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Electricity bill scam- tips to avoid and concerns to report

Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation Limited (TANGEDCO) has [issued a warning](#) for consumers to beware of fraudulent Whatsapp and SMS messages asking consumers to pay their pending bills.

Electricity bill scam: [Consumers should beware](#) of false and misleading messages usually insisting that consumers have to pay a certain amount of money if they do not want their electricity to be cut off. The messages state that you can click on a given link to pay the bill. This link takes consumers to a third party website/app. This will open a portal directing them to pay a nominal fee to ensure that there is no stoppage of their electricity supply. Upon making a payment, this website/app records all the bank details of the customer. The scammers then use these details to transfer large sums of money from the consumer's account.

How to avoid these scams:

Make sure that you pay only through the following official portals: (1) The [TANGEDCO official website](#) (2)The [TANGEDCO official mobile app](#) only.

Law on disconnecting your electricity supply:

The consumer need not panic and worry about sudden disconnection of their electricity supply. [Section 56\(1\) of Electricity Act 2003](#) provides conditions for the disconnection of your electricity supply in case you fail to pay your bills on time.

Under this section, TANGEDCO must send you a notice at least fifteen

days prior to disconnection. It is only if you fail to pay even after the last date given on the notice, that TANGEDCO will disconnect your electricity supply.

Reporting the fraud:

Unfortunately, in case you have been affected by this scam, please take the following steps:

1. Call your bank, inform them about the scam and request them to immediately block your card and online transactions.
2. Report the crime as soon as you can, by filing a complaint through the following options:
 - You can file an online complaint on [National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal \(NCRP\)](#)
 - You can call the helpline number '1930'
 - You can file a complaint with your local police station

TANGEDCO Bill Payment Guidelines	Consumer safety tips
TANGEDCO will never ask for payment of any small amount. Consumers can only pay the complete bill amount.	Do not believe any demand for small amounts.
TANGEDCO/any government body will never ask for your bank details.	Do not enter your bank details/make any payment on any third party website or app apart from the ones given above.
TANGEDCO will never send any messages from a personal number.	Inform with your local section office in case you receive any information from a personal number.
TANGEDCO will never ask for any of your personal details like aadhar, address, etc. to be sent via SMS	Do not share any of your information following requests.


(Concluded)

Simple measures for Electricity consumers to participate in the circular economy - Do It Yourself series (Part -2)


The [previous issue](#) gave an introduction to the concept of circular economy. From this part, let us explore how the R's of the circular economy can be put into everyday use, in relation to household appliances.

1. Air conditioner :

Air conditioners (AC), once considered a luxury, are now gradually becoming an essential requirement in many households. A room air conditioner is an appliance used specifically to reduce the temperature and humidity of the air in a room. Air conditioners work based on the principles of thermodynamics and refrigeration. They provide a controlled cooling effect by continuously circulating the refrigerant between the indoor and outdoor units, extracting heat from the indoor air and releasing it outside.




AIR CONDITIONER - CIRCULAR CONSUMPTION



REFUSE


While purchasing a new Air Conditioner, REFUSE BRANDS THAT DO NOT HAVE STAR RATINGS (star ratings indicate the efficiency of the AC). Also, REFUSE BRANDS THAT DO NOT OFFER REPAIR, REGULAR MAINTENANCE & REFURBISHMENT SERVICES.

Buy products that provide adequate guarantees and long-term warranties.



REDUCE

REDUCE THE USAGE of Air Conditioners. Adopt passive strategies like natural aeration and fans for cooling, and wear light clothes to facilitate air circulation. Reducing AC use might not directly contribute to the elimination of waste, but does play a vital role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy use. While using AC, set the optimum temperature between 24 - 26°C for energy efficiency and comfort.



REPAIR & REUSE


Sometimes your AC may not work because one or more of its components have failed completely or partially. Do not hastily decide to replace it. REPAIR the faulty components and REUSE your AC to extend its life as long as possible. For the appliance to be healthy and energy efficient, ensure regular maintenance along with cleaning and replacement of dirty filters.

However, if you are going to buy a new AC to replace the old one, look for exchange offers. You may also donate or sell your old AC, instead of disposing it of.



REPURPOSE

When disposing of your used AC, dismantle the components with professional guidance and CONSIDER REPURPOSING ITS COMPONENTS like metal and plastic parts, cables, etc.



RECYCLE

ACs contain heavy metals, refrigerants and other chemicals that are toxic to the environment. If your AC reaches its end of useful life, do not dump it in a landfill. Give it responsibly to an e-waste reclamation or recycling facility who can handle it safely.

(To be continued)

Understanding Time of Day Tariff

In April 2023, Tamil Nadu attained the all time [peak](#) power demand of 19,387 MW i.e highest levels of energy consumed at a particular point in time. The reasons for peak demand can vary based on time of day, season, weather conditions and other economic activities. TANGEDCO, a licensee in Tamil Nadu, which is responsible for generation, distribution and supply of electricity, managed to supply electricity even during those peak consumption hours. This was possible because of the adequate power generated from the installed capacity of [33,877 MW](#) and well established transmission & distribution systems to procure electricity from the markets. Generally, the fluctuation in the power demand (with the demand curve being high during the peak hours and low at the non-peak hours) can [strain the power infrastructure](#) such as grid, transmission and distribution systems. Sometimes this leads to power outages because of the sudden spike in the demand. In general, the generation companies like to have a flat demand curve (maintaining the demand) to maintain the plant's efficiency.

In order to flatten the demand curve, TANGEDCO previously introduced a "Time of Day" (ToD) tariff for all High Tension (HT) consumers categories. The newly introduced [Tariff Order 2022](#) states that a few Low Tension (LT) consumer categories should also pay a peak hour charge under the ToD tariff. Prior to this order, domestic consumers under the LT category paid a flat rate and were not charged peak / off-peak rates. The reason behind charging LT categories for peak consumption is because their electricity consumption during peak hours is higher compared to the HT categories. As per the TANGEDCO's [Report on Time of Day Tariff](#) *"ToD is a widely accepted tool for effective Demand Side Management (DSM)"*. Utilities purchase electricity to meet higher than usual demand from the open market, typically at prices higher than standard prices used to purchase from a generation company. . The introduction of ToD tariff for the LT categories is to recover the expenses that are spent to meet the peak demand. A simple measure that consumers can now use to avoid peak hour charges is to reduce electricity consumption during peak hours, operate energy efficient appliances during peak hours, and run energy intensive appliances during off- peak hours.

Time of Day (ToD) refers to the different periods of time segments within a day when electricity tariff rates vary. The different periods are peak hours and off peak hours. The peak hours are from 6.00 A.M to 10.00 A.M in the morning and 6.00 P.M to 10.00 P.M in the evening ([refer page no 253 of Tariff Order, 2022](#)). Generally, [peak hours are when electricity demand](#) is at its highest due to the use of appliances, air conditioning, lighting, and industrial activities. Off peak hours are the periods of the day when electricity demand is low because the usage of energy- intensive appliances will be fewer. TANGEDCO purchases [power at a high price](#) to meet the power demand during peak hours in order to ensure uninterrupted power supply to the consumers. ToD tariff is levied as additional charges on consumers for their consumption during peak hours and provides incentives/rebates in tariff for their consumption during off-peak hours. [ToD tariff comprises separate tariffs for peak and off-peak hours](#). This mechanism is to encourage consumers to reduce their consumption during peak hours and shift their consumption to off-peak hours in order to balance the demand.

TANGEDCO applies ToD tariff to calculate the peak hour charges in two ways: (i) ToD tariff rates with ToD meter (ii) ToD tariff rates without ToD meter. As of now, [TANGEDCO has not](#) installed ToD meters, though this can be done at the request of interested consumers who want to check the accuracy of their peak hour consumption. ToD meter is installed next to the electricity consumption meter. The utility itself has two ways to calculate the peak hour charges depending on whether the connection is metered for it or not :

1. TANGEDCO charges 25% extra on the energy charges for the consumption recorded by the TOD meters during peak hours (refer page no 256, clause 5.30.18 of [Tariff order 2022](#)) . For example, for commercial consumers (LT V) - office, shops and other consumers who engage in commercial activity whose consumption is above 100 units:
2. For the users who have not asked for ToD meters to be installed, 25% extra on the energy charges may be collected for 20 % of the total consumption of the billing period as peak hour charges (refer page no 256, clause 5.30.18 of [Tariff order 2022](#)).

(Concluded)

Tamil Nadu News

Tangedco to conduct special camps for name change from July 24

Finance, HRD and Electricity Minister Thangam Thennarasu on Tuesday announced that special camps for name change of consumer connections would be held in all the section offices from July 24. "Considering the welfare of the consumers, to clear hurdles faced in the name change process, the special camps will be held in all the section offices from July 24 to effect name change immediately after the payment of the charges, " the minister said, after reviewing the maintenance works undertaken to provide the uninterrupted power supply.

A senior Tangedco official said that nearly 40 lakh domestic consumers have linked their Aadhaar using the option "owner but name not changed". The camp would help domestic consumers to update the consumer name to the service connection, the official added. In the official release, Minister said that Tangedco would take up coordinated maintenance work for the ensuing monsoon across the state to carry out 3.89 lakh works shortly. The maintenance works include the replacement of damaged poles and the erection of additional poles between low-sagging lines, the release said.

Minister directed the officials to take up the maintenance works after giving due intimation to the consumers and also to avoid long-duration of power outages. "The minister also strictly advised the officials against taking up maintenance works during Sundays or other holidays. Also, the official should ensure uninterrupted power supply to hospitals, schools and drinking water pump sets, " it added. In the review meeting, the minister has explanations from the officials on the places which witnessed over 30 minutes of power outages. "Minister instructed the officials to focus on areas which witness frequent power cuts and rectify it, " the release added.

Source : [DTNext](#), July 18, 2023

India News

State takes lead in announcing green hydrogen policy, a first such in India

The state cabinet on Tuesday gave approval to green hydrogen policy for Maharashtra in a bid to promote renewable energy across state. Maharashtra is the first state in the country to announce a policy for generating Green hydrogen — hydrogen produced by splitting water by electrolysis. The cabinet also sanctioned funds to the tune of Rs 8,562 crore to provide subsidies and benefits to companies generating this green energy in the coming years. "This will drive decarbonization across the industries, enhance energy security and also encourage exports of green fuels in the near future," said a senior official. The policy also aims to attract investment in the green hydrogen and renewable energy sector, create job opportunities, and develop the state economy, the cabinet report mentioned. The benefits include exemption of "cross subsidy surcharge" and additional surcharge in power bills for electricity procured for the production of green hydrogen; 50% exemption from intra-state transmission charges and wheeling charges for a period of 10 years from date of commissioning of green hydrogen projects for power procured from renewable energy plants; and 100% exemption from electricity duty, among other benefits.

Three types of government land shall be made available on lease/rent on priority basis for such projects — land owned by various institutions of state government, corporations, public undertakings, local self government etc; land owned and occupied by revenue department and lands owned or in possession of the central government, central institutions/public undertakings etc. The cabinet also decided that Maharashtra Energy Development Agency shall support the identification of land banks for development of hubs/clusters for green hydrogen and its derivatives production, conversion, storage, transportation and hydrogen refuelling stations within the state. The benefits under the policy shall be applicable for all projects which will procure renewable energy.

Source: [TOI](#), July 05, 2023

Consumer Focus

Ombudsman Case:

The appellant is the secretary of a flat owner's association in a residential complex containing 352 living units. It consists of 12 blocks and a physically segregated building in one block with a swimming pool, gym, community hall, etc that can be used by residents only. These common facilities were under one Low Tension Commercial Tariff (LTCT) service charged under Tariff V, according to the [old tariff order](#). Under the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission's (TNERC) [new Tariff Order \(passed on 09-09- 2022\)](#) the said service connection under Tariff V could also be changed to Tariff ID if the built-up area used for common areas was less than 25% of the total built-up area. The appellant applied for a change in tariff, submitting that the common facilities occupied less than 25% of the total built up area. But this application was rejected by the respondent (utility) on 28-12-2022.

The appellant registered a complaint seeking tariff change and compensation through [Distribution Standards of Performance Regulation \(DSOP\)](#) to the concerned Consumers Grievances Redressal Forum (CGRF) on 07.01.2023. The CGRF passed an order on 10.03.2023 directing the respondent to convert the tariff of the service connection in accordance with the [tariff clause 6.2.5 of TNERC's Tariff Order](#).

The appellant was aggrieved by this order since they were not given adjustment of their overcharged bills as per [Tamil Nadu Electricity Supply Code \(TNESC\) Regulations](#), and compensation through [DSOP](#) for delay in change of tariff. Thus, the appellant filed the present complaint to the Ombudsman.

The appellant argued that this case falls under the purview of [TNESC](#):

"[Regulation 12\(2\)](#), where it is found that the consumer has been overcharged, the excess amount paid in such cases will be adjusted against future current consumption charges. If, even after such adjustment against future current consumption charges for two assessment periods, there is still a balance to be refunded, the refund will be made by cheque."

Under [Regulation 9 read with 21 of DSOP](#) the appellant further argued that they have to be compensated for failure to effect tariff change within seven days of submitting the application.

The appellant finally submitted that the respondent had grossly distorted facts by stating on receipt of the tariff change application that they were not able to ascertain if the common facilities occupied less than 25% of total built up area of which tariff change is requested. The appellant prayed for change in tariff and compensation from the respondent for the losses suffered.

The respondent stated that using the documents along with the application submitted on 16.12.2022, it was not possible to determine if the area requested for tariff change was less than the 25% of total built up area in the complex. Thus the respondent cancelled the application which had resulted in the CGRF complaint and subsequent order, directing the respondent to change the tariff.

The respondent submitted that after this, the documents uploaded by the petitioner again failed to provide the required details, and hence the claim for compensation for delay in effecting tariff change is not valid.

Considering the facts of the case, arguments put forth, and the statutes relied upon, the Ombudsman passed the following order:

- The service connection was to be changed to LT Tariff ID from 24-02-2023. In light of this, the respondent is directed to refund the excess amount due to delay in change of tariff, as per the provisions of [TNESC](#)
- A compliance report shall be sent to the Electricity Ombudsman within 30 days after implementation of the previous direction.

Source: **Ombudsman Case**, [TNERC](#).

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Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) is a non-profit, non-political and professional organization that works towards protecting citizen's rights in consumer and environmental issues and promoting good governance processes including transparency, accountability and participatory decision making.

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World News

Energy transition in jeopardy without metals investment: Report

Shortages of metals that are critical for the energy transition could emerge in the next decade unless investment increases, according to a global group of energy producers, consumers and financial institutions.

Significant supply gaps for lithium, nickel, graphite, cobalt, neodymium and copper are all possible, says the Energy Transitions Commission (ETC). This could result in higher prices for these metals and hinder efforts to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. Mines need to increase production to prevent these shortages from arising. However, large-scale mining projects can take up to 20 years to become operational, and there has been a lack of investment in exploration and output in the past decade. It will be challenging to scale up supplies to meet this rapidly rising demand, says the ETC Chair Adair Turner.

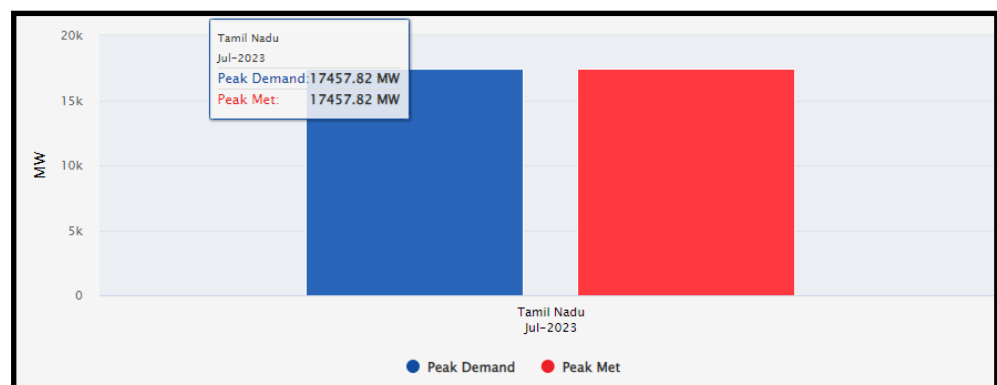
Annual capital investment in energy transition metals has averaged \$45 billion over the last two decades, compared with the \$70 billion required each year until 2030 to expand supply, the ETC says. Turner adds that governments, regulators, producers and consumers need to collaborate on increasing metals recycling, improving material efficiency, investing in new mining, and implementing environmental and social standards. The forecast assumes an aggressive deployment of clean energy technologies for global decarbonisation and that recycling and the amount of material needed would follow recent trends. Up to 6.5 billion tonnes of materials will be needed between 2022 and 2050 for the energy transition, with steel, copper and aluminium accounting for 95% of this, the ETC estimates.

Source: [WEF](#), July 25, 2023

Publications / Regulations

- Electricity Market Report - Update 2023, July 2023, [IEA](#)
- Geopolitics of the Energy Transition: Critical Materials, July 2023, [IRENA](#)
- National Electricity Plan Notification (Amendment) Rules, 2023, [MoP](#)
- Electricity (Second Amendment) Rules, 2023, July, [MOP](#)
- Report on Roadmap of Solar Energy for Universal Energy Access, July 2023, [MNRE](#)

Tamil Nadu Peak Demand vs Peak Met (July 2023)



Source: [MoP](#)