

Territorial Jurisdiction: State of Jharkhand

AUTHORITY OF THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN: JHARKHAND

Present: Gopal Kumar Roy
Electricity Ombudsman
2nd Floor, Rajendra Jawan Bhawan
Main Road, Ranchi- 834001.

Dated- Ranchi, The 7th day of August'2025

Appeal No. EOJ/03 of 2025

(Arising out of order passed in Case no.05 of 2024 by the learned VUSNF, Ranchi)

Sudhansu Bhushan Choudhary represented by Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh, son of Sri Chittaranjan Singh, resident of Sri Sai Niketan Apartment, Behind Shiv Mandir, Kokar, P.O. & P.S.- Kokar, District – Ranchi, Consumer No. KRK8690, K No. 16012106971

----- Petitioner

Versus.

1. Jharkhand State Electricity Board, through its Chairman, officiating at Engineering Bhawan, H.E.C. Township, P.O. & P.S. Dhurwa, District- Ranchi.
2. Executive Engineer, Electricity Supply Division-Kokar, P.O. & P.S. Kokar, District- Ranchi.
3. Assistant Electrical Engineer, Electricity Supply Sub-Division – Kokar, P.O. & P.S. Kokar, District- Ranchi.
4. Junior Engineer, Electricity Supply Sub-Division - Kokar, P.O. & P.S.- Kokar, District - Ranchi.

----- Respondents.

Counsel/Representative

On behalf of Appellant: Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh, the petitioner himself.

ORDER

1. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh has filed this appeal under clause 15 of the JSERC (Guidelines for Establishment of Forum for Redressal of Grievances of the Consumers, Electricity Ombudsman and Consumer Advocacy) Regulations, 2020. Dr. Singh has filed the appeal as the representative of consumer Sudhansu Bhushan Choudhary.

It is relevant to mention here that Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh is not the consumer of electricity connection no. KRK 8690. The connection is registered in the name of one Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary. Dr. Singh has claimed, in an affidavit, that - "I am the holder of Consumer No. KRK 8690, K-No-16012106971 vide EIJ Case No. 03/2025" (It is relevant to mention here that EOJ No. 03/2025 is the registration number of this appeal)

2. The record is at the stage of admission. Dr. Singh was directed to produce a few relevant documents vide order sheet dated 12.6.2025. After giving opportunities to Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh to file documents and on his request, the case is fixed for passing order on the point of admission.

3. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh has sought for followings reliefs in this appeal:

For setting aside Bill No. 924402014269920827 wherein a demand of Rs.1,47,444 has been made from the Petitioner, for the months of April 2025. Commanding the Respondent to issue a fresh bill after deducting the amount which has been wrongly assessed and prepare the fresh bill on the basis of average meter reading of the last six months. Commanding upon the Respondent to issue fresh bill after waving off the Delay Payment Surcharge (DPS) which has been leveled upon the petitioner. Commanding the Respondents to issue a fresh bill upon the Petitioner after adjusting the entire excess sum paid by the Petitioner in the past under protest. Commanding upon the Respondents to pay adequate compensation to the Petitioner for the difficulty and harassment suffered by him due to deficiency in service provided by the Respondents.

4. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh has not sought for the relief to set aside the Order dated 1.1.2025 passed by the learned VUSNF, Ranchi in Case No. 05 of 2024 for the reasons best known to him.

5. The operative portion of Order of the learned Vidyut Upbhokta Shikayat Niwaran Forum (VUSNF), Ranchi in Case No. 05 of 2024 on 20.12.2024 :

“This Forum is of the view that the new incumbent of the premises should first upon clear the outstanding dues and then apply for fresh connection in his name being a consumer. This Forum also finds that civil liabilities of the house also shift with its right of entitlement to the person who has become the first owner of his house. So this Forum concurs with the view of the counsel of respondent and his right as consumer is not maintainable here in this Forum and hence the complaint of petitioner is hereby dismissed.”

6. Grounds of Appeal:

Dr. Sanjeev Kr. Singh has not shown any grounds for appeal in his memo of appeal. He has not disclosed any reason as to how the consumer (Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary) is dis-satisfied with the order of the learned VUSNF, Ranchi.

7. Memo of Appeal :

Since Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh has not taken any ground for appeal, I feel expedient to bring forward the memo of appeal. It reads as follow:

The Petitioner is a private individual and a citizen of India. Petitioner is the resident of 203, Shri Sai Niketan Apartment, Behind Shiv Mandir, Kokar, Ranchi, Jharkhand, Pin – 834001, having electricity consumer number KRK8690. The electricity meter is in the name of the former flat owner, Mr. Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary. While the meter reader of the electricity department was taking the reading for the month of May 2022, petitioner was informed by him that there was an unexpected jump in the reading and the necessary software to print the bill for such a high reading was not available in the machine available with him, giving this reason he did not give the electricity bill to the petitioner. The petitioner wrote a letter to the Assistant Electrical engineer, Electrical Sub

Division, Kokar on 11.07.2022 to resolve the problem. Where after, an employee of the electricity department came and inspected the meter and assured that the complaint of the petitioner would be resolved soon. 15.10.2022, the reading of the same meter was taken by the meter reader of the electricity department and the petitioner was given a bill (No. 924402014247865134) for Rs. 81,317/-. That the perusal of the bill shows that in about five months since the last reading (dated 07.05.2022), the petitioner had used a total of One Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Five (1255) units of electricity, which is equivalent to monthly average expenditure. In lieu of such consumption, the petitioner should have got a bill of only Six Thousand One Hundred Sixty Three (Rs. 6,163/-) after deducting the grant amount of Two thousand Five Hundred Seventy Two (Rs.2,572/-), but the respondent after adding an additional amount of Rs. Seventy five thousand one hundred fifty four (Rs. 75,154/-) a bill of Rs. Eighty one thousand three hundred and seventeen (Rs.81,317/-) has been given to the petitioner. Regarding this additional amount, the petitioner was told that this amount has been charged to him in lieu of the difference in meter reading. The petitioner again on 16.10.2022 made a representation before Assistant Electrical Engineer requested to solve the above problem. But even after this, the bill of the petitioner was not corrected and in the subsequent bills sent to him, he was not given the benefit of the grant and in addition due to delay in payment by him, he was also charged Delay Payment Surcharge (DPS). The dues of the petitioner kept on increasing and on 30.01.2023 the electricity supply to the flat of the petitioner was disconnected. The petitioner contacted the then Junior Electrical Engineer about this issue over phone and explained to him the reason for such a due in detail and assured that the petitioner shall definitely pay the outstanding amount after his bill was rectified. But the petitioner was directed to make some partial payment towards the dues only then the electricity supply to the petitioner shall be restored. The petitioner was forced to pay ten thousand rupees (Rs.10,000/-) and reconnection charges of four hundred rupees (Rs.400/-) against the dues which the petitioner paid under protest and then the

electricity supply to the flat the petitioner was restored. That even after this, neither the bill of the petitioner was corrected nor was the meter checked. The increased amount, after depriving the petitioner of the benefit of grant and adding DPS, the petitioner was given bills and alleging that the payment was pending, the electricity supply to the flat of the petitioner was again disconnected on 30.03.2023. This time the petitioner met the Executive engineer, Electricity Division, Kokar and complained about the matter by giving him an application. On the said application, he ordered the Assistant Engineer to restore the power supply by charging Rs.5,000/- and re – connection charges. The petitioner got his electricity connection restored by paying the above amount. The executive Engineer also instructed the petitioner to deposit the meter challenge fee. The petitioner deposited the above fee on 11.04.2023. Thereafter the petitioner bought a new meter and got it installed by the department employee and submitted the old meter to the office of Junior Engineer, electricity, Kokar Chowk for testing. On 17.07.2023, Junior Engineer, Electricity sent the meter to the laboratory located at Doranda for testing. Meanwhile, on 11.11.2023, the petitioner received a disconnection notice and again on 28.12.2023, the electricity supply to the flat of the petitioner was disconnected. His connection was again restored on his verbal request. On 02.01.2024, the petitioner received a report from the inspection office at Doranda that the meter was absolutely fine. The petitioner on 16.01.2024 again wrote a letter to the Assistant electrical engineer for making corrections in the electricity bill along with the meter inspection report and also gave its copy to the Executive engineer, but no action has been taken yet. The electricity department has not been able to settle this matter that has been going on for almost two years, and is regularly sending the petitioner electricity bills worth lakhs of rupees. When admittedly the petitioner has used only one thousand two hundred fifty five (1255) units of electricity then a bill (No. 924402014247865134) for Rs. 81,317/- is highly disproportionate and by no stretch of imagination such huge amount can be demanded from the petitioner. The respondent on the one hand has wrongly calculated

the bill amount and on the other hand has also stopped the government grant and in addition they are also charging Delay Payment Surcharge (DPS) from the petitioner. The petitioner goes to the department with his grievances he is asked to first clear his dues. The petitioner states that by no stretch of imagination the bill of the petitioner could be such exorbitant and the same shall be evident from the bills issued at the beginning. The petitioner represented before the respondent authorities in person seeking explanation of the bill, he was threatened that if the bill is not paid in time, the electricity supply shall be discontinued. The aforesaid conduct on the part of the respondents amounts to gross deficiency in service. Due to such irresponsible behavior on the part of the Respondents, the petitioner is suffering physically, mentally and financially since the last 2 years. A huge sum has been excessively paid by the petitioner towards defective billing generated / issued from the month of May 2014 to till date and the same is yet to be adjusted by the respondents. The respondents have acted in a most arbitrary manner and have harassed the petitioner to a great extent.

8. Directions given to Dr. Sanjev Kumar Singh vide order sheet dated 12.6.2025 by this Authority of the Electricity Ombudsman :

The relevant portion of order sheet reads as follows:- Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh has presented himself as the REPRESENTATIVE of one Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary, before the learned VUSNF, Ranchi and before this Authority of Electricity Ombudsman. It appears from the record that Dr. Sanjeev Kr. Singh has filed a complaint before the learned VUSNF, Ranchi in representative capacity and also filed this appeal in the same capacity. To file a case in representative capacity, the applicant is mandatorily required:- (i) To obtain LEAVE of the learned Forum to file & proceed with the case for other aggrieved persons. (ii) To file an 'Authority Letter' of the other 'Aggrieved' person to make the Judgement / order binding upon him. (The provision of Order I Rule 8 of the Civil Procedure Code may be referred to). Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh is directed to furnish the authority letter of

Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary to represent his case before the learned VUSNF, Ranchi and also before the Electricity Ombudsman, Jharkhand.

FINDINGS

9. The first and foremost question which comes to my mind is who is the “APPELLANT” in this appeal. The other series of questions comes to my mind as to : - (i) who is the consumer of consumer no. KRK 8690, (ii) what is the status of Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh in this appeal and (iii) what grievances the consumer has on the order of the learned VUSNF, Ranchi?

On going through the Memo of Appeal, I find that one Sudhansu Bhushan Choudhary has been projected as the ‘Appellant’ of this appeal but he has not come forward before this Authority of Electricity Ombudsman. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh has claimed himself as the “Representative” of Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary but without obtaining any authority from him.

Dr. Singh was directed to furnish the authority letter of Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary to represent his (Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary)case before the Electricity Ombudsman. Dr. Singh has failed to produce the required authority letter. He has simply produced a declaration of Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary made on 26.6.2025 at Ranchi, which reads as follow:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I, Shudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary hereby declare that :-

1. I sold our flat no.203, Sri Sai Niketan aptts, behind Shiv Mandir, Kokar, Ranchi to Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh on 13/08/2018.
2. I had cleared my electricity dues before the sale of the flat, as mandatorily required.
- 3.Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh, in his present capacity of the sole proprietor of the property, is liable to pay the electricity bills of consumer no. KRK 8690, from the date of sale of the property.

4. I have no objection whatsoever, if the name registered in consumer no. KRK 8690 is converted in the name of Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh, and also **he is authorized to represent me in any dispute or in case the name has not yet been changed.** (emphasis supplied by bolding)

10. Dr. Singh was specifically directed to comply with the order dated 26.6.2025 and file “Authority Letter “ of Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary to conduct this appeal, but he has failed to produce the letter and insisted that the Authority of Electricity Ombudsman to pass an order on the basis of the materials available on record. The Memo of Appeal is silent about the grievances of consumer and reason for dis-satisfaction of consumer from the Order of the learned VUSNF, Ranchi. The Memo of Appeal says that Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary is a consumer of the Jharkhand Bijli Vitran Nigam Limited but he is not in frame in this appeal. Since, the appeal is at the stage of admission itself, I am not entering into the merit of the case no. 05/2024 disposed of by the learned VUSNF, Ranchi on 20.12.2024.

The chit of paper, issued by Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary, says that the consumer has no objection if Dr. Sajeev Kumar Singh takes steps for changing the consumer's name. It is not an authority letter of Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary authorising Dr. Sajeev Kumar Singh to file an appeal before the Electricity Ombudsman on his behalf. Till now, I don't find any document on record to confirm that Dr. Sajeev Kumar Singh is the authorised person and the representative of the consumer Sudhanshu Bhushan Choudhary to file this appeal.

11. In view of my findings and comments made above, it is therefore

ORDERED

that since there exists technical error, the appeal be and the same is

DROPPED

on technical grounds. To protect the interest of the consumer and/or the representative from the clutches of the limitation as prescribed in Clause 15 of the Jharkhand State Electricity Regulatory Commission (Guidelines for Establishment of Forum for Redressal of Grievances of the Consumers, Electricity Ombudsman and Consumer Advocacy) Regulations, 2020, an opportunity is being given to them to furnish the required documents before this Authority of the Electricity Ombudsman, Jharkhand.

Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Singh is at liberty to get the appeal restored within a period of 30 days from today by removing the defects as have been pointed out and filing a restoration petition on affidavit.

There shall be no order of costs. Let a copy of this order be served upon the parties.

Dictated & Corrected by me,

Pronounced by me,

(G. K. ROY)

(GOPAL KUMAR ROY)
Electricity Ombudsman: Jharkhand