

BEFORE THE ELECTRICITY OMBUDSMAN
(For the State of Goa and Union Territories)
Under Section 42 (6) of the Electricity Act, 2003
3rd Floor, Plot No. 55-56, Udyog Vihar - Phase IV, Sector 18
Gurugram (Haryana) 122015,
Email ID: ombudsman.jercuts@gov.in
Phone No.:0124-4684708

Appeal No-268 of 2026

Date of Hearing: 22.06.2026 and
01.07.2026

Mode: Videoconferencing

Date of Order: 03.07.2026

In the matter of

1. Shri. Sachin Patekar/Shri. Sameer Vast,
B/203, Sai Sugandh Co-Op. Hsg. Society,
2nd Floor, Near Matrix School Kharodi Naka,
Agashi Road Virar West-401303.
2. Smt Shubhangi Ramesh Patekar,
Sai Sugandi, B/203, Building No.3,
Agashi Road, Near Kharodi Naka,
Bhoir Complex, Virar West, Thane, Maharashtra 401303
3. Smt. Bhavana Bhalachandra Vast,
W/o Bhalachandra Vast,
A/15/232 Dnyaneshvar Nagar, D.G. Mahajani Road,
Near T.B. Hospital, Sewri, Wadala,
Mumbai, Maharashtra-400031.

.... Appellant(s)

Versus

1. The Chief Electrical Engineer,
Electricity Department,
Government of Goa, Vidyut Bhavan, Panaji - Goa.
2. The Executive Engineer,
Electricity Department, Div - I, Panaji - Goa.
3. The Assistant Engineer,
Electricity Department, Div-I, S/D - II, Panaji - Goa.
4. Smt. Reshma Ramakant Shirodkar,
House No. 475, St. Inez, Panaji, Goa - 403001.

...Respondent(s)



Present:

1. Mr. Sachin Ramesh Patekar
 2. Mr. Sameer Bhalchandra Vast
 3. Mrs. Shubhangi Ramesh Patekar
 4. Mrs. Bhavna Bhalchandra Vast
- ...Appellants

1. Paresh Sawaikar, Executive Engineer Div-1,
Electricity Department, Goa.
 2. Shri. Sydney Fernandes AE (Com)Panaji
- ...Respondents

ORDER

The present representation was filed on 26.05.2026 (through Email) under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003 read with Regulations 35 and 36 of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (Consumer Grievances Redressal Forum and Ombudsman) Regulations, 2024, challenging the order dated 15.05.2026 passed by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Goa in Case No. Goa/C.G. No. 02/2026/27.

Upon scrutiny, and being satisfied that the representation fulfilled the requirements prescribed under the Regulations, the same was admitted and notice was issued on 01.06.2026. A copy of the representation was forwarded to the Respondent(s)

1. The Chief Electrical Engineer, Electricity Department, Government of Goa, Vidyut Bhavan, Panaji - Goa.
2. The Executive Engineer, Electricity Department, Div - I, Panaji - Goa.
3. The Assistant Engineer, Electricity Department, Div-I, S/D - II, Panaji - Goa.
4. Smt. Reshma Ramakant Shirodkar, House No. 475, St. Inez, Panaji, Goa - 403001.

calling upon them to submit their reply/comments.

The Respondent No. 3 vide his Email dated 09.04.2026 has filed his comments/ reply to the petition filed by the Appellant(s) which is taken on record.

A. FACTS OF THE CASE

1. The dispute pertains to the transfer/change of name of Consumer Connection No. 060000549646, which originally stood in the name of late Smt. Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar. Following her demise, the Distribution Licensee effected transfer/change of the said electricity connection in favour of Respondent No. 4, Smt. Reshma Ramakant Shirodkar, on the basis of documents submitted by her, including a registered Will dated 27.05.2010 and other supporting documents.



2. The Appellants challenged the said transfer before the Learned CGRF alleging, inter alia, that the Distribution Licensee failed to undertake proper verification before approving the transfer, did not obtain No Objection Certificates from all legal heirs, relied upon disputed documents, failed to conduct adequate departmental scrutiny and acted in violation of the applicable procedural safeguards governing transfer/change of name of the electricity connection.
3. The Distribution Licensee contested the complaint and submitted that the request for transfer/change of name was processed in accordance with the applicable procedure on the basis of the documents furnished by Respondent No. 4, including the registered Will, death certificate of the original consumer, affidavits and other supporting records. It was further contended that the Distribution Licensee was not competent to adjudicate disputes relating to succession, title, ownership or validity of testamentary documents.
4. Upon consideration of the pleadings and submissions of the parties, the Learned CGRF, by its Order dated 15.05.2026, declined to interfere with the transfer/change of name while observing that disputes relating to succession, title, ownership and validity of the registered Will fall outside the jurisdiction of the consumer grievance redressal mechanism and are required to be adjudicated by the competent Civil Court.
5. Aggrieved by the said Order, the Appellants have preferred the present Appeal before this Authority. The Appellants have asserted that the Appeal is confined to examination of procedural legality, departmental verification, administrative due diligence and compliance with procedural safeguards adopted by the Distribution Licensee while affecting the transfer/change of name. They have specifically contended that they do not seek adjudication of title, ownership, succession, inheritance, partition or validity of the registered Will.
6. During the course of proceedings before this Authority, a preliminary issue regarding the maintainability of the present Appeal and the locus standi of the Appellants was raised. By Daily Order dated 22.06.2026, the Appellants were granted an opportunity to address the said issue. Pursuant thereto, the Appellants filed a detailed rejoinder dated 27.06.2026 contending that they possess sufficient locus standi to challenge the procedural legality of the administrative action undertaken by the Distribution Licensee and that the Appeal is maintainable within the limited scope of examining procedural compliance.
7. The matter was thereafter heard on 01.07.2026 through Video Conferencing. During the course of hearing, the Appellant fairly admitted that he is not a "consumer" within



the meaning of Section 2(15) of the Electricity Act, 2003. However, it was contended that the Appellants were questioning only the procedure adopted by the Distribution Licensee while processing the request for transfer/change of name and the adequacy of departmental verification undertaken before acting upon the documents submitted by Respondent No. 4. The Appellant was afforded an opportunity to substantiate the maintainability of the Appeal and the legal basis of his challenge but did not place on record any statutory provision, regulation or judicial precedent conferring upon him an independent right to maintain the present Appeal in the capacity asserted by him.

8. Respondent Nos. 1 and 2 submitted that the Appellants are admittedly not consumers under the Electricity Act, 2003, have no recognised legal status in relation to the subject electricity connection and cannot seek adjudication of disputes which essentially relate to succession, inheritance, title and the legal effect of the registered Will. It was further submitted that the Distribution Licensee acted upon the documents produced before it for the limited purpose of processing the request for transfer/change of name and that any dispute regarding succession or entitlement can only be decided by the competent Civil Court.

B. SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF THE APPELLANTS

The Appellants submitted that the present Appeal has been preferred under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003 challenging the Order dated 15.05.2026 passed by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Goa in Petition No. Goa/C.G. No. 02/2026.

At the outset, the Appellants clarified that they are not seeking adjudication of questions relating to title, ownership, succession, partition, inheritance rights, or the validity of any testamentary document allegedly executed by the deceased consumer. According to the Appellants, such issues fall within the domain of the competent Civil Court and are outside the scope of the present proceedings.

It was submitted that the Appeal is confined to examining the legality of the administrative action undertaken by the Electricity Department, Goa, while affecting transfer/change of name of the subject electricity connection after the demise of the original consumer. The Appellants contended that the issues requiring consideration relate to procedural fairness, administrative due diligence, verification standards, compliance with applicable procedures, and the legality of the transfer/change of name effected in favour of Respondent No. 4.



The Appellants submitted that the subject electricity connection originally stood in the name of Late Mrs. Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar, who expired in the year 2020, and that thereafter the electricity records came to be transferred in favour of Respondent No. 4, namely Mrs. Reshma Ramakant Shirodkar. According to the Appellants, since the registered consumer had expired, the Department ought to have undertaken adequate verification and scrutiny before affecting any change in the consumer records.

It was contended that objections had been raised before the Learned CGRF regarding the transfer process on the grounds that there existed multiple legal heirs and stakeholder branches connected with the deceased consumer and that the transfer was allegedly affected without obtaining consent or No Objection Certificates from all concerned persons. The Appellants further submitted that the transfer was processed on the basis of documents furnished by Respondent No. 4 without adequate independent verification by the Department.

The Appellants argued that the Department allegedly relied upon a Will or testamentary document without any prior judicial determination, probate, or independent verification and that the Department ought to have exercised greater caution before acting upon such documents for the purpose of affecting changes in consumer records.

It was further submitted that certain discrepancies existed in the name of the deceased consumer as reflected in different records, wherein the names "Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar", "Manurama Shirodkar" and "Manu R. Shirodkar" were stated to appear in different documents. According to the Appellants, no material was made available to demonstrate the manner in which the Department verified the identity linkage between such records before processing the transfer application.

The Appellants also relied upon information stated to have been obtained under the Right to Information Act and submitted that the available records did not disclose internal verification notes, legal scrutiny reports, file noting's, or other documentation evidencing the verification process undertaken by the Department. On this basis, it was contended that the transparency and adequacy of the verification exercise remained open to scrutiny.

The Appellants further submitted that materials placed before the Learned CGRF Goa, reflected the existence of multiple electricity connections associated with the same premises, property, or family structure. It was argued that inconsistencies allegedly existed regarding the number, status, and linkage of such connections and that these circumstances required a higher degree of procedural scrutiny before affecting any transfer/change of name in respect of the subject connection.



According to the Appellants, the existence of multiple stakeholder branches and related electricity connections warranted a comprehensive verification exercise to identify all affected stakeholders and to ensure procedural fairness before alteration of the consumer records.

The Appellants additionally contended that during the proceedings before the Learned CGRF Goa, Respondent No. 4 did not personally appear on certain occasions and was represented by another individual. It was submitted that objections were raised regarding the authority of such representative and that no valid authorization, Power of Attorney, Vakalatnama, or written authority was produced despite such objections. The Appellants submitted that the issue of authorization remained unresolved before the Forum.

The Appellants further submitted that while the Learned CGRF observed that disputes relating to title, succession, and the validity of the alleged Will were matters for adjudication by a competent Civil Court, the procedural objections concerning departmental verification, administrative scrutiny, and compliance with applicable procedures were not adequately examined. It was contended that the impugned order neither determined whether proper verification had been undertaken by the Department nor conclusively addressed the procedural objections raised by the Appellants.

On the aforesaid grounds, the Appellants prayed that this Authority may call for and examine the complete departmental records relating to the transfer/change of name of Consumer Connection No. 060000549646, scrutinize the verification process followed by the Department, direct production of relevant records and authorizations, and pass such further orders as may be deemed appropriate in the interests of procedural fairness, transparency, and compliance with applicable procedures.

C. SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS

The Respondents opposed the Appeal and supported the order passed by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Goa. The Respondents submitted that the transfer/change of name of Consumer Account No. 60000549646 from the name of late Smt. Manorama R. Shirodkar to Smt. Reshma Ramakant Shirodkar was processed strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Electricity Act, 2003, the applicable provisions of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and Standards of Performance) Regulations, 2018, and the departmental procedure governing change of name of electricity connections.



It was submitted that Respondent No. 4, while seeking transfer/change of name, furnished all the requisite documents prescribed under the applicable procedure. These documents included:

A copy of the registered Will executed by late Smt. Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar dated 27.05.2010, registered at Folios 89V to 90V in Book No. 171 before the Office of the Civil Registrar-cum-Sub-Registrar, Tiswadi.

The Death Certificate of late Smt. Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar, evidencing her demise on 14.04.2020.

The Death Certificate of late Shri Ramakant Raghuvir Shirodkar, husband of Respondent No. 4; and

A duly sworn Affidavit of Respondent No. 4 declaring, inter alia, that she was entitled to seek transfer of the subject electricity connection on the strength of the documents furnished by her.

The Respondents submitted that after examining the documents produced by Respondent No. 4, the request for transfer/change of name was processed in accordance with the prevailing departmental procedure. It was contended that the Distribution Licensee was required to undertake only such administrative scrutiny as is contemplated under the applicable regulations and was neither expected nor empowered to adjudicate disputed questions relating to title, succession, inheritance or the validity of testamentary documents. With regard to the allegations concerning lack of transparency, the Respondents submitted that all information sought by the Appellants under the Right to Information Act, 2005 was furnished by the competent authority within the prescribed time. According to the Respondents, there was no suppression of any departmental record or information which was legally required to be disclosed.

The Respondents further submitted that the matter had also been examined by the Central Vigilance Cell of the Electricity Department, which, upon a prima facie examination, did not find any wrongdoing, mala fide action or deliberate irregularity on the part of the departmental officers in processing the application for transfer/change of name.

It was further contended that the present dispute essentially arises out of an intra-family disagreement regarding succession and entitlement to the estate of the deceased consumer. According to the Respondents, such disputes are civil in nature and cannot be adjudicated either by the Distribution Licensee or by the consumer grievance redressal mechanism established under the Electricity Act, 2003.



The Respondents also submitted that copies of their reply, together with the supporting documents, were duly served upon the Appellants through their e-mail addresses and were likewise furnished to Respondent No. 4 through her registered e-mail address, thereby ensuring compliance with the principles of natural justice.

On the basis of the aforesaid submissions, the Respondents prayed that the Appeal be dismissed and that the order dated 15.05.2026 passed by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Goa be affirmed.

D. Proceedings

The present Appeal has been preferred under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003 against the Order dated 15.05.2026 passed by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Goa in Petition No. Goa/C.G. No. 02/2026.

Upon receipt of the Appeal, this Authority examined the Memorandum of Appeal and the documents annexed therewith and, finding a prima facie case for consideration, issued Admission Notices to the Respondents.

In response thereto, Respondent Nos. 2 and 3 appeared in person and filed their written reply opposing the Appeal. Despite due service of notice through e-mail, Respondent No. 4 did not enter appearance before this Authority. During the hearing held on 01.07.2026, Mr. Rajesh Shirodkar appeared and stated that he is the son of late Shri Ramakant R. Shirodkar and Respondent No. 4. He sought to represent Respondent No. 4 on the ground that she was unable to attend the proceedings. However, no Power of Attorney, authorization letter or any other written authority executed by Respondent No. 4 authorising him to represent her was produced before this Authority. In the absence of any valid authorization, Mr. Rajesh Shirodkar was not permitted to represent Respondent No. 4, and his submissions were not treated as submissions made on her behalf.

The matter was first taken up for hearing through Video Conferencing on 22.06.2026. The Appellants appeared and advanced their preliminary submissions. Respondent Nos. 1 to 3 were represented through their authorised representative. Despite service of the Admission Notice through e-mails dated 15.06.2026 and 18.06.2026, Respondent No. 4 did not appear before this Authority.

During the course of the hearing held on 22.06.2026, this Authority considered it appropriate to raise the preliminary issue regarding the maintainability of the present Appeal and the locus standi of the Appellants to invoke the appellate jurisdiction under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003. Upon the said issue being raised, the Appellants



sought time to file a rejoinder addressing the question of maintainability. Considering the request, this Authority granted one week's time to the Appellants to file their rejoinder, with a direction to furnish an advance copy thereof to the Respondents.

Pursuant to the liberty granted by this Authority, the Appellants filed a detailed rejoinder dated 27.06.2026, contending that the Appeal was maintainable and that their challenge was confined to examining the procedural legality, departmental verification, administrative due diligence and compliance with the applicable procedure adopted by the Distribution Licensee while affecting the transfer/change of name of the subject electricity connection. The Appellants further asserted that they were not seeking adjudication of title, ownership, succession, inheritance or the validity of the registered Will.

The matter was thereafter listed for further hearing on 01.07.2026 through Video Conferencing. The Appellants appeared and advanced their submissions. Respondent Nos. 2 and 3 appeared in person.

Respondent No. 4 did not appear personally. However, Mr. Rajesh Shirodkar, claiming to be the son of Respondent No. 4, sought permission to represent her and submitted that Respondent No. 4 was unable to attend the hearing due to ill health. Upon enquiry by this Authority, it was admitted that no Power of Attorney, authorisation letter, Vakalatnama or any other written authority executed by Respondent No. 4 authorising Mr. Rajesh Shirodkar to represent her had been placed on record. In the absence of any valid authorisation, Mr. Rajesh Shirodkar was not permitted to represent Respondent No. 4 during the proceedings. It was further noted that certain written submissions had been received from Mr. Rajesh Shirodkar through e-mail dated 29.06.2026. Since the said submissions were not filed by Respondent No. 4 personally or through a duly authorised representative, the same were taken only for the limited purpose of reference and were not treated as pleadings on behalf of Respondent No. 4.

During the course of the hearing on 01.07.2026, the Appellant fairly admitted that he was not a "consumer" within the meaning of Section 2(15) of the Electricity Act, 2003. Nevertheless, he contended that the Appeal was confined to examining the procedure adopted by the Distribution Licensee while processing the request for transfer/change of name. The Appellant questioned, inter alia, the manner in which the documents, including the registered Will relied upon by Respondent No. 4, were verified by the Department and the reasons for not obtaining No Objection Certificates from the Appellants before affecting the transfer/change of name.



This Authority specifically afforded the Appellant an opportunity to substantiate the maintainability of the present Appeal by placing on record any statutory provision, regulation, or judicial precedent conferring upon him an enforceable right to maintain the Appeal in the capacity asserted by him. Despite such opportunity, no such material was placed on record beyond the submissions already contained in the Memorandum of Appeal and the rejoinder dated 27.06.2026.

Respondent Nos. 2 and 3 submitted that the Appellants admittedly do not fall within the definition of "consumer" under the Electricity Act, 2003 and have no recognised legal status in relation to the subject electricity connection. It was further submitted that the transfer/change of name had been processed on the basis of the documents furnished by Respondent No. 4 in accordance with the applicable departmental procedure and that any dispute relating to succession, inheritance, title or the legal effect of the registered Will could be adjudicated only by the competent Civil Court.

After hearing the parties at length, considering the pleadings, the rejoinder filed by the Appellants, the documents placed on record and the submissions advanced during the course of the hearings, this Authority reserved the matter for orders.

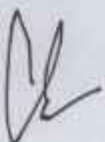
E. Findings and Analysis

Based on the Appellants' grounds of appeal, the CGRF order, and the limited scope of the challenge before this Authority, it would be advisable not to mechanically adopt all nine issues framed by the CGRF. The Appeal before the Ombudsman is narrower and principally questions whether the CGRF correctly appreciated the procedural legality of the transfer process and whether the Electricity Department exercised adequate due diligence before affecting the change of name.

For purposes of this Authority's order, the controversy can be distilled into the following issues:

Issues for Determination

1. Whether the present Appeal is maintainable before this Authority under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003?
2. Whether the Appellants are entitled to question the procedural legality of the transfer/change of name of Consumer Connection No. 060000549646 notwithstanding the dispute regarding title, succession, or validity of the alleged Will?
3. Issue No. 3



In what capacity do the Appellants challenge the transfer/change of name of the subject electricity connection and whether they possess sufficient legal interest to maintain such challenge beyond alleging procedural irregularity?

4. Whether the Electricity Department exercised due procedural diligence and followed the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements while affecting the transfer/change of name of the subject electricity connection in favour of Respondent No. 4?
5. Whether the alleged absence of consent/NOCs from other legal heirs, the alleged discrepancies in identity particulars, and the alleged inconsistencies regarding connected electricity installations disclose any procedural illegality warranting interference with the impugned order?
6. Whether the CGRF committed any error in concluding that disputes relating to title, succession, heirship, ownership, and validity of the alleged Will fall outside the jurisdiction of consumer grievance proceedings under the Electricity Act, 2003?
7. Whether the Appellants are entitled to any relief?

Findings

Issue No. 1

Whether the present Appeal is maintainable before this Authority under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003?

The present Appeal has been preferred against a final order passed by the CGRF under Section 42(5) of the Electricity Act, 2003. The grievance raised concerns the legality of administrative action undertaken by the Distribution Licensee while processing a request for transfer/change of name of an electricity connection. Such grievance falls within the supervisory appellate jurisdiction of this Authority under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003.

Accordingly, the Appeal is maintainable to the extent it seeks examination of procedural compliance and administrative action of the Distribution Licensee. However, this Authority cannot adjudicate questions of title, succession, ownership, partition, heirship, or validity of testamentary documents.

Finding: Issue No. 1 is answered in the affirmative.

Issue No. 2: Whether the Appellants possess any enforceable right to challenge the transfer/change of name of the subject electricity connection and whether this Authority can adjudicate the issues raised by them?

The principal challenge raised by the Appellants is directed against the transfer/change of name of Consumer Connection No. 060000549646 from the name of late Smt. Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar to Respondent No. 4. The Appellants contend that the transfer was affected without obtaining their consent, without adequate verification, and without considering the claims of other legal heirs.

At the outset, it is necessary to examine the capacity in which the Appellants seek to challenge the said transfer.



It is an admitted position that the Appellants are neither the registered consumers in respect of the subject electricity connection nor the applicants who sought transfer of the connection. The electricity connection never stood in their names. It is also not their case that they are presently recognised by the Distribution Licensee as consumers, applicants, or persons entitled to the connection under the applicable regulations.

The Appellants seek to challenge the transfer on the basis that they claim to be legal heirs and descendants of the deceased consumer and that the transfer ought not to have been affected without their consent or participation. However, the record reveals that the transfer was processed on the basis of a registered Will dated 27.05.2010 relied upon by Respondent No. 4. It is further not disputed that the Appellants are not beneficiaries under the said Will.

The entire foundation of the Appellants' objection therefore rests upon their assertion that they possess rights superior or adverse to those claimed by Respondent No. 4 under the said Will. Any determination of such claim would necessarily require adjudication of questions relating to succession, inheritance, heirship, entitlement to the estate of the deceased consumer, and the legal effect, validity, interpretation, or enforceability of the registered Will.

Neither the Distribution Licensee, nor the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, nor this Authority exercising powers under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003 possesses jurisdiction to adjudicate disputes relating to title, ownership, succession, inheritance, validity of testamentary documents, or competing civil rights arising out of the estate of a deceased person. Such matters fall exclusively within the jurisdiction of the competent Civil Court.

This Authority is unable to accept the submission of the Appellants that the challenge is confined purely to procedural irregularities. Although couched in the language of procedural compliance, the substance of the grievance is that Respondent No. 4 was not entitled to secure transfer of the connection to her name. Such contention necessarily invites an examination of the legal effect of the registered Will and the competing claims of succession asserted by the parties. Entertaining such challenge would require this Authority to enter into an adjudication which is clearly beyond its statutory jurisdiction.

In the absence of any declaration, injunction, succession determination, probate proceedings, or order passed by a competent Civil Court affecting the operation of the registered Will relied upon by Respondent No. 4, the Distribution Licensee was entitled to consider the documents placed before it for the limited purpose of administrative processing of the request for change of name. The electricity authorities are neither expected nor empowered to conduct a trial regarding competing succession claims or determine the validity of testamentary documents. Accordingly, this Authority holds that the Appellants have failed to establish any independent or enforceable right before the electricity authorities to seek



cancellation or reversal of the transfer/change of name effected in favour of Respondent No. 4. If the Appellants dispute the entitlement claimed by Respondent No. 4 under the registered Will, or seek recognition of any alleged succession rights in their favour, their remedy lies before the competent Civil Court having jurisdiction to adjudicate such disputes.

Therefore, while the Appellants may question whether the Distribution Licensee acted in accordance with the applicable procedure, they cannot seek from this Authority any adjudication which would directly or indirectly determine the validity of the registered Will, the succession rights of the parties, or entitlement to the property or electricity connection flowing therefrom.

The issue is answered accordingly against the Appellants.

Issue No. 3

"In what capacity do the Appellants challenge the transfer/change of name of the subject electricity connection and whether they possess sufficient legal interest to maintain such challenge beyond alleging procedural irregularity?"

The Appellants have challenged the transfer/change of name of Consumer Connection No. 060000549646 from the name of late Smt. Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar to Respondent No. 4.

The record reveals that the Appellants are neither the registered consumers in respect of the subject electricity connection nor applicants seeking transfer of the said connection. The connection admittedly never stood in their names.

The Appellants claim interest in the matter, on the basis that they are descendants and/or legal heirs of the deceased consumer. However, Respondent No. 4 relies upon a registered Will dated 27.05.2010 under which the subject property is stated to have been bequeathed to specified beneficiaries and the names of the present Appellants do not appear amongst such beneficiaries.

This Authority cannot adjudicate the correctness, validity, enforceability, or legal effect of the said Will. Equally, this Authority cannot determine questions of succession, heirship, inheritance, or competing proprietary claims arising out of the estate of the deceased consumer. Such issues fall exclusively within the jurisdiction of the competent Civil Court.

Consequently, the Appellants cannot claim any independent right before this Authority as owners, beneficiaries, successors, or persons entitled to the subject connection. Their legal standing, if any, can only extend to questioning whether the Distribution Licensee complied with the applicable procedure while processing the request for change of name.

Once the challenge is confined to procedural scrutiny, the Appellants cannot seek relief founded upon disputed claims of inheritance, succession, or entitlement to the property or electricity connection. Any right asserted by the Appellants beyond the limited issue of procedural compliance necessarily depends upon adjudication of civil rights by a competent court.



Accordingly, this Authority holds that the Appellants have no established legal status as consumers, applicants, beneficiaries under the registered Will, or persons presently recognized in the electricity records. Their standing in the present proceedings is therefore confined only to raising allegations regarding procedural compliance by the Distribution Licensee, and not to seeking determination of ownership, succession, entitlement, or rights in the subject electricity connection.

Issue No. 4

Whether the Electricity Department exercised due procedural diligence and followed the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements while affecting the transfer/change of name of the subject electricity connection in favour of Respondent No. 4?

The material on record indicates that the application for change of name was accompanied by:

- Registered Will dated 27.05.2010;
- Death certificate of the original consumer;
- Relevant death certificates of family members;
- Affidavit and declaration submitted by Respondent No. 4.

The Department processed the application on the basis of the aforesaid documents. The Appellants have repeatedly asserted that the Department failed to undertake independent verification. However, apart from raising suspicions regarding the adequacy of verification, no substantive material has been produced demonstrating that the Department acted mala fide, ignored mandatory regulatory requirements, or knowingly accepted forged or fabricated documents.

The role of the Distribution Licensee in change-of-name matters is administrative and not adjudicatory. The Licensee is required to undertake reasonable prima facie verification and is not expected to conduct a trial regarding succession disputes.

The record further indicates that the Department considered the documents placed before it and processed the application accordingly. The Central Vigilance Cell of Goa Electricity Department also reportedly did not find any prima facie wrongdoing in the processing of the application.

Accordingly, no material procedural illegality of such magnitude as would justify appellate interference has been established.

Finding: The Department substantially complied with the applicable procedure while processing the transfer/change of name.

Issue No. 5

Effect of NOCs, Identity Discrepancies and Multiple Connections

The Appellants contend that:

- NOCs from all legal heirs were not obtained;
- Variations exist in the name of the deceased consumer;
- Multiple electricity connections existed in the premises/family property.



With regard to NOCs, neither the Supply Code nor any provision brought to the notice of this Authority establishes that procurement of NOCs from all possible heirs is mandatory in every case where an applicant relies upon a registered testamentary document and supporting records.

Similarly, the differences appearing in the names "Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar", "Manurama Shirodkar" and "Manu R. Shirodkar" appear, on the present record, to be variations in spelling, abbreviation, or recording. No convincing evidence has been produced to establish that the documents relate to different individuals.

The existence of multiple electricity connections may warrant greater caution by the Department; however, no evidence has been produced to show that the impugned connection was transferred to an unrelated premises or that any other consumer's rights were adversely affected by reason of such transfer.

Nevertheless, this Authority observes that the Department would be well advised, in future cases involving deceased consumers and competing family claims, to maintain more detailed verification records and clear file noting's demonstrating the basis of satisfaction before affecting changes in consumer records.

Finding: The objections raised do not establish any procedural illegality warranting reversal of the transfer/change of name.

Issue No. 6

Jurisdiction Regarding Will, Succession and Ownership Disputes

The principal controversy between the parties ultimately stems from competing claims concerning rights flowing from the estate of the deceased consumer.

Neither the Distribution Licensee, nor the CGRF, nor this Authority possesses jurisdiction to adjudicate:

- validity of a Will;
- succession rights;
- title disputes;
- partition claims;
- heirship disputes;
- ownership of immovable property.

Such questions require adjudication by competent Civil Courts upon appreciation of evidence.

The CGRF was therefore correct in holding that these matters fall outside the scope of consumer grievance proceedings.

Finding: The CGRF committed no jurisdictional error in declining to adjudicate issues relating to title, succession, ownership, or validity of the alleged Will.

Issue No. 7

Relief

In view of the findings recorded above:

- no procedural illegality has been established;



- no violation of any mandatory statutory or regulatory provision has been demonstrated;
- the core dispute remains a civil dispute concerning succession and property rights.

Consequently, no ground is made out for interference with the order of the CGRF.

Finding: The Appellants are not entitled to the reliefs sought in the present Appeal.

F. CONCLUSION

Having carefully considered the pleadings, documents placed on record, submissions advanced by the parties, the findings recorded by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Goa, and the material available before this Authority, it emerges that the dispute raised by the Appellants substantially arises from competing claims concerning succession, inheritance, and entitlement flowing from the estate of late Smt. Manorama Raghuvir Shirodkar.

The Appellants seek to question the transfer/change of name of the subject electricity connection in favour of Respondent No. 4 primarily on the basis of their asserted status as legal heirs of the deceased consumer. However, the transfer was processed by the Distribution Licensee on the basis of a registered Will and other supporting documents furnished by Respondent No. 4.

This Authority is of the considered view that neither the Distribution Licensee, nor the Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, nor the Electricity Ombudsman possesses jurisdiction to adjudicate questions relating to title, ownership, succession, inheritance, heirship, or the validity, interpretation, or legal effect of testamentary documents. Such issues fall exclusively within the jurisdiction of the competent Civil Court.

The Appellants are neither the registered consumers of the subject connection nor the applicants seeking transfer thereof. Their challenge necessarily requires determination of rights claimed contrary to the registered Will relied upon by Respondent No. 4. Such adjudication is beyond the statutory jurisdiction of this Authority.

This Authority further finds that no material has been placed on record to establish any mala fide action, arbitrariness, patent procedural illegality, or violation of any mandatory provision of the applicable Supply Code or the Electricity Act, 2003 while processing the request for transfer/change of name. The Distribution Licensee acted upon prima facie documentary material placed before it and cannot be expected to adjudicate competing civil claims amongst family members.

Accordingly, no ground is made out for interference with the order passed by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Goa.

It is clarified that this Authority has not expressed any opinion whatsoever on the validity of the registered Will, the rights of the parties under the said Will, questions of succession, inheritance, title, ownership, or entitlement to the property in question.



All such issues are expressly left open for determination by the competent Civil Court, if approached by any aggrieved party.

G. ORDER

In view of the foregoing discussion, analysis and findings recorded hereinabove, this Authority passes the following order:

1. The Appeal is dismissed.
2. The rejoinder dated 27.06.2026 filed by the Appellants and all submissions advanced by the parties during the course of the proceedings have been duly considered while deciding the present Appeal.
3. It is held that the Appellants have failed to establish any enforceable legal right or recognised legal status under the Electricity Act, 2003 or the applicable regulatory framework to seek interference with the transfer/change of name of Consumer Connection No. 060000549646 effected in favour of Respondent No. 4.
4. It is further held that the Distribution Licensee processed the request for transfer/change of name substantially in accordance with the applicable statutory provisions, the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (Electricity Supply Code and Standards of Performance) Regulations, 2018, and the prescribed departmental procedure. No illegality, arbitrariness, deficiency in service or material procedural irregularity warranting interference in exercise of the appellate jurisdiction of this Authority has been established.
5. The challenge raised by the Appellants, in substance, involves questions relating to succession, inheritance, heirship, title, ownership and the legal effect of the registered Will dated 27.05.2010. Such issues fall outside the jurisdiction of this Authority under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003 and are required to be adjudicated, if so raised, by the competent Civil Court. Accordingly, this Authority declines to adjudicate upon the validity, interpretation, enforceability or legal effect of the said Will or any competing civil claims arising therefrom.
6. Consequently, the Order dated 15.05.2026 passed by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum, Goa in Petition No. Goa/C.G. No. 02/2026 is affirmed.
7. Before parting with the matter, this Authority considers it appropriate to observe that the scope of the present proceedings is confined to the exercise of appellate jurisdiction under Section 42(6) of the Electricity Act, 2003. The findings recorded herein are limited to determining whether the impugned order passed by the Learned Consumer Grievance Redressal Forum calls for interference within the statutory framework governing consumer grievance redressal. The observations made in this order shall not be construed as adjudicating or determining any question relating to title, ownership,



succession, inheritance, heirship or the validity and legal effect of the registered Will, all of which are matters falling within the exclusive jurisdiction of the competent Civil Court.

8. There shall be no order as to costs.

9. The Appeal stands disposed of accordingly.

Let a copy of this Order be supplied to all concerned parties in accordance with law and uploaded on the official website of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission for Goa and Union Territories.

Pronounced accordingly.


(C M Sharma)
3/7/26

Dated: 03.07.2026

Ombudsman (JERC)