Diary No. DNO/26/CCPD/5852 **Dated:** 22/10/2026

In the matter of—

Dr. Aditya Sanjay Lohiya

(Complainant)

Versus

The Secretary

Department of Posts

(Respondent)

1. Background of the Case

1.1 The Complainant, a person with 58?rebral palsy, stated that he visited the Akola Head Post Office to dispatch parcels and found that the facility lacked basic accessibility for persons with disabilities. He submitted that there was no designated parking space with proper signboards for persons with disabilities, no proper ramp at the entrance, and that the road leading to the building was uneven, making it difficult for persons with disabilities to reach and enter the post office.

1.2 The Complainant further stated that there was no separate counter or facility for persons with benchmark disabilities to dispatch their parcels. He submitted that although a doorstep pick-up facility exists, persons with disabilities who wish to visit the post office and dispatch their parcels themselves are entitled to an accessible building and premises, and that this amounts to a violation of the accessibility provisions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, even after the lapse of about ten years since its enactment.

2. Notice of Admissibility

2.1 A notice dated 01.10.2026 under Sections 75 and 77 of the RPwD Act, 2016, was issued to the Respondent for a hearing on 09.10.2026 to determine the admissibility of the case and find out if this can be resolved without further quasi-judicial intervention of this Court.

3. Respondent's Submission

3.1 The Department of Posts, the Respondent, through the Senior Superintendent of Post Offices, Akola Division, vide its written reply dated 06.10.2026, expressed regret for the inconvenience faced by the Complainant and submitted that the Akola Head Post Office is situated in the main square opposite the bus stand. It submitted that the premises have two entry gates; that ramps along with steps are available on both sides of the main entrance gate; that a separate large ramp with safety railing is available inside the premises for entry into the main building, where eight counters are available for the public; and that another large ramp with safety railing is available at the back side of the building. It further submitted that instructions have been issued to the staff, especially the counter staff, to attend to persons with disabilities on priority.

3.2 The Respondent submitted that, after receipt of the complaint, an order for the purchase of wheelchairs had been placed through the GeM portal and that the wheelchairs would be available shortly. It stated that the Complainant might have entered through the second entry gate, where the ground level is lower than the main road level, and that levelling it requires a considerable budget; the matter has therefore been taken up with the Postmaster General, Nagpur Region, with a request to direct the Assistant Engineer, Civil Wing, to visit the premises, prepare an estimate and allot the required funds. The Respondent submitted that this work is time-consuming and requested that, until its completion, the Complainant be asked to use the main gate, where a ramp is available, or to avail of the Department's online services such as doorstep pick-up and delivery.

4. Hearing

4.1 A preliminary hearing was conducted on 09.10.2026. The following parties/representatives were present during the hearing:

Sl.No.	Name of the parties/Representatives	For Complainant/Respondent	Mode of Attendance
1	Dr. Aditya Sanjay Lohiya	Complainant	Online
2	Ms. Sangeeta Ratteswar, Sr. Postmaster, Akola Head Post Office, Maharashtra Circle, Department of Posts	Respondent	Online

5. Record of Proceedings

5.1 During the hearing, the Respondent reiterated its written reply, regretted the inconvenience caused to the Complainant and submitted that the Akola Head Post Office is an old establishment located in the heart of the city with two entrances, of which the first has a ramp, while the road at the second entrance is uneven. The Respondent submitted that a proposal for development of the road had already been forwarded through the civil wing to the division and regional offices as the cost of the work is heavy, that the work of levelling the road is under progress, and that arrangements for a wheelchair have also been made.

5.2 The Complainant stated that no separate queue, lower-height counter or staff assistance is available for persons with disabilities, who have to stand in the common line for a long time without any proper waiting area. He further stated that one of the two gates is kept closed, that the height of the entrance has reduced after construction of the new road, making it very difficult to enter with a vehicle, and that the ground level of the parking area is uneven and hazardous for a person with disability getting down from a vehicle. He requested waiting areas and special counters for persons with disabilities that operate full time, and also requested that signboards and designated parking for persons with disabilities be provided.

6. Observations & Recommendations

6.1 The Court observes that accessibility is a mandatory requirement and not merely an obligation to be discharged as and when resources permit, and that sensitivity towards the needs of persons with disabilities is lacking at the Akola Head Post Office. Regretting the inconvenience is not sufficient. The Court further observes that, since the Respondent was aware of the difficulty at the second entrance, the other entrance could have been kept open and a temporary arrangement made to make both entrances approachable, and that these are simple measures which do not require large expenditure. Sections 44 and 45 of the RPwD Act, 2016 require public buildings to be made accessible within the period prescribed under the Act and the Rules, and accessibility standards benefit not only persons with disabilities but also senior citizens and patients; they are part of the Respondent's social responsibility and not an additional burden.

6.2 The Respondent is recommended to ensure that, within 45 days from the issuance of this Order, the Akola Head Post Office is made accessible for persons with disabilities, including (i) approachable and usable entrances, with the second entrance kept open or a temporary arrangement made until the levelling work is completed; (ii) an even surface on the approach road and the parking area; (iii) designated parking for persons with disabilities with proper signboards; (iv) proper waiting areas; and (v) a lower-height counter or facility for persons with disabilities. While this Court understands that a counter cannot practically be dedicated to persons with disabilities throughout the day, the Respondent is recommended to ensure that,

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whenever a person with disability visits the post office, the staff voluntarily attend to the person on priority, in a comfortable and sensitive manner, and that the staff are sensitized accordingly.

6.3 The Respondent is further recommended to get an accessibility audit of the Akola Head Post Office conducted and to submit the audit report, along with a declaration on the compliance of the above recommendations, duly signed by the competent officer, to this Court within 90 days from the issuance of this Order.

6.4 In exercise of the functions of this Court under Section 75(1)(b) of the RPwD Act, 2016, the Respondent is recommended to take necessary action on the above recommendations and to inform this Court of the Action Taken Report (ATR) within three months from the date of receipt of this Order, as provided under Section 76 of the Act.

6.5 With the above recommendations, the case is disposed of.

Yours faithfully,

(S. Govindaraj)
Commissioner