

## STATE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN

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### REPRESENTATION No: P 121/2010

Appellant: Fr Vicar

St Joseph's Church

Udayanapuram, Vaikom

Respondent: Kerala State Electricity Board

*Represented by*

The Assistant Executive Engineer

Electrical Sub Division Vaikom

### ORDER

Fr Vicar of St Joseph's Church, Udayanapuram, Vaikom submitted a representation on 27.01.2010 seeking the following relief:

*Declare that the Bill no: 138801 dated 24.07.2009 for an amount of Rs 20317/- is not payable by the Consumer Number 1183 Appellant*

Counter statement of the Respondent was obtained and hearing conducted on 12.05.2010 and 11.8.2010. The Appellant pointed out that the average consumption of the above consumer was 221 units per bi-month. But the consumption recorded for the period from 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2009 to 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2009 was 3499 units and the connected invoice was for an amount of Rs 20800/-. When the Appellant raised disputes on the demand the meter was tested with a parallel meter by the Respondent and found working ok. The meter was sent for testing in the Meter testing laboratory of KSEB. They found that the meter was working normally and errors are within limits. The Respondent was not prepared to cancel the demand. The Appellant approached the CGRF Kottarakkara who also upheld the findings of KSEB. The representation with the pleas noted above is submitted to the under signed in the above back ground.

The Appellant states that the high reading and bill has come about due to errors in the meter. They had not increased their consumption for any purposes in the periods under question. The error might be due to breaking of neutral conductor in the second week of April 2009 and consequent over voltage. The error could also be due to wrong recording of the registering mechanism consequent to lightning. Since the ELCB is working properly leakage could be ruled out. On verification of the average values prior to and after the periods under dispute, it would be clear that the abnormal consumption recorded in May 2009 is wrong.

The Respondent argues that the meter was subjected to test in the premises itself by connecting a good meter in parallel. No abnormality was noticed. Since the consumer was not satisfied the meter was sent to test at KSEB Testing Laboratory Pallom. Their

test certificate shows that the meter was working properly. The premises were inspected by the Respondent on 24.10.2009 as per directions during the CGRF hearing. During inspection it was seen that the connected load of the consumer was actually 3490 W against the registered CL of 1000W. More over it was seen that some wires were seen taken through PVC pipes under ground in the outside for lighting flood lights and illuminations during 'perunnal' season. These connections and wiring was not in standard condition which might have resulted in earth leakage. It was also reported that if the digits jump due to some error only one digit may jump .In this case three digits have changed position. The consumer has stated that during April 2009 their electrical equipments had burned due to over voltage etc consequent to neutral failure. If such a development had taken place other consumers in the area would also be affected. KSEB was not aware of such incidents. This shows that internal faults had developed during the period resulting in wastage of electricity through earth leakage etc.

This is essentially a dispute over the accuracy of the energy meter and correctness of the readings. The Appellant has no case that the readings recorded were not correct. The contention of the Appellant is that the meter should have become erroneous to show such an abnormal consumption. The best course to decide upon the accuracy and errors on the meter is to refer the matter to Electrical Inspector for testing in their Laboratory.

Directions were given to the Respondent during the sitting on 12.5.2010 to get the meter tested by the Electrical Inspector in their Laboratory . The report of the Electrical Inspector Kottayam was received on 25.7.2010. The Electrical Inspector reported that the errors were within tolerable limits. A copy of the report was sent to the Appellant and the Appellant was again heard on 11.8.2010. The Appellant had no other points to make and pleaded for maximum allowable reliefs.

Hence I have to conclude that the abnormal consumption recorded in the energy meter was due to actual flow of energy, probably due to leakage or other forms of wastage. Here the Licensee is empowered to realize charges for the energy recorded in the meter. But the Appellant being a religious worship centre, interest shall be waived during the period in which the matter was under dispute.

Orders:

Under the circum stances explained above and after carefully examining all the evidences, arguments and points furnished by the Appellant and Respondent on the matter, the representation is disposed off with the following orders:

1. *The representation being devoid of merits stands dismissed.*
2. *The Appellant shall be allowed 21 days time from the date of this order to remit the amounts due. The respondent shall not collect interest for the dues from the date of invoice until the above date.*
3. *No order on costs.*

Dated this the 12<sup>th</sup> day of August 2010 ,

P.PARAMESWARAN  
Electricity Ombudsman

No P 121 /2010/ 643 / dated 12.8.2010

Forwarded to: 1. Fr Vicar  
St Joseph's Church  
Udayanapuram, Vaikom

2. The Assistant Executive Engineer  
Electrical Sub Division KSEB Vaikom

Copy to :

1. The Secretary,  
Kerala State Electricity Regulatory Commission  
KPFC Bhavanam, Vellayambalam,  
Thiruvananthapuram 695010
2. The Secretary ,KSE Board,  
VaidyuthiBhavanam ,Thiruvananthapuram 695004
3. The Chairman , CGRF,KSE Board ,Kottarakkara