



A consumer is the important visitor on our premises.  
He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him.  
-Mahatma Gandhi

## **TAMIL NADU ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN**

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**Before The Tamil Nadu Electricity Ombudsman, Chennai**

**Present : Thiru. N.Kannan, Electricity Ombudsman**

**A.P.No. 15 of 2025**

Thiru Balaji, Administrative Officer,  
M/s. Omayal Achi College of Nursing,  
No.45, Ambattur Road, Puzhal,  
Chennai – 600066.

. . . . . Appellant  
(Thiru Balaji Administrative Officer,  
M/s. Omayal Achi College of Nursing)

Vs.

1. The Executive Engineer/O&M/Avadi,  
Chennai Electricity Distribution Circle/West,  
TNPDCI,  
230 KV Avadi SS Complex,  
Sathya Moorthy Nagar,  
Near Murugappa Polytechnic, Avadi, Chennai - 62.

2. The Assistant Executive Engineer/O&M/Puzhal,  
Chennai Electricity Distribution Circle/West,  
TNPDCI,  
110/11 KV Puzhal SS, Puzhal Camp,  
Anna Ninaivu Nagar, Chennai - 66.

3. The Assistant Engineer / Puzhal,  
Chennai Electricity Distribution Circle/West,  
TNPDCI,  
110/11 KV Puzhal SS, Puzhal Camp,  
Anna Ninaivu Nagar, Chennai - 66.

. . . . Respondents  
(Thiru P.Soundararajan, EE/O&M/Avadi,  
Thiru J. Balachander, AEE/O&M/puzhal  
Thiru J. Sathish Kumar, AE/O&M/Puzhal)

**Petition Received on: 19-02-2025**

**Date of hearing: 09-04-2025**

**Date of order: 24-04-2025**

The Appeal Petition received on 19.02.2025, filed by Thiru Balaji, Administrative Officer, M/s. Omayal Achi College of Nursing, No.45, Ambattur Road, Puzhal, Chennai –66 was registered as Appeal Petition No. 15 of 2025. The above appeal petition came up for hearing before the Electricity Ombudsman on 09.04.2025. Upon perusing the Appeal Petition, Counter affidavit, written argument, and the oral submission made on the hearing date from both the parties, the Electricity Ombudsman passes the following order.

### **ORDER**

#### **1. Prayer of the Appellant:**

The Appellant has requested to revise the tariff and refund the excess amount paid in the Service Connection No. 051-006-2768.

#### **2.0 Brief History of the case:**

2.1 The Appellant has requested to demerge the service connection and revise the tariff and to refund the excess amount paid in the Service Connection No. 051-006-2768.

2.2 The Respondent has stated that the service connection was merged as both the services were in the same premises.

2.3 Not satisfied with the Respondent's reply, the Appellant filed a petition with the CGRF of Chennai EDC/West on 23.09.2024.

2.4 The CGRF of Chennai EDC/West has issued an order dated 30.12.2024. Aggrieved over the order, the Appellant has preferred this appeal petition before the Electricity Ombudsman.

#### **3.0 Orders of the CGRF :**

3.1 The CGRF of Chennai EDC/West issued its order on 30.12.2024. The relevant portion of the order is extracted below: -

#### **"Order:**

*As per the above findings, the request of the petitioner to refund the amount paid towards fixed charges due to merging for the month of 08/2024 and penalty charges paid in service connection no.051-006-2768 is not feasible of compliance.*

*Further, the forum directs the Respondent to close the account of service connection no.051-006-2768 and to adjust/refund the available deposits, if any, to the petitioner In accordance with regulation 33 of the TNE Distribution code.*

*With this, the petition is disposed of.”*

#### **4.0 Hearing held by the Electricity Ombudsman:**

4.1 To enable the Appellant and the Respondents to put forth their arguments, a hearing was conducted in person on 09.04.2025.

4.2 The Appellant Thiru Balaji Administrative Officer of M/s. Omayal Achi College of Nursing attended the hearing and put forth his arguments.

4.3 The Respondents Thiru P.Soundararajan, EE/O&M/Avadi, Thiru J. Balachander, AEE/O&M/puzhal and Thiru J. Sathish Kumar, AE/O&M/Puzhal of Chennai Electricity Distribution Circle/West attended the hearing and put forth their arguments.

4.4 As the Electricity Ombudsman is the appellate authority, only the prayers which were submitted before the CGRF are considered for issuing orders. Further, the prayer which requires relief under the Regulations for CGRF and Electricity Ombudsman, 2004 alone is discussed hereunder.

#### **5.0 Arguments of the Appellant:**

5.1 The Appellant has stated that the bill was unusually too high for the month of August 2024 and when checked, it was found that the fixed charges were almost doubled. When enquired with the EB accounts office, they informed that, since the petitioner have 2 LT connections (1 for College & 1 for Hostel) which totals upto 177KW (112kw college + 65kw hostel) hence it has to be merged to 1 HT (above 150kw) connection.

5.2 The Appellant has stated that there was no prior intimation or notice given to them in this regard. As their demand for the load averages only 30-35 kw for each connection, they would have surrendered 1 connection if it would have been informed to them earlier.

5.3 The Appellant has stated that a letter for surrender (Permanent Disconnection) for the Hostel connection 051-006-2768 (65kw) was given on 10th September 2024 to the Assistant Engineer, Puzhal. Then AE asked them to meet the Deputy Finance Controller (Thirumangalam) for further action. On meeting the Deputy Finance Controller (Thirumangalam), he advised the AE to forward a mail for deletion of the reading and the same has been done on 11th September 2024 for demerging.

5.4 The Appellant has stated that the other service 051-006-2739 remained in the HT tariff. Hence on 19th September, they went back to the AE office for revision of the tariff for the College connection immediately, as the due date was 20 September 2024. He then asked them to meet the Asst. Accounts Officer (Avadi) for revision. The AAO (Avadi) again asked them to meet the AE/Puzhal and get a signed letter (Hard copy) from him. After that the AE and AEE were not responding to their requests, and made them wait for more than 3 hours on their campus.

5.5 The Appellant has stated that on 20th September, they were forced to pay the demanded amount (in HT tariff) to avoid penalty charges for the service No. 051-006-2739 (112KW). For the other service no. 051-006-2768 (65KW) the reading has been already deleted and hence they were unable to pay the charges. Later around 4.00pm Mr. Sivakumar from Puzhal EB office called them and said that the AE has instructed him to upload the reading again and wanted them to pay the bill immediately. Further to this at 04.05pm the reading was uploaded. As they being an institution by this time, the signing authorities were not available and they were unable to pay the bill before the due date. The bill was paid the next day with a penalty of Rs.1,008.90/- for no fault of them. This is a remark for them due to the late response from EB Puzhal. Moreover EB made them run to the EE office & DFC for no reason.

5.6 The Appellant has requested to disconnect the service No. 051-006-2768 permanent and demerge at the earliest and revise the tariff and refund the excess amount paid (including the penalty charges of Rs.1,008.90/-).

**6.0 Arguments of the Respondent:**

6.1 The Respondent has submitted that the service connection 051-006-2768 (65 KW) stands in the name of Omayal Achi College of Nursing, Hostel Block, the service connection 051-006-2739 (112 KW) stands in the name of Omayal Achi College of Nursing, College Block were utilising individually. The petitioner represented that he has received a cc charges for the month of August seems to be very high and found that the fixed charges were doubled. There was no prior intimation or notice given to them in this regard.

6.2 The Respondent has submitted that the petitioner approached the Accounts office /Avadi, they informed about the merging of services for 2 LT services (1 for Hostel and 1 for college which totals upto 177 KW(112KW+65KW). Due both the services stand in the same name and same premises. Hence, it has to be merged to 1 HT (above 150 KW) connection and parallel the SMS sending to the petitioners mobile numbers as they given in the consumer ledger.

6.3 The Respondent has submitted that the petitioner approached Assistant Engineer/Puzhal on 10<sup>th</sup> September and sent a mail on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2024 for demerging the 051-006-2768(65 KW) and 051-006-2739 (112 KW) and requested for permanent dismantling in the service connection No:051-006-2768 (65 KW).

6.4 The Respondent has submitted that the petitioner represented through CGRF dated on 23.09.2024, as per the petitioner request this service connection No: 051-006-2768 (65 KW) was disconnected on 25.10.2024 demerging process done in the service connection Nos. 051-006-2739 (112 KW).

6.5 The Respondent has submitted that the CGRF hearing was conducted on 25.10.2005 and CGRF order issued on vide Petition No. CGRF/CEDC/W/No.E-114/24 disposed off, the request of petitioner to refund the amount paid towards

fixed charges due to merging for the month of 08/2024 and penalty paid charges in the service connection No:051-006-2768 is not feasible.

6.6 The Respondent has submitted that during merging process a SMS was sent to the petitioner on 07.08.2024 @ 13:31 hrs there is no option for refunding the amount paid towards fixed charges and penalty paid charges due to merging for the month of 08/24. He submitted that the petitioner has not satisfied with Respondent report and CGRF order, he approached the TNE Ombudsman.

6.7 The Respondent has prayed to dismiss the Appeal Petition No. 15 of 2025 as may deem it fit and proper and thus render Justice.

## **7.0 Findings of the Electricity Ombudsman:**

7.1 I have heard the arguments of both the Appellant and the Respondent. Based on the arguments and the documents submitted by them, the following Order is issued.

7.2 In this case, the Appellant's primary contention revolves around the sudden increase in their electricity bill for August 2024, attributing it to a significant rise in fixed charges. They discovered that this was due to their two LT connections (one for the college and one for the hostel) being merged into a single HT connection without prior notification. This change substantially increased their tariff rate without their consent or prior information, which they argue should have been communicated to them beforehand. Had they been informed earlier, they claim they would have voluntarily surrendered one of the connections, as their combined load demand does not justify the HT tariff.

7.3 Furthermore, the Appellant asserts that they took proactive steps upon discovering the issue. They promptly submitted a request for the permanent disconnection of the hostel connection to the Assistant Engineer at Puzhal. Despite following the prescribed procedure and receiving assurance from the Deputy Finance Controller for the deletion of readings and demerging of connections, they faced prolonged procedural setbacks from the officials involved. These

circumstances added to their difficulty, causing avoidable delays and considerable inconvenience.

7.4 As a result, the Appellant emphasizes their compliance with the corrective measures suggested by EB officials, including revising the tariff and making timely payments where applicable. They highlight their efforts to resolve the issue promptly, despite facing challenges such as indifferent responses from staff and procedural hurdles. Ultimately, they seek fair treatment, requesting the demerger of the connections as originally requested, a revision of the tariff to reflect their actual usage, and reimbursement of the excess amount paid, including penalties incurred due to delays caused by administrative shortcomings.

7.5 The Respondent has countered the Appellant's claims by stating that the two LT service connections—one for the hostel block (65 KW) and the other for the college block (112 KW)—were registered under the same name and located on the same premises. Therefore, as per regulatory norms, these were subject to be merged into a single HT service since their combined load exceeded 150 KW. The Respondent explained that this merging triggered the increase in fixed charges for August 2024, which the Appellant found unusually high. They further stated that an SMS notification regarding the merging was sent to the mobile number registered in the consumer ledger on 07.08.2024 at 13:31 hrs.

7.6 Additionally, the Respondent clarified that the Appellant approached the Assistant Engineer on 10th September and subsequently sent an email on 18th September 2024 requesting demerging and permanent disconnection of the hostel connection (65 KW). The request was acted upon, and the hostel connection was officially disconnected on 25.10.2024, with the demerging process completed accordingly.

7.7 The Respondent also pointed out that the matter was already taken up with the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum (CGRF) through a petition dated 23.09.2024, and a hearing was conducted on 25.10.2024. Following the hearing, an order was passed under Petition No. CGRF/CEDC/W/No.E-114/24, in which the

CGRF concluded that refunding the fixed charges and the penalty paid for August 2024 was not feasible. The Respondent emphasized that the actions taken were in accordance with applicable norms and that the SMS intimation served as a valid form of notice. In conclusion, the Respondent prayed for the dismissal of Appeal Petition No. 15 of 2025, asserting that all due process had been followed and that no relief can be granted regarding the refund of charges already paid.

7.8 During the hearing held on 09.04.2025, the Respondent stated that the service connections SC No. 051-006-2739 and SC No. 051-006-2768 were merged on 02.08.2024 based on a computer-generated "merging services report." This decision followed an inspection that confirmed both LTCT services were under the same name, same tariff, and located within the same premises. Consequently, as per TNERC tariff regulations, the billing for both services in August 2024 was carried out under HT tariff at a fixed charge rate of Rs. 589/kW, since both meters remained active post-merger.

7.9 Following a request from the consumer to surrender one of the service connections, the billing for September 2024 was done under LT tariff at a fixed charge rate of Rs. 348/kW, still accounting for both meters until the demerger process was completed. The consumer had submitted a request for permanent disconnection of SC No. 051-006-2768 on 10.09.2024, citing that their actual demand was only around 30-35 kW, significantly lower than the sanctioned demand of 177 kW. Acting on this request, the proposal for demerger was forwarded to the Superintending Engineer (SE), as the demerger option was accessible only through the SE's user account. The demerger was completed during September 2024. Subsequently, SC No. 051-006-2768 was officially dismantled on 25.10.2024, and the account was formally closed on 04.03.2025.

7.10 During the hearing, the Respondent was asked to explain the process of merging two service connections, i.e., SC No. 051-006-2739 and SC No. 051-006-2768. It was questioned how, after the merger of the two service connections at the premises, two meters could continue to exist for energy recording. The Respondent stated that after the merger, the energy consumption recorded by both meters was



combined, and the demand was billed under the HT tariff based on the total demand from both service connections. This was evidenced by the consumer ledger, which showed the billing for August, reflecting HT tariff charges based on the combined demand of 177 kW (SC No. 051-006-2739 with a sanctioned demand of 112 kW + SC No. 051-006-2768 with a sanctioned demand of 65 kW). In the subsequent month (September), the analysis revealed that the two service connections were demerged by the Respondent themselves, and normal LT billing was resumed, including the respective fixed charges for each connection.

7.11 The sequence of events clearly demonstrates how the merger was executed by the Respondent. Two LT service connections—SC No. 051-006-2739 (112 kW) and SC No. 051-006-2768 (65 kW)—were considered for merger in August 2024. However, instead of completing the merger in full compliance with regulatory procedures, only the energy and demand parameters from the two existing meters were virtually combined and billed. Both the meters remained active and in service, indicating that the merger was superficial and did not result in a fully integrated, single service connection.

7.12 Upon analysis of the billing for August 2024, it was found that the total demand of 177 kW (112 kW + 65 kW) was billed under HT fixed charges at the rate of Rs. 589/kW. However, the energy charges were calculated based on the readings from the two separate meters still functioning at the premises. This approach effectively amounted to billing a consumer, who remained under LT service classification, as if they were under HT classification—without any corresponding conversion of infrastructure or formal execution of an HT service agreement. In this context, it is important to understand the TNERC's views on Tangedco's proposal for charging multiple LTCT/LT service connections in the same premise whose combined demand is more than 112 kW under corresponding HT demand charges along with transformers loss of 1% as per the Regulation 3(1)(b)(v) of the TNE supply code. The Commission's views are given in para 5.7.24 of Tariff Order No. 7 of 2022 under Tariff Philosophy. The relevant conclusions are discussed below:

**TANGEDCO's Proposal**

#### 5.7.24 Multiple services – combined Load:-

*Multiple LT CT/LT services are available under same tariff category in the same premises owned by the same owner/different owners used for similar purpose/associated activities and these services are obtained for avoiding HT Tariff and to avoid erection of DT inside their premises and there is no space for provision of Distribution of transformers. If these services are merged and the consumers do not come forward for merging of such services, even if notices are issued by the TANGEDCO for merging and under this circumstances, it is submitted that entire demand used for similar purposes/associated activities of the multiple LTCT/LT service connections in the same premise whose combined demand is more than 112 kW will be charged under corresponding HT demand charges along with transformers loss of 1% as per the Regulation 3(1)(b)(v) of the TNE supply code and the same has been submitted in the new tariff clause 8.2.1(k) of this petition.*

#### **Commission's views**

*The proposal is not accepted in view of statutory and commercial reasons.”*

7.13 From the above, it is evident that TANGEDCO had proposed that when multiple LTCT or LT services exist in the same premises, under the same tariff category, and are used for similar or associated purposes—often installed to avoid HT tariff or transformer erection—such services, if their combined demand exceeds 112 kW, then demand charges should be charged under HT. This would apply even if consumers do not come forward for merging after the notice issued. The Commission, however, did not accept this proposal citing statutory and commercial reasons.

7.14 However during September 2024, the Respondent unilaterally reversed the merger, reinstating the two service connections as separate entities. Both were billed under LT Tariff IIB, with fixed charges applied at Rs. 348/kW. Subsequently, in October 2024, one of the service connections—SC No. 051-006-2768—was permanently disconnected at the Appellant's request, leaving SC No. 051-006-2739 as active connection.

7.15 The above events make it clear that the process of merging and demerging was inconsistent and not as per regulations. At no point did the merger result in a unified service with a single meter and a consolidated agreement. Instead, two separate meters and service agreements remained active during and after the so-called merger. Furthermore, the billing pattern shifted between HT and LT tariffs

without any formal reclassification or regulatory approval, raising serious concerns about procedural correctness. The Respondent's action of merging the two services in August 2024, and subsequent demerge during September 2024, further supports the claim of irregular handling.

7.16 The Respondent's justification—that the consumer had exceeded the sanctioned demand of 112 kW and therefore was liable for HT classification that to only for virtual billing under HT Tariff cannot be sustained in the absence of a properly executed conversion and merger process. The licensee however has the option of levying excess demand charges as regulation 5(2) of TNE Supply code Regulations.

7.17 As per the above findings, it is viewed that the Respondents have failed to follow the procedures laid down in the regulations in the case of load regularisation as well as billing the combined load of both the LT SCs virtually under HT category. Hence it is evident that the merger of two LT service connections and billed the combined load under HT demand charges was in violation of the TNERC conclusions as specified for the Multiple services – combined Load:- in the Tariff Order No.07 of 2022. Therefore, the CGRF order supporting the Respondent's action is liable to be set aside and the excess amount collected, should be refunded to the Appellant.

## 8.0 **Conclusion** :

8.1 From the above findings, it is concluded that the merger of two LT service connections and billed the combined load under HT demand charges was in violation of the TNERC Tariff Order No.07 of 2022 conclusions and hence the CGRF order supporting the Respondent's action is liable to be set aside and the excess amount collected, should be refunded to the Appellant.

8.2 A compliance report in this regard shall be furnished within 30 days from the date of receipt of this order.

8.3 With the above findings the A.P. No. 15 of 2025 is finally disposed of by the Electricity Ombudsman. No costs.

**(N.Kannan)**  
Electricity Ombudsman

“நுகர்வோர் இல்லையேல், நிறுவனம் இல்லை”  
“No Consumer, No Utility”

To,

1. Thiru Balaji, Administrative Officer,  
M/s. Omayal Achi College of Nursing,  
No.45, Ambattur Road, Puzhal,  
Chennai – 600066.

- By RPAD

2. The Executive Engineer/O&M/Avadi,  
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5. The Superintending Engineer,  
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- By email

6. The Chairman & Managing Director,  
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