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Press Release

Businessman gets Rs 2 years Jail, Tenant 1 year for power theft

Business Penalised Rs 21.5 lakh, Tenant Rs 1.3 lakh for power-theft

Judge cites famous American singer Billy Joel's "We didn't start the fire" to highlight the "cancer" of power-theft

New Delhi: For stealing over 31 KW of power, a businessman has been awarded two-year Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) and penalised Rs 21.5 lakh (Fine Rs 12.93 lakh + civil liability Rs 8.62 lakh). In another case, a tenant (running a property business) has been awarded one-year Simple Imprisonment and a penalty of Rs 1.33 (Fine Rs 80,270 + Civil Liability of Rs 53.514 lakh) for a similar offence. In case of default in paying their respective fines, the businessman will undergo Simple Imprisonment of three-months and the tenant of six-months.

Case: Businessman gets 2 years RI, penalised Rs 21.5 lakh

Refusing to show leniency to accused, a businessman, Mr Bhanwar Singh, The judgment of Special Court Judge Karkardooma, Mr Devendra Kumar Sharma says, ".....the convict was found using electricity illegally and there is no ground for taking a lenient view. Accordingly, the interest of justice will be served by directing the convict to undergo RI for a period of 2 years"

"Accordingly, the convict Bhanwar Singh is directed to pay fine of Rs.12, 93,792/-. In default of fine, convict Bhanwar Singh shall further undergo SI for a period of three months". Further, the accused was also asked to pay Rs 8.62 lakh towards his civil liability.

The judgment of Special Court Judge Mr Devendra Kumar Sharma cites Billy Joel's hit song "We didn't start the fire" and "Cancer". Citing the hit song, it says "..... It may be summarised in the world' of Song by Billy Joel from his Storm Front album titled, we didn't start the Fire. "It was always burning, since the world's been turning", goes the next line. People can say the same about the power theft situation in India today. We didn't start it. It seems like it's been always happening...."

Coming down hard on the breed of well heeled power-thieves, the judgment says, ".....But for a period of time the privilege of these elite class got extended to their kith and kin. Now it has spread like cancer and the mass theft of power has reached frightening proportions to say the least. As of today about 12 % distribution loss/loss due to electricity theft is reported and if it is converted into the revenue it is in crores"

Background

A BSES inspection in 2006, accompanied by Delhi Police and CISF, had unearthed power-theft of over 31 KW in Gokulpur Village in East Delhi. Of this, 22.6 KW was being used for industrial purposes and 8.8 KW for domestic purposes. A power-theft bill of Rs 11.26 lakh was raised on the

accused basis the laid down regulations. When accused did not pay the fine, a FIR (No 05/08) was registered at Police Station Gokulpr.

Case: Tenant gets 1 year Jail, Penalised Rs 1.33 lakh

A BSES inspection at a shop in Mahavir Enclave, Palam found electricity of over 7 KW being stolen to run a property business. The meter was found be tampered to run nearly 60% slow. An assessment bill of Rs 1.30 lakh was raised on one Mr Hari Om Sharma, a tenant, which the accused did not pay within the stipulated timeframe.

After hearing the lengthy arguments from both the sides, the order of the Special Court of Electricity Judge Dwarka Mr Naveen Arora convicted the accused u/s 135 and 138 of the electricity act. He was awarded an imprisonment of one year and a imposed a civil liability of Rs. 53,514 and a fine of Rs 80,270.

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