the registered Consumer Operating Units like Google pay, Phone pay, Bank, etc, the petitioner, if they want to cancel the transaction, can submit their request in the platform they made the payment.

Analysis and findings:

Hearing was conducted at the Office of Assistant Executive Engineer, Electrical Subdivision, SLPuarm. The Forum afforded an opportunity to hear the Petitioner and the Respondent on 21/12/2023. Both the representatives of the petitioner and the respondent were present for hearing. Having examined the petition in detail and the statement of facts of the respondent, considering all the facts and circumstances in detail and perusing all the documents of both sides, the Forum comes to the following observations, conclusions and decisions thereof.

Sri. Skariya Joseph Alexander, the petitioner, holds two electric connections with consumer numbers 1155192000654 and 1155194016070 under the jurisdiction of Electrical Section, Muhamma. The assigned tariffs for these connections are LT I A for domestic purposes and LT-VA for agriculture purposes,

respectively. Notably, Consumer Number 1155194016070 is part of the beneficiary list of Krishi Bhavan, and the electricity bills for this consumer number are being paid by Krishi Bhavan.

On 01.09.2023, the petitioner mistakenly made a payment of Rs.1793/- through online payment mode against the demand for the agriculture purpose connection, instead of paying the electricity bill for their domestic connection. Upon realizing the error, the petitioner made several requests to the licensee, urging either a refund of the amount wrongly paid to the agriculture connection or an adjustment against the demand of their other domestic connection.

Unfortunately, on 28.11.2023, the licensee rejected the petitioner's request, citing the absence of any advance payment towards the petitioner's agriculture connection.

During the hearing, the petitioner reiterated their concern about the respondent's refusal to refund the amount mistakenly paid against the demand for their Agriculture connection.

In response, the respondent clarified that the amount paid in error by the petitioner against the demand for their agriculture connection cannot be refunded. This is due to the automatic accounting system, where once a payment is made against a specific demand, it is automatically attributed to that demand. Presently, there is no amount recorded as an advance payment against this consumer number in the software, making it unavailable for refund. Additionally, since the petitioner made the payment through the Bharath Bill Payment System (BBPS), a single-point platform managed by the National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI), the repayment process can only be initiated from the registered Consumer Operating Units such as Google Pay, Phone Pay, Banks, etc. If the petitioner wishes to cancel the transaction, they can submit their request to the respective platform through which they made the online payment.

This Forum acknowledges that Krishi Bhavan, the Department of Agriculture of the Government of Kerala, is responsible for the electricity payment

of the petitioner's agriculture connection. The petitioner accidentally paid the demand against this connection on 01.09.2023 for Rs. 1793/- while attempting to pay the electricity bill for their domestic connection through an online platform. Although the respondent admitted that the petitioner made the payment mistakenly, they rejected the petitioner's request for a refund, citing the absence of an advance amount in the account of their agriculture consumer number.

The Forum takes note that the same demand for the petitioner's agriculture connection is being communicated to Krishi Bhavan by the licensee for payment, and they are awaiting payment from Krishi Bhavan, as confirmed by the respondent during the hearing. Therefore, this Forum suggests a solution to resolve the issue that once Krishi Bhavan makes the payment against this demand, the amount shall be refunded to the petitioner. Both the respondent and the petitioner have agreed with this decision of the Forum, providing a consensus for the proposed resolution.

DECISION:

Considering the above facts and circumstances, the Forum issues the following orders:-

- 1. Once Krishi Bhavan makes the payment against the demand for the petitioner's agriculture connection, for which the petitioner made a mistaken payment, the amount shall be refunded to the petitioner.**
- 2. No cost ordered.**

The petitioner is at liberty to file appeal before the State Electricity Ombudsman, D.H. Road, Off shore Road Junction, Near Gandhi Square, Ernakulam, Pin – 682 016 (Ph: 0484 -2346488 , Mobile No. 8714356488) within 30 days of receipt of this order, if not satisfied with this decision.

Dated this 30th day of December 2023

Sd/-
Biju Varghese
3rd Member
CGRF, Ernakulam

Sd/-
Sheeba. P
(CHAIRPERSON)
CGRF-CR, Ernakulam

Endt. On CGRF-CR/OP No.65/2023-24 Dated
Delivered to

Sri.Skariya Joseph Alexander,
Mattam House, Muhamma P.O.,
Alappuzha

Sd/-
CHAIRPERSON
(DEPUTY CHIEF ENGINEER)
CGRF-CR, KALAMASSERRY

Copy submitted to: 1) The Secretary, KSEBL, Vydhyuthi Bhavanam, Pattom,
Thiruvananthapuram.
“ 2) The Secretary, Kerala State Regulatory Commission,
KPFC Bhavanam, C.V Raman Pillai Road, Vellayambalam,
Thiruvananthapuram.

Copy to: - (1) The Deputy Chief Engineer, Electrical Circle, KSEBL, Alappuzha
(2) The Executive Engineer, Electrical Division, KSEBL, Cherthala
(3) The Assistant Executive Engineer, Electrical Sub Division KSEBL,
SL Puram
(4) The Assistant Engineer, Electrical Section, Muhamma.