

**JHARKHAND STATE ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
RANCHI**

Case No. **25** of **2010**

Shri **Mukhtiar Singh**, Chairperson
Shri **T. Munikrishnaiah**, Member (Tech)

Date: 11th October 2010

ORDER

IN THE MATTER OF

Replacement of existing meters by digital meters at the cost of the consumers.

It had come to the notice of the Commission from the news items published in the newspaper "Dainik Bhaskar" dated 22.9.2010 that the existing consumers of the distribution licensee-JSEB has to replace their existing meters with digital meters at their own cost and if they fail to do so within the specified date, penalty of Rs.6,000/- would be imposed on them. As per the provisions contained in Clause 13 of the JSERC (Electricity Supply Code) Regulations 2005 it is the duty of the distribution licensee to supply the meter and accessories unless the consumer elects to purchase a meter. Further, the testing, maintenance and replacement of lost, burnt or defective and inoperative meters are also the responsibility of the distribution licensee. As such, the Commission by its order dated 29.9.2010 had directed the distribution licensee-JSEB to show-cause within 10 (ten) days as to under which provision of law the consumers are being asked to replace their existing meters with digital meters. In the meantime it was also directed not to take any coercive action against the consumers for replacement of the existing meters by the digital meters.

The distribution licensee-JSEB has submitted its show-cause stating therein that the news published in the said newspaper is far from truth and without any basis. It has further been stated that the Board has launched a consumer friendly incentive scheme for replacement of burnt/stopped meter in the urban area. The scheme is friendly and not coercive/pressure bearing. No consumer is being harassed/pressurized for replacement of the meter. It has further been stated that the Board is arranging to procure the meters for replacement of burnt/stopped meters for those consumers who do not avail of this scheme. In view of this it has been requested to drop the proceeding. In support of their contention copy of notice and circular letter No.01 dated 19.7.2010 addressed to the field officers of the Board have also been enclosed with the show-cause.

Perused the show-cause and its enclosures.

In the show-cause, it has been stated that the Board is arranging to procure the meters for replacement of burnt/stopped meters for those consumers who do not avail of this scheme. On the other hand the distribution licensee-JSEB has mentioned in the notice published in the newspapers as well as in the letter dated 19.7.2010 addressed to its field officers that “the domestic consumer has to purchase ISI marked multifunctional meter and make it available to the Board for testing and sealing. Meter testing fee will also be deposited by the consumer.” Both these statements are contradictory in themselves. It is not understood when the Board is arranging to procure the meters for replacement of burnt/stopped meters for the consumers, then what is the necessity for publishing the notice asking the consumers to purchase the

meters. Secondly, none of the communications makes it loud and clear that the scheme is on optional basis and not compulsory. Moreover, as per the provisions contained in Clause 13 of the JSERC (Electricity Supply Code) Regulations 2005 it is the duty of the distribution licensee to supply the meter and accessories unless the consumer elects to purchase a meter. Further, the testing, maintenance and replacement of lost, burnt or defective and inoperative meters is the responsibility of the distribution licensee. In view of the above, the show-cause of the distribution licensee-JSEB cannot be accepted.

As a result, the distribution licensee-JSEB is directed to issue fresh notice in the newspapers immediately in accordance with the provisions of Clause 13 of JSERC (Electricity Supply Code) Regulations, 2005 and send a copy to the Commission. It should also be made clear in the said notice that if the consumers elect to purchase the meter, they will be entitled to get rebate. It should also be made clear that it will be optional and not compulsory and no coercive action will be taken against those consumers who do not purchase the meters (ISI Marked Multi Functional Meter) and submit it in the office of the Assistant Electrical Engineer/Junior Electrical Engineer, as asked for earlier.

Put up on **20.10.2010** for compliance and further orders.

Sd/-
(T. Munikrishanaih)
Member (E)

Sd/-
(Mukhtiar Singh)
Chairperson