

BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN
(For the State of Goa and Union Territories)
Under Section 42 (6) of the Electricity Act, 2003
3rd Floor, Plot No. 55-56, Udyog Vihar - Phase IV, Sector 18
Gurugram (Haryana) 122015,
Email ID: ombudsman.jercuts@gov.in
Phone No.:0124-4684708

Appeal No-245 of 2025

Date of Video Conferencing: 08.10.2025 and
15.10.2025

Date of Order: 23.10.2025

In the matter of

Shri Jay Prakash Mishra
House No. 13, Radhey Kunj,
AHW Colony, Austinabad,
South Andaman,
Andaman & Nicobar Island.

... Appellant

VERSUS

The Executive Engineer (HQ),
Electricity Department,
Andaman & Nicobar Island,
Vijay Puram.

The Assistant Engineer III,
Electricity Department,
Andaman & Nicobar Island,
Vijay Puram.

....Respondent(s)

Appellant(s)

Shri Jay Prakash Mishra in person.

Respondents(s)

Mrs Madhuri Shukla,
Superintending Engineer

Mr Navin Lal
Assistant Engineer-III,
Andaman and Nicobar Island



ORDER

Shri Jay Prakash Mishra, resident of House No. 13, Radhey Kunj, AHW Colony, Austinabad, South Andaman, Andaman & Nicobar Island, filed this representation on 28.08.2025 (through email) under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003, read with Regulations 35 and 36 of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum and Ombudsman) Regulations, 2024. The Appellant has challenged the order dated 22.05.2025 issued by the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF), Andaman & Nicobar Island, in Case No. 01/2025, and seeks redress against the billing discrepancies against connection No H2/4648 installed at House No. 13, Radhey Kunj, AHW Colony, Austinabad, South Andaman, Andaman & Nicobar Island.

The undersigned exercises jurisdiction under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003, read with Regulation 36 of the above Regulations. The representation, being an appeal against the decision of the CGRF, Andaman and Nicobar Island, is maintainable before this Authority, subject to compliance with the prescribed limitation.

After thoroughly examining the complaint and completing the due process, this office issued the admission notice on 29.08.2025. This office also forwarded a copy of the complaint to the Respondent, Executive Engineer (HQ), Electricity Department, A&Ni Administration, Sri Vijayapuram, and directed him to file a reply to the appeal submitted by the Appellant, Shri Jay Prakash Mishra, through letter dated 29.08.2025.

A. Submission by the Appellant:

The Appellant, Shri Jay Prakash Mishra, Consumer No. H2/4648, resident of AHW Colony, Austinabad, South Andaman, submitted that he is aggrieved by the decision of the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) and the inaction of the Electricity Department in resolving the persistent billing discrepancies in respect of his three-phase domestic electricity connection since 2019.



The Appellant stated that he has been continuously raising his grievances before the CGRF and the Department since 2019 through several representations, review petitions, and follow-up communications. Despite departmental responses, the issue remains unresolved, causing him undue financial and mental distress. He has enclosed copies of all communications and replies for reference.

The Appellant submitted that:

- a. He had, vide letters dated 10.04.2025 and 29.04.2025, sought reimbursement of excess charges allegedly paid since 2019 due to meter discrepancies.
- b. In his review petition dated 27.06.2025, he pointed out non-compliance with the CGRF order dated 22.05.2025 and enclosed documentary evidence highlighting discrepancies between AMI (Smart Meter) data and billed units.
- c. The Department, in its response dated 08.07.2025, attributed the discrepancies to multiple meter replacements (March 2021, 24.05.2023, and 20.01.2025) and alleged that some data pertained to another consumer.
- d. The Department's compliance letter dated 06.08.2025 admitted that several meter changes had taken place and that the consumer account reflected old GP numbers incorrectly, but no clear relief was provided.
- e. The Appellant produced proof showing that the meter bearing GP No. 7802429 was reportedly installed on 24.05.2023, while the ESL readings reflect consumption data for the same meter number between May 2021 and June 2022, which he contends is technically impossible.

The Appellant submitted that his original bills since 2019 have consistently reflected the same meter number, whereas the Department's records show the following replacements:

- GP No. 7801193 — replaced in March 2021;
- GP No. 7802429 — installed on 24.05.2023;
- GP No. 7800867 — installed on 20.01.2025.

The Appellant contended that despite these replacements, there have been wide and unexplained fluctuations in the billed units and URJA PAY data from March 2021 onwards. He particularly pointed out that even after installation of the new meter (GP No. 7800867) in January 2025, the monthly units from January to July 2025



continued to vary significantly, though his consumption pattern and number of appliances remained the same. He stated that the cumulative difference between AMI-recorded units and billed units amounts to 11,584.08 units, resulting in inflated billing.

The Appellant stated that the Department claims to have implemented smart metering but continues to take manual meter readings at regular intervals. He contended that such a practice undermines the reliability of the billing process and raises doubts regarding the integrity of the recorded consumption data. He further submitted that he receives messages through the URJA PAY portal pertaining to A/C No. J/7445, which, according to him, does not belong to him.

The Appellant further submitted that the Department ignored his repeated requests for authentic documentary proof of meter installations and removals and failed to clarify how it maintained billing continuity under the same meter number during the period of alleged replacements. He requested that the Department reinstall the meter at an appropriate and consumer-friendly height and location in compliance with the applicable regulations. He therefore prayed that the Ombudsman direct the Department to rectify the billing discrepancies and take corrective action in accordance with law.

The Appellant therefore prayed for the following reliefs:

- I. A direction to conduct an independent audit and reconciliation of consumption and billing data from 2019 till date, comparing AMI (Smart Meter) data, ESL readings, URJA PAY records, and monthly bills.
- II. A direction to the Department to produce authenticated installation and removal reports for all meters associated with his account.
- III. Refund or adjustment of excess amounts, if found due, along with applicable interest and suitable compensation for prolonged hardship.
- IV. Suspension of recovery of disputed amounts pending audit, or alternatively, permission to pay in installments over at least one year.
- V. Direction to reinstall the meter at a standard location and to discontinue unnecessary manual readings when AMI data is available.
- VI. Correction of erroneous linkage of his consumer account with A/C No. J/7445.

The Appellant submitted that the continuous issuance of inflated bills, reliance on unverified manual readings, and failure to reconcile AMI data constitute procedural lapses and violate the consumer protection framework. He maintained that these lapses warrant appropriate corrective and compensatory directions from this Hon'ble Authority.

B. Submission by the Respondent:

The Respondent, Executive Engineer (HQ), Electricity Department, Andaman & Nicobar Administration, submitted that the grievance raised by the Appellant Shri Jay Prakash Mishra pertains to alleged billing discrepancies in respect of Consumer No. H2/4648, located at AHW Colony, Austinabad, South Andaman. The Respondent stated that the Department prepared all bills strictly based on actual readings, verified meter data, and applicable tariff provisions.

The Respondent clarified that the Appellant's account has undergone several meter replacements as part of the smart metering and system upgradation process, which may have led to temporary data mismatches during migration. The Department's system records the following sequence of meter changes

- GP No. 7801193 — replaced in March 2021 due to technical fault; (Display problem)
- GP No. 7802429 — installed on 24.05.2023 after the earlier meter became defective; (Display problem)
- GP No. 7800867 — installed on 20.01.2025.

The Respondent stated that the Department replaced each meter in accordance with the prescribed procedure and prepared proper installation and removal reports, which it updated in the billing system. The Department clarified that any delay in system synchronization did not affect billing accuracy, since officials later validated the consumption data.

The Respondent stated that the Department prepares bills for the account using cumulative meter readings received from the Energy Service Provider (ESL) through the AMI network. When AMI data becomes unavailable because of communication failure or network outage, departmental staff take manual readings to ensure



continuous billing and prevent arrears. The Department follows its prescribed guidelines for this process.

The Respondent denied the Appellant's contention that the same meter number appeared throughout his billing history despite replacements.

The Respondent explained that the system sometimes retains old GP numbers in bills for continuity until the next billing cycle, after which the Department updates the new number. The Respondent emphasized that such display errors do not affect unit computation or billing accuracy.

Regarding the allegation of discrepancies between AMI (Smart Meter) data and billed units, the Respondent stated that apparent differences occur because AMI data records consumption in 15-minute intervals, while the Department calculates bills from cumulative monthly readings after applying the sanctioned load and tariff category. Therefore, AMI raw data and billed figures are not directly comparable

The Respondent further submitted that the Department has verified that the consumption recorded for Consumer No. H2/4648 corresponds to the installed meters at the said premises, and no instance of data mixing with any other account, including A/C No. J/7445 has been established. Occasional URJA PAY message errors are attributable to software synchronization issues, not to any physical interlinking of consumer accounts.

The Respondent submitted that there has been no undue or inflated billing. Each bill is system-generated, reviewed by the billing section, and duly supported by meter reading data. Moreover, the consumer has been regularly paying his bills without interruption until recent months, which itself reflects his acknowledgment of the accuracy of charges.

The Respondent stated that the request for an audit of bills from 2019 onwards is not justified, as most of the data prior to 2021 pertains to old meters already verified at the time of replacement. Nevertheless, the Department remains willing to recheck and reconcile the readings from May 2023 onwards (after installing smart meter GP No. 7802429) to ensure full transparency.



The Respondent maintained that the Department acted in good faith and followed due process under the JERC (State of Goa and Union Territories) Electricity Supply Code and relevant departmental circulars.

Therefore, the Department is of considered view that there is no deficiency of service and committed no violation of consumer rights.

The Respondent thus prayed that the appeal may kindly be dismissed as devoid of merit and that the Department's actions and billing procedures be upheld as proper and in accordance with law.

C. Proceedings:

Hearing on 08.10.2025:

The Forum noted the Appellant's grievance regarding multiple meter replacements for identical display defects, communication failure in smart meters, and discrepancies in billing.

The record shows that the Appellant withheld bill payments from February 2025 onwards pending resolution of the dispute.

This Office allows the appeal filed by the Appellant to the limited extent.

The Forum heard the Respondent's submissions, including installation of a check meter, rectification of previous meters, manual readings in the shadow area, and explanations regarding apparent discrepancies.

The Forum examined downloaded data from the current meter and verified that the Department followed due procedure for meter replacements and billing.

The Forum directed the Respondent to:

- (a) Examine 5–6 nearby premises with similar three-phase smart meters to verify whether similar communication or billing issues occur. The Junior Engineer (JE) shall conduct joint inspections with the Appellant, take photographs, and collect consumption data from 2021–2025 for those connections.
- (b) Trace the current installation locations of meters GP Nos. 7801193 and 7802429, verify their performance, and submit meter-reading details along with meter health reports.



The Respondent shall submit both reports on or before 13thOctober 2025. The Department shall not take any coercive action against the Appellant until the next hearing.

The Forum scheduled the next hearing for 15thOctober 2025 at 12:00 Noon via video conferencing. The Respondent shall ensure the presence of an authorized EESL representative and bring all relevant records pertaining to Consumer No. H2/4648.

Hearing on 15.10.2025:

During the joint inspection of the Appellant's premises, the Department confirmed that no other meter in the area experienced communication failure. The Forum observed that the non-communication issue occurs only at the Appellant's premises. The Appellant reiterated his earlier submissions regarding erratic consumption recorded by the Department.

The Respondent acknowledged the communication issue at the Appellant's premises and stated that the Department will coordinate with the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) to resolve it.

The Forum reviewed and discussed the reading chart submitted by the Respondent in detail. The Forum directs the Department to submit the reading chart for Consumer No. H2/4648 in an Excel sheet so that it can analyze the data further. The Appellant confirmed that he agrees to pay the outstanding electricity charges in installments.

D. Findings and Analysis

Before examining the issue of billing discrepancies relating to Consumer No. H2/4648, I consider it necessary to record certain foundational observations. Without a proper understanding of these basic aspects, the issue at hand cannot be resolved coherently.

In the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Electricity Department provides every consumer with an individual energy meter to record consumption and a unique consumer number. The consumer number remains static and permanent throughout the existence of the connection. The Department tags every installed meter to the respective consumer number immediately upon installation.



When a meter becomes defective, the Department replaces it with a functional one. The Department records all details of such replacement and maintains the complete meter replacement history against the same consumer number. Thus, even though the meter changes from time to time, the consumer number remains constant and acts as the permanent identifier of the connection.

In the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the Department often replaces defective meters with repaired meters when new meters are unavailable. The Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) repairs these meters and resets their readings to "0" before reuse. Both the Electricity Department and the OEM maintain corresponding records of such repairs and installations.

In the present case, the Department installed Meter No. 7801193 for Consumer No. H2/4648, registered in the name of Shri Jay Prakash Mishra, resident of Austinabad, Sri Vijay Puram, on 27.02.2021. When this meter developed a display defect in 2023, the Department replaced it with Meter No. 7802429 on 24.05.2023. The Department simultaneously removed Meter No. 7801193.

Subsequently, Meter No. 7802429 also developed a display defect. The Department replaced it with Meter No. 7800867 on 20.01.2025 and removed Meter No. 7802429. In each instance, the OEM repaired and reset the replaced meter to "0" before its reinstallation elsewhere.

The appellant earlier approached the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF), Andaman and Nicobar Islands, through Appeal No. ANI/CG No. 01/2025 dated 11.04.2025. The Ld. CGRF issued its order on 22.05.2025. Dissatisfied with the decision, the appellant filed a review petition on 27.06.2025. The Ld. CGRF disposed of the review petition through its order dated 28.07.2025.

These factual details establish the sequence of meter replacements, the tagging of each meter to the same consumer number, and the maintenance of meter history by the Department. With this foundation, the analysis of the billing discrepancy issue can now proceed.

After examining the submissions made by both parties and the records placed on file. The following issues arise for determination in this case:

- a. Whether any inconsistency exists in the billing of Consumer No. H2/4648.



- b. Whether any discrepancy exists in the billing against Connection No. H2/4648.
- c. Whether any difference exists between the recorded meter readings and the AMI smart meter readings.
- d. Whether any issue exists regarding meter communication.

The Appellant raised the issue of billing discrepancies against his connection No. H2/4648 and sought revision of bills for the period from March 2021 to July 2025. The Respondent Electricity Department submitted para-wise comments through letter No. EE/HQ/Tech/29B/2025/1340 dated 01.10.2025. The Department stated that it replaced the Appellant's meter in February 2021, May 2023, and January 2025. On two occasions—May 2023 and January 2025—the Department replaced the meter due to a fault in the display. The Appellant also raised concerns regarding meter communication; however, this issue ceased after the installation of Meter No. 7800867 on 20.01.2025. The reading pattern from January 2025 to June 2025 confirms that no communication issue persisted after this replacement.

The Appellant submitted a comparative reading chart for the period from February 2022 to February 2023, alleging significant variation between the readings recorded by the Electricity Department and the AMI smart meter data. In support of this claim, he produced two sheets of unsigned and unverified meter reading records of Meter No. 7802429. The submitted chart indicates that the said meter did not record any consumption from June 2022 to February 2023. However, during this period, Meter No. 7801193 existed at the Appellant's premises. The reading chart of Meter No. 7801193 shows an incremental consumption pattern, with readings of 15113 on 01.02.2022 and 21000 on 30.08.2022. The meter stopped functioning thereafter, and the Department replaced it on 24.05.2023 with Meter No. 7802429.

The records further show that Meter No. 7802429 had previously been installed elsewhere before repair and was later assigned to Consumer No. H2/4648 on 24.05.2023. The reading chart reflects "0" reading on 01.05.2023, confirming that the meter became operational against the said connection only after 24.05.2023. Therefore, comparing the reading data of Meter No. 7802429 for the period from February 2022 to February 2023 has no relevance, as this meter did not exist against the Appellant's connection during that time.



Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2021	1000	1018	1467	1083	1259	1626	1128	1106	1010	1174	0	0
2022	3588	981	1229	1303	1200	1247	600	308	100	336	248	228
2023	271	249	249	256	641	700	705	710	888	950	965	962
2024	1000	1010	800	700	250	310	350	400	450	450	450	460
2025	651	984	1275	996	659	380	845	486				

Reading chart of consumer No. H2/4548

The consolidated meter reading chart for the period from 2021 to July 2025 shows a consistent consumption pattern between January–May and June–December in each year. A single spike appears in the recorded consumption of 3588 units, which resulted from accumulated readings for November and December 2021 and January 2022, since the readings for November and December 2021 were “0”. The consumption during 2023 appears comparatively lower, but in all other years (2021, 2022, 2024, and 2025), the consumption remains consistent across both half-yearly periods.

Regarding the Appellant’s contention that the Electricity Department failed to comply with the orders of the Learned CGRF, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the records contradict this claim. The Department submitted compliance reports through letters No. EL/JE/PP-1/1-20/2025/81 dated 09.06.2025 and No. EL/JE/PP-1/1-20/2025/150 dated 06.08.2025. These submissions establish that the Department complied with the directions issued by the Forum.

A joint inspection to the neighborhood premises where three phase smart meters are installed was recommended in the hearing dated 8.10.2025 to ascertain if they are also facing any communication issue. The Respondents vide their letter dated 11.10.2025 submitted their joint inspection report. As per their joint report, they inspected the meters of consumer Nos. H2/4814, H2/4548, and H2/8090 and found



that the meter for consumer No. H2/4548 did not communicate, while the other two meters communicated properly.

It is further observed that the Ombudsman's jurisdiction under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003, is confined to addressing consumer grievances arising from the decisions of the CGRF. This Authority does not reassess technical readings unless supported by credible and verified data. In the present matter, the records placed on file fail to establish any manifest billing error or procedural irregularity attributable to the Department.

E. Conclusion and Directions

Both parties got adequate opportunity to present their case during the hearings on 08.10.2025 and 15.10.2025, conducted through video conferencing.

After examining the pleadings, documents, and meter reading data submitted by both parties, I find that the Department replaced the consumer's meter on multiple occasions due to display-related defects. The latest installation of Meter No. 7800867 on 20.01.2025 resolved the communication issues that existed earlier. The consumption pattern recorded since January 2025 confirms normal meter performance and proper communication of readings through the AMI system.

The comparison charts submitted by the Appellant for the period from February 2022 to February 2023 do not establish any credible inconsistency in billing, as Meter No. 7802429 did not exist against his connection during that time. The Department's records clearly show that the said meter became functional against Consumer No. H2/4648 only on 24.05.2023. Hence, the comparison between the AMI data and manual readings for that earlier period has no evidentiary value.

The consumption pattern from 2021 to July 2025 demonstrates reasonable consistency, with only one exceptional increase in recorded units for the period November 2021 to January 2022, which resulted from accumulated readings. The variation in consumption during 2023 appears minor and does not indicate any systemic billing anomaly.

The Department has also produced documentary evidence showing compliance with the orders of the Learned CGRF, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, through its



communications dated 09.06.2025 and 06.08.2025. These documents confirm that the Department implemented the directions issued by the Forum.

In view of the above findings, I hold that the appeal is devoid of substantive merit except to the limited extent noted herein.

The following directions are therefore issued in exercise of powers conferred under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003:

1. The appeal is allowed to the limited extent indicated in this order.
2. The orders of the Learned CGRF, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, in Case No. ANI/CG 01/2025 dated 22.05.2025 and review order dated 28.07.2025 are upheld to that extent.
3. The Department shall continue to monitor the performance of Meter No. 7800867 and ensure uninterrupted transmission of AMI data.
4. The Department shall ensure that any future meter replacement follows proper documentation, sealing, and acknowledgment by the consumer.
5. The Appellant shall cooperate with the Department to relocate the meter at a readable and regulation-compliant height to maintain proper communication and accessibility.
6. The Ombudsman permits the Appellant to clear the outstanding dues in six equal monthly instalments along with the current consumption charges.
7. The evidence and analysis presented herein do not justify any further revision of past bills.

With these directions, the representation stands disposed of.

Dated: 23.10.2025


23.10.25
(C M Sharma)

Ombudsman JERC
For the State of Goa and UT's