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* **IN THE HIGH COURT OF DELHI AT NEW DELHI**

+ **W.P.(C) 3722/2026 & CM APPL. 18259/2026**

MONIKA CHAUHAN

.....Petitioner

Through: Mr. Naman Jain, Advocate.

versus

PRINCIPAL DISTRICT AND SESSIONS JUDGE (HQ)

.....Respondent

Through: Mrs. Avnish Ahlawat, SC, GNCTD
with Mr. Nitesh Kumar Singh, Ms.
Aliza Alam and Mr. Mohnish
Sehrawat, Advocates.

CORAM:

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE SANJEEV NARULA

ORDER

% **24.03.2026**

1. The Petitioner joined service with the Delhi District Courts as Stenographer Grade III on 19th March, 2010. On 10th January, 2025, she has been granted the first financial upgradation under the Modified Assured Career Progression Scheme [“MACP”] with effect from 1st January, 2024. The grievance of the Petitioner is that the said benefit ought to have been granted from the date she completed ten years of service. In this regard, she submitted a representation, which stands rejected by the impugned order dated 12th February, 2026. The relevant extract thereof reads as under:

“Sub: Representation/ Reminder regarding for grant of MACP w.e.f 2020.

I am directed to refer to your request letters dated 24.01.2025, 03.01.2026, on the subject cited above, and to inform you that the Screening Committee in its recent meeting held on 14/11/2025 considered your case for anti-dating the benefit of 1st financial up-gradation in the grade pay of



Rs.4800/- and rejected the same. The relevant extracts of the minutes of meeting/recommendations of the Committee is as under:

“Representation of Ms. Monika Chauhan

The official has submitted that her 1st MACP has been granted w.e.f. 01.01.2024, whereas she claims it was due in 2020. She states that her ACRs for 2017 and 2018 were graded B+ (Good), which affected her eligibility. She has explained that her family circumstances and child-care responsibilities affected her punctuality and performance during that period. She states that she has otherwise worked sincerely, and that the same Presiding Officer subsequently graded her as ‘A’ for 2019 and 2020. She asserts that not granting her MACPS from due date has caused her financial loss and mental distress to her as her batchmates are now senior to her and she is now equivalent to her junior of 2014 batch. She requests that the 1st MACP be granted from the date of her “actual entitlement” in 2020.

The Committee has carefully examined the representation and the service record of the official. Financial up-gradation under MACP is subject to meeting the prescribed performance benchmark on the due date. The official’s ACR gradings for the years 2017 and 2018, assessed as B+ (Good), fall below the required benchmark, and these gradings were duly communicated and upheld upon review. While the Committee acknowledges the personal circumstances mentioned by the official, it is clarified that MACP can only be granted from the date on which the benchmark is actually met, and not merely from completion of the qualifying service period. Since the official did not meet the benchmark in 2020, her request for ante-dating the 1st MACP cannot be acceded to. The 1st MACP already granted to her w.e.f. 01.01.2024 is therefore in order. Her representation stands rejected and she be informed accordingly.”

2. The aforesaid order indicates that the request for ante-dating the grant of the first MACP has been declined on the ground that the Petitioner’s ACR gradings for the years 2017 and 2018 were assessed as “B+ (Good)”, which falls below the prescribed benchmark.
3. The impugned order further records that the said gradings were “*duly communicated and upheld upon review*”.
4. Mr. Naman Jain, counsel for the Petitioner, argues that the gradings for the years 2017 and 2018 were not communicated in a timely manner. It is further contended that upon receipt of the gradings, the Petitioner noticed



that the adverse impact was primarily on account of low attendance, whereas the overall remarks of the Reporting Officer were otherwise favourable. The Petitioner had, therefore, submitted representations explaining the circumstances necessitating leave, including significant family responsibilities, such as caring for four young children. It is submitted that these circumstances were not duly considered while rejecting her representations, which has consequently led to delay in grant of MACP benefits by four years. It is further contended that delayed communication of the ACR for the year 2016 also had a cascading effect on the subsequent year gradings.

5. Mrs. Avnish Ahlawat, SC (GNCTD) appearing for the Respondent, submits that the Petitioner's representations were duly considered. It is also urged that there is delay on the part of the Petitioner in approaching this Court.

6. The Court has considered the aforementioned submissions. The scope of judicial review in matters relating to ACR gradings is limited. However, the Court cannot lose sight of the fact that, in the present case, the consequence of the impugned gradings is significant, resulting in denial of MACP benefits for a period of four years. Although the Petitioner's representations have been considered, the orders dated 26th June, 2021 rejecting the representations for the ACRs of the years 2017 and 2018 do not reflect due consideration of the circumstances put forth by the Petitioner.

7. Accordingly, in view of the aforesaid circumstances, the orders dated 26th June, 2021 are set aside. The Respondent is directed to reconsider the Petitioner's representations for upgradation of ACRs for the years 2017 and 2018 and pass a reasoned and speaking order thereon within a period of four



weeks from today.

8. Subject to the outcome of the aforesaid exercise, in the event the Petitioner's ACRs are upgraded, the Respondent shall also reconsider the Petitioner's case for grant of first MACP from the appropriate date.

9. The petition is disposed of in the above terms.

SANJEEV NARULA, J

MARCH 24, 2026/hc