

CHAPTER-3

PUBLIC CONSULTATION - SUGGESTIONS / OBJECTIONS & REPLIES

3.0 The Commission undertook the process of public consultation in pursuance of Section 64 of the Electricity Act, 2003, in order to obtain suggestions/views/objections from the interested stakeholders on the Tariff application filed by GESCOM. In the written submissions as well as during the public hearing some stake-holders and public have raised several objections to the Tariff Applications filed by GESCOM. The names of the persons who have filed written objections are given below:

List of persons who filed written objections within the due date

Sl.No	Application No.	Name & Address of Objectors
1	GA-01	Sri.M.G.R.Rajagopal, General Secretary, Karnataka Small Scale Industries Association, # 2/106, 17 th Cross, Magadi Chord Road, Vijaya Nagar, Bengaluru – 560 040,
2	GA-02	Sri. Deepak G.Gala, President, Hyderabad Karnataka Environment Awareness and Protection Organization, No. 4-311 Opp. Basava Temple, Maktamapur, Kalaburagi- 585101.

The objections/suggestions mainly pertain to:

- Tariff;
- Quality of Power Supply and Service;
- Compliance of Commission's directives; and
- Certain specific requests.

The gist of objections, replies by GESCOM and the Commission's Views are appended to this order in **Appendix-1**.

3.1 List of the persons, who made oral submissions during the Public Hearing, held on 15.02.2020:

SL. No.	Names & Addresses of Objectors
1	Shri Deepak G Gala , Hyderabad Karnataka Environment Awareness & Protection Organization, Kalaburagi
2	Shri Sidramayya S.Hiremath, President, RTI Activists Association,

SL. No.	Names & Addresses of Objectors
	Kalaburagi.
3	Shri. Chandrasekhara Gowda, Bennur, Karatagi Taluk, Koppal District
4	Shri. Parameshwara, Vice President Gram Panchayat, Kallangarga
5	Shri. Basavaraj M. Sajjan, Bharatiya Kissan Sangha, Kalaburagi
6	Shri Channabasayya Nandikodi, H.K. Chamber of Commerce & Industries
7	Shri Subhash Chandra, Benakanalli, Kalaburagi
8	Shri. Hanumantha, Ambala village, Lingasugur Taluk
9	Shri Umapathy
10	Shri. Pampathy, Aland Taluk.
11	Shri Srinivas, Aland
12	Shri Mohammed Taher
13	Shri Sugamanath B Hiregowda
14	Shri Tammanna, Bagewadi

3.2 The summary of the additional points raised during the Public Hearing are as follows:

- 1) In general, the Tariff hike was opposed and requested the Commission not to approve the increase in tariff.
- 2) Hydel power allocation shall be balanced among all the ESCOMs.
- 3) Government has dues to an extent of Rs.1000 Crores towards subsidy amount to GESCOM. Interest needs to levied on subsidy amount if there is delay on releasing the subsidy amount by the Government. The Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission has passed an order on levy of interest for delayed subsidy release.
- 4) Proceedings needs to be initiated under Section 142 of the Act for violation of Electricity Act and Regulations under it.
- 5) There is necessity to avoid unwanted questions being asked by the call receivers during compliant lodging process via '1912'
- 6) Statistics on LED / Non-LED Street lights shall be provided by GESCOM.
- 7) Publicity is needed on power surplus situation in the State may be given. This will attract new industries in the State.

- 8) Consumer interaction meetings are not successful as they are intended to be, since the publicity in this regard is not adequate. The social media shall be used more often for publicity.
- 9) The GESCOM shall avoid unnecessary travel expenditure.
- 10) The GESCOM is spending huge amounts on Transformer repairs, even without looking into validity of guarantee/warranty period. The expenditure towards failure within the guarantee period has to be borne by the concerned manufacturer and Transformer provider.
- 11) The linemen are not wearing safety equipment. This will be Human Rights violation. Whether the safety equipment is being provided or not needs to be looked into.
- 12) Proceedings of this public hearing needs to be published.
- 13) A tariff of Rs.4.50 per unit has been charged towards cultivating food crops. It is requested to include these under LT (2) A tariff.
- 14) Power Supply to IP sets shall be provided during day time instead of night time.
- 15) Old and Broken poles shall be replaced.
- 16) Un-electrified houses to be electrified under soubhagya scheme.
- 17) Linemen shall be stationed in the headquarters.
- 18) Transformers are burnt and failure rates are increasing due to overload and unauthorized connections. The Section officer and linemen needs to be vigilant in this aspect.
- 19) The maximum contract demand under LT supply shall be raised to 99 H.P and the Commission shall recommend the same to Govt. of Karnataka.
- 20) Public hearing shall not become a formality.
- 21) There is no necessity of Tariff hike, as the power from solar and Open access rates are lower rather than entering into long term PPAs
- 22) The HT consumers are moving towards Open Access and the ultimate sufferer will be GESCOM.
- 23) Connections are provided in Bahamani Fort and Sharana Basappa Temple without verifying the documents.
- 24) The Electrical contractors and Agents shall be barred between the Consumers and GESCOM for obtaining service connections and related works.

- 25) In respect of M.S. Building, if one the consumer defaults others are also made to suffer, by GESCOM.
- 26) Free electricity to the electricity department staffs shall not be provided and if provided, shall be stopped, as they are highly paid.
- 27) Disconnection of the installations having arrears is not being carried out by GESCOM.
- 28) All subsidies (like the one provided to BJ/KJ) shall be stopped.
- 29) The employees of GESCOM, starting from linemen to engineers are corrupt.
- 30) Failed Transformers are replaced only if money is paid by the affected farmers. All the expenditure in this regard has to be borne by the farmers.
- 31) GESCOM officers are not consumer friendly and problems are not being solved.
- 32) Visiting time to the public in GESCOM offices shall be made known to the public.
- 33) The hazardous locations in few of the school premises have been rectified by GESCOM. This has been appreciated by the concerned school authorities.
- 34) There is only one vehicle provided to 24X7 Service station. It is not possible to simultaneously attend more than one fault. Hence, the no. of vehicles to the service station, needs to be increased.
- 35) Development charges in respect of layouts has been hiked.
- 36) Adequate publicity is required for public hearing.
- 37) The compensation provided towards electrical accidents needs to be increased.
- 38) GESCOM is spending unnecessary amount towards replacing plastic boxes provided to meters.
- 39) Since 2014, a wrong bill issued for Rs.90,000/- for the problem in the meter is not solved as against the energy being used for domestic purpose.

Further, M/s Hyderabad Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Kalaburagi in their letter dated 14th February 2020 and 15th February 2020 has submitted the following to the Hon'ble Commission:

- i) Request to drop the proposal of GESCOM for enhancement of power tariff and defer the same until the industry, trade and commerce witnesses favourable condition citing the following:
 - a) Since the economy and the industry is reeling under stress and the trade and commerce has slowed down to an unprecedented level, it is felt that the economy do not deserve any enhancement in the rates of power tariff.
 - b) The Govt. of Karnataka has come forward to reimburse the subsidy amount of Rs.1065 Crores to GESCOM. Such being the fact, the question of loss of revenue to GESCOM and need to enhance power tariff does not arise.
- ii) In the State of Telangana, the power connections up to 99 HP is provided under LT power supply and which is helpful to the industries especially for MSME units. The MSME units in Kalaburagi can arrival LT power connection up to 66HP. To mitigate the hardship to the MSME units of dal mills they have requested to provide LT connection to industries up to the level 99 HP and also requested the Commission to recommend to the Govt. of Karnataka to make provision to arrange LT power connection up to 99 HP.

The Commission has taken note of the above request of M/s Hyderabad Karnataka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Kalaburagi. The classification of LT and HT installations is historically different in Karnataka as compared with other States. For any change in the present classifications the ESCOMs shall examine its pros and cons and submit suitable proposal for amending the Conditions of Supply Regulations. Hence, ESCOMs shall examine this and submit suitable proposal to the Commission.

3.3 GESCOM's Response to the objections:

The MD GESCOM stated that the replies to most of the issues raised in the public hearing have been furnished in the written replies. The other issues not covered earlier would be looked into and remedial action taken.

3.4 Commission's Views:

The Commission directs GESCOM to look into the unresolved issues and attend to them on priority.