

November 21, 2016

Press Release

Landmark Judgment Against Power Theft

West Delhi Resident Given Rigorous Imprisonment of 2 yrs & Heavy Penalty of Rs. 1.48 cr

Power Theft Remains a Major Menace for Discoms and Honest Consumers in Delhi

Power Theft has proved to be an expensive affair for a West Delhi resident. In a landmark judgment, Special Court of Electricity, Dwarka, has imposed a fine of Rs 1.48 crore on a Tagore Garden resident. Further, he has also been awarded Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) of 2 years. In case of a default, he will undergo a further Simple Imprisonment (SI) of 6 months.

The order of Mr Gulshan Kumar (Additional Sessions Judge, Special Court of Electricity, Dwarka) says, *"The penalty should not be less than three times the financial gain on account of theft of liability. Hence, convict Ranjit Singh Chaudhary is sentenced to undergo RI for two years and to pay fine of Rs. 1, 48, 61,194/- and in default of payment of fine to undergo SI for 6 months"*

"The convict is also liable to pay civil liability U/s 154 (5) of the Act so amount of civil liability shall be paid to the complainant towards satisfaction of the civil liability, out of fine....."

".....The bill is raised on the basis of consumption for a period of 12 months multiplied by two times of the applicable tariff rate. Accordingly, the civil liability on the basis of the then tariff rate is assessed at Rs. 99, 07,463/-"

Case:

Earlier, the convict person Mr Ranjit Singh Chaudhary was caught stealing a whopping 243 KW of electricity for running a plastic factory at Golden Park, Rampura, Tagore Garden. No electricity meter was found at site. The entire electricity load of the factory (running under the name HP Plastic) was being stolen using 8 Teflon wires.

According to the regulations a penalty was imposed on him. When he did not pay the amount within the mandated timeframe, a FIR was registered against him u/s 135 of the Electricity Act, 2003 and a criminal case filed.

The accused had pleaded innocence. Infact, he took the plea that he had nothing to do with the premises in question. With the help of several witnesses (over course of the trial, 19 witnesses were examined)and MCD records, the company was able to prove that Mr Ranjit Singh Chaudhary was indeed owner of the factory and he had been granted a license for doing business of plastic goods at the said premises.

Concerns on power theft

Power theft is not only resulting in substantial revenue loss to the discoms, but is also increasing the number of trippings and local breakdowns manifold. Efforts of discom enforcement teams to check the irregularities are thwarted by organised gangs on many occasions. Whenever enforcement teams reach these areas, these gangs 'gherao' them and don't let them check their premises.

Though Delhi discoms have managed to reduce AT & C losses from over 55% to under 15% in the last 14 years, still, there are areas in Najafgargh, Jaffarpur, Mundka, Nangloi, Daryaganj, Chandini Chowk, Paharganj, Seelampur, Nand Nagari, Yamuna Vihar, and Karawal Nagar, Shaheen Bagh where power theft continues to be a concern. It is also rampant in some unauthorised colonies.

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