

Office of the Electricity Ombudsman

(A Statutory Body of Govt. of NCT of Delhi under the Electricity Act, 2003)

B-53 Paschimi Marg, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi – 110 057

(Phone No. : 32506011, Fax No.26141205)

Appeal No. F. ELECT/Ombudsman/2012/475

Appeal against the Order dated 27.01.2012 passed by CGRF-BRPL C.G.No. 496/2011.

In the matter of:

Smt. Bhagavathy Iyer

- **Appellant**

Versus

M/s BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd.

- **Respondent**

Present:-

Appellant: Smt. Bhagavathy Iyer was present alongwith her husband Shri S.J.N. Moorthy Iyer.

Respondent: Shri Keshaw Kumar, Commercial Officer, and Shri Salauddin, Asst. Finance Officer attended on behalf of the BRPL.

Date of Hearing: 11.09.2012

Date of Order: 20.09.2012

ORDER NO.: OMBUDSMAN/2012/475

This is an appeal against the order of the CGRF-BRPL No: 496/2011 dated 27.1.2012, filed by Smt. Bhagavathy Iyer on the ground that the order of the CGRF is erroneous.


Hearing was held on 11.9.2012 when both the parties were present. The facts of the case are that the Appellant claims excess/wrong billing for 56 days amounting to 06 units. She also claims that bills are not received on a timely basis and readings are not taken at fixed intervals but at arbitrary times/intervals. She claims that higher

fixed charges are recovered than the amount due because of uneven periods of taking readings/issuance of bills, and, hence, she has been overcharged. Further, she was required to incur a great deal of expense in representing her case to the HKPL (DISCOM) including photocopying and transportation charges, as well as other inconvenience borne by her. She is also not being properly attended to when she makes complaints as the amounts involved are small. She is being treated roughly and in an insulting manner. She claims that an expense of Rs 1300/- incurred by her due to the above reasons may be reimbursed to her.

The DISCOM, in their reply pointed out that the billing is accurate but that there may have been a lack of proper verbal behaviour by the person assigned by them to deal with such grievances. It appears that a third party had been contracted by the DISCOM to attend to such grievances and some particular person has not been behaving courteously with the complainant. It is seen from the bills that the amounts involved are small but they are seen as large by the complainant because she is from a low income category. It is possible that the small amounts being contested by the Appellant are being seen by the DISCOM's nominee as an irritation and hence the allegation of discourteous behaviour.

The fact that the Appellant is an economically weak customer does not change the fact she must receive the same courtesy and consideration as a bigger and more prosperous customer. The small size of her bill and the small size of the amount objected to should not lead to a lack of courteous treatment. Since no fault can be found with the actual billing except that the DISCOM should respond to the customer's request to take readings at fixed intervals rather than at random intervals, the DISCOM undertook to look into the instance of discourteous behaviour and improve this aspect of customer interaction.

Given the fact that Smt. Bhagavathi Iyer, the Appellant should have received better treatment, which would have made it unnecessary to approach the CGRE or to file an appeal to the Ombudsman, it would be in the fitness of things if an amount of Rs. 100/- is paid by the DISCOM to her for the above inconvenience caused. The bill must also be issued on regular intervals henceforth, based on regular readings. The appeal is disposed off with above directions.


(PRADEEP SINGH)
OMBUDSMAN

24th September, 2012