



*Trust Through Transparency*

**“An Act to provide for setting out the practical regime of right to information for citizens to secure access to information under the control of public authorities, in order to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority, the constitution of a Central Information Commission and State Information Commissions and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.**

**Whereas the constitution of India has established democratic republic;**

**And Whereas democracy requires an informed citizenry and transparency of information which are vital to its functioning and also to contain corruption and to hold Governments and their instrumentalities accountable to the governed;**

**And Whereas revelation of information in actual practice is likely to conflict with other public interests including efficient operation of the Governments, optimum use of limited fiscal resources and the preservation of confidentiality of sensitive information;**

**And Whereas it is necessary to harmonise these conflicting interests while preserving the paramountcy of the democratic ideal;**

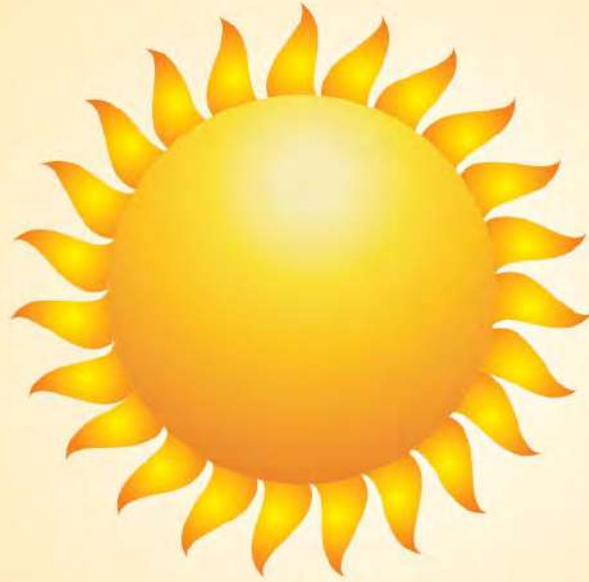
**Now, Therefore, it is expedient to provide for furnishing certain information to citizens who desire to have it.”**

**(From the Right to Information Act, 2005)**

# Foreword

Ever since adoption of the sunshine law on the Right to Information, a silent movement has been underway in India to promote transparency in governance, which is the key to building a participatory governance structure that treats people not as the subject of but equal partners in the process of decision making and policy formulation. The dynamics set in motion by the Right to Information Act, therefore, add strength, with each passing day, to the democratic polity that was established by the founding fathers of our Constitution in tune with the age old traditions of participatory governance and democratic spirit of the people of India. The 11th anniversary of the Right to Information Act is an opportune moment to take stock of the manner in which this Act has ushered in an air of trust and transparency and this is aptly the theme of this book. This volume is a compilation of the success stories of citizens using the Right to Information Act to access information on issues and decisions impacting them and their rights as citizens of a democratic country; in the process airing their grievances and ensuring greater accountability in governance. It also encompasses novel initiatives launched by governments and public authorities to disseminate suo motu maximum possible information and adopt citizen friendly and responsive systems of governance and grievance redressal, drawing upon the nature and content of the queries posed by citizens under the Right to Information Act.

This volume has been prepared on the basis of contributions made by general public, civil society organizations and government agencies. The success stories included in it are only a small sample of many such stories, big and small, that are contributing to the silent movement set in motion by the Right to Information Act. It is our hope that this volume would inspire many more citizens to become a part of this movement and many more public authorities to treat the requests for information under the Act as a barometer of the needs and aspirations of those impacted by their functioning and use this information to promote good governance practices.



**RTI Paves the Way**

# Student gets road repaired

**T K Sreejeeth Vijay | Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 2012**

*A secondary school student of Port Blair used RTI to get a road, repaired.*

## The Problem

T K Sreejeeth Vijay (Avre Palkaar Babu), a class 8 student of Kamaraj English Medium School, Port Blair, Andaman Islands, was greatly inconvenienced by a road that needed repairs.

## Use of RTI

On the advice of his father, Vijay filed an RTI application to Port Blair Municipal Council (PBMC) as well as Andaman Public Works Department (APWD) on 16 November 2012. Since the location was not clear in his RTI application, he had to appear before the Assistant Engineer I (Water Works), PBMC on 6 December 2012. He explained the location of the road with the help of Google images and the photos taken from mobile phones showed the bad condition of the road. After giving the location details of the road, the applicant was informed that information will be sent shortly.

## The Success

The road repair work was taken up on top priority the very next day. Local newspaper reported, "While PBMC started the repairing works of the said road, APWD forwarded the said RTI application to the concerned PIO to provide the information in time along with a reminder letter. Both the copies were also received by the young RTI user." Vijay became the youngest RTI user in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

(Source: [www.sousevasangamam.org](http://www.sousevasangamam.org))







# The Fair price shop becomes really Fair

| Bhadresh Wamja | Mehsana, Gujarat | 2011

*An 18 year old student from Saldi Village used RTI to nail the ration shop which was not distributing food grains to ration card holders. His persistence led to mandatory stock disclosure by fair price shops in Gujarat.*

## The Problem

Bhadresh Wamja was then a second year B.Com student from Saldi village, about 225 km from Gandhinagar, wondered why the two fair price shops in his village never seemed to have enough stocks of wheat, rice and kerosene. One day, when Bhadresh visited one of the shops, he was told by the shopkeeper that he had not been getting any stock of wheat, rice or kerosene from the government for the past several months. That prompted Bhadresh to use RTI 'in the larger interest of the village'.

## Use of RTI

By coincidence, a leading newspaper of Gujarat printed a chart showing the amount of food grains and kerosene that families of Above Poverty Line (APL) and Below Poverty Line (BPL) should receive every month, along with a table giving the prices per kg. Bhadresh filed an RTI application to the tehsildar of Lilia Taluka on 11 February 2011, seeking information on supplies that his village's fair price shop has been receiving every month, between August 2010 and January 2011. The tehsildar ordered the shopkeeper to disclose the details within 15 days. The shopkeeper did not oblige.

On advice of Pankti Jog, a member of the Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel (MAGP) in Ahmedabad, Bhadresh lodged a police complaint. He also visited the office of the District Supply Officer (DSO) where he found out that the shopkeeper was supplied with 8,306 kg of wheat as regular supply and 1,599 kg as extra wheat between August 2010 and January 2011. Records showed that the shopkeeper had supplied the entire stock to ration card holders.

Random inspection by the tehsildar who visited Saldi, revealed that nine of the ten ration card holders had not received even a single kilogram of grain during the previous six months. He was forced to write a report against the shopkeeper, and the District Supply Officer ordered an inquiry.



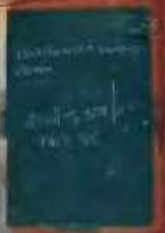
## The Success

Bhadresh's campaign propelled the Chief Information Commissioner of Gujarat to send a letter on 17 February 2011, to the Secretary of the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department, to order proactive disclosure of ration supplies not only at tehsildar offices, but also at fair price shops across the state.

The Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department in an order, dated 4 March 2011, asked all tehsildars and fair price shop licensees in Gujarat to proactively disclose ration supply information on the walls of fair price shops, every week.

(Source: [www.moneylife.in](http://www.moneylife.in))

श्री साखडी संपासहकारी मंडळी  
मु.साखडी ता.बि.महेंद्रगड.  
उ.क्र.नं.से. १२२० स्थापना.ता. २८-६-१९६०.





# Fair decision for BPL beneficiaries

**Buddhi Sagar Soni and Mahendra Dube | Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh | 2008-09**

*RTI information revealed that some people were misusing BPL ration cards and snatching away grains meant for the genuine Beneficiaries. The District Collector takes apt action.*

## The Problem

The government provides food grains at nominal cost through the Public Distribution System (PDS) so that poor families can have a wholesome meal. The benefits of PDS can be availed only by those who hold Below Poverty Line (BPL) ration cards. In this case, cards were to be issued to all those, who came under the BPL category in the years 1991-92, 1997-98 and 2006-07 during survey. However, some BPL families were deprived of the cards. Lakhan, son of Chandu, a marginal farmer-cum-agricultural labourer living in Karhaiyyapara area of Ratanpur, District Bilaspur, applied for his ration card. However, the authorities of Ratanpur Municipal Council refused the application, claiming that he was not entitled to it, as his name did not figure in the BPL survey list. Lakhan informed his educated son Buddhi Soni and his friend Mahendra Dube, about this problem.

## Use of RTI

Buddhi Soni and Mahendra Dube filed an RTI application with the Ratanpur Municipal Council, seeking photocopies of the list of BPL beneficiaries published over the last three years. The information provided on ration cards in circulation in Ratanpur from Collector (Food Department), Bilaspur, revealed that Lakhan's name figured in the survey list and a BPL ration card too had been issued in his name. However, someone else had been using it to claim the quota of rationed food grains. Besides, some other beneficiaries too had their names in one or the other BPL survey lists and ration cards had been issued in their names. However, these were also being illegally used by some others.

Soni and Dube registered a complaint with the District Collector and Sub Divisional Officer, Bilaspur and appealed to them to restore the right of the deprived ones.



## The Success

The district administration instituted an inquiry on the basis of the complaint by Soni and Dube. The food inspector, who was in charge of the inquiry recorded statements of officials from the Ratanpur Municipal Council, fair price shop operators in Ratanpur and some Councillors. His probe revealed that, some beneficiaries in whose names ration cards were issued had no knowledge of it. The competent authority then issued ration cards to the eligible beneficiaries and they began getting their rightful food grains at fair price.

*(Source: Chhattisgarh Academy of Administration)*

कार्यालय  
नगर पालिका परिषद रतनपुर  
जिला बिल्वासपुर (छ.ग.)

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राज्य शहरी विकास आनंकरण योजना अन्तर्गत  
भा. गोरधी नगर जल संचयन  
प्रधानमंत्री पुरस्कार से सम्मानित  
• शहरी क्षेत्र में लोग परिवारों में नियोजित निर्माण-परिवारों को उनके आवास से दूरत तक कनेक्ट  
• मानिक जल प्रसार मात्र 60 रुपए प्रति मीटर।  
कुलिया आनिक, उपकरणों से न... अग्रत शहर कुलिया 1 गल-सपर गोरधी नगर पालिका  
कार्यालय में उपलब्ध करें

नगरीय प्रशासन एवं विकास विभाग (छ.ग.)





# School girl gets garbage dump cleared

**Aishwarya Sharma (Parashar) | Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh | 2009**

*Teenager Aishwarya Sharma (Parashar) of Lucknow, who was eight years old and studying in class 4, used RTI to turn the garbage dump yard in front of her school into a public library.*

## The Problem

Aishwarya is possibly the youngest RTI user. She was eight year old in 2009 and a class 4 student of Rajajipuram branch of Lucknow's renowned City Montessori School, when she successfully used RTI for a public cause. Aishwarya was distressed that she and her school mates had to walk to school, through an overflowing garbage dump that lay in front of the school. They were also vulnerable to the stray dogs which loitered around the dump. Earlier, several residents had appealed to the civic body to shift the garbage dump, but it fell on deaf ears.

## Use of RTI

Aishwarya then consulted her mother who is an RTI user and wrote to the Chief Minister's Office on 26 October 2009, highlighting the danger that the garbage dump posed to the school children and requested action from the municipality to shift the garbage dump. She did not receive any reply. On 30 November 2009, she sent an application under Section 6 of the RTI Act to the PIO at the office of the Chief Minister. The application was handwritten on her school notebook. She took out required money from her piggybank to pay the RTI application fees of Rs.10.



In the application, Aishwarya sought information on the following points:

- Whether it was legally permissible to locate a garbage disposal site near a school. What was the land actually meant for?
- Who would be held responsible if the garbage dump became a source of infection for children in her school?

## The Success

In February 2010, Aishwarya received a response from the Lucknow Municipal Corporation, informing her that the said site was reserved for a public library. Hence the Mayor had directed that the site should be cleared. Soon, the garbage dump was gone and a public library with books, newspapers and magazines came up at the site.

# सबसे कम उम्र की आरटीआई कार्यकर्ता ने फैलाई जागरूकता

2009 की बात है जब शहर स्वाइन प्लू की चपेट में था। आठ वर्ष की ऐश्वर्या पराशर को जब पता चला कि स्वाइन प्लू के फैलने का प्रमुख कारण गंदगी है तो तत्कालीन मुख्यमंत्री को पत्र लिखकर उसने पूछा कि गंदगी से होने वाली बिमारियों के लिए कौन जिम्मेदार है? महीनों तक कोई जवाब नहीं मिला। ऐश्वर्या ने अपनी मां से आरटीआई के बारे में सुन रखा था। आज आरटीआई के जरिए शहर में गंदगी के लिए जिम्मेदार लोगों की खोज में निकली ऐश्वर्या देश की सबसे कम उम्र की आरटीआई कार्यकर्ता के रूप में राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर ख्याति अर्जित कर चुकी है।

आरटीआई के जरिए सामाजिक मुद्दों को जनता के सामने लाने के लिए सीएनएन-आईबीएन ने 2010 में ऐश्वर्या को 'सिटीजन-जर्नलिस्ट' अवॉर्ड से सम्मानित कर चुका है। आरटीआई की मदद से ऐश्वर्या ने अपने स्कूल के बाहर कूड़ा घर के स्थान पर सार्वजनिक पुस्तकालय का निर्माण कराया। इसके अलावा उग्र



● ऐश्वर्या पराशर

सूचना आयोग की तरफ से बच्चों द्वारा सूचना के अधिकार का प्रयोग न करने के फैसले के खिलाफ मुहिम चलाई और सफलता हासिल की। महात्मा गांधी कब राष्ट्रपिता बने इसकी जानकारी भारत सरकार के पास नहीं थी? ऐश्वर्या के आरटीआई के बाद ही देश के राष्ट्रीय खेल, पर्व आदि पर मांगी जानकारी में कई चौंकाने वाले तथ्य सामने आए। खेल मंत्रालय ने स्वीकार किया कि भारत सरकार ने हॉकी को राष्ट्रीय खेल का दर्जा नहीं दिया है। फिलहाल ऐश्वर्या शहर में पॉलीथीन के प्रयोग के खिलाफ अभियान में सक्रिय हैं।





# Reviving ward committee meetings

**Deepak kumar Gupta | Jalgaon, Maharashtra | 2015-16**

*Jalgaon and Amravati Municipal Corporations were compelled to hold ward committee meetings on a regular basis after a citizen used RTI to expose the non-existence of such meetings.*

## The Problem

As per the provision under Section 29 A (1) of the Maharashtra Municipal Corporation Act, 1949, forming Ward Committees and holding meetings on a regular basis is mandatory. The ward committee comprises Corporator, the ward officer and a maximum number of three members from NGOs who are registered as voters in the ward. Meetings of such Ward Committees which are vital for citizen-government interface are required to be held at least once a month at the ward office. However, there were hardly any such meetings held, in any of the wards of the Jalgaon Municipal Corporation.

## Use of RTI

Deepak Gupta, an RTI user from Jalgaon, filed an RTI application on 11 February 2015 with the Jalgaon Municipal Corporation, seeking information on the number of Ward Committee meetings held in all the wards. He also brought this issue to the notice of the Municipal Commissioner and Corporators.

## The Success

The RTI reply revealed that, of the 75 Corporators elected to the Municipal Corporation, only two had conducted meetings of Ward Committees. Subsequently, on 22 April 2016, the Municipal Corporation informed Gupta that after he brought it to the notice of municipal authorities, they have started organizing ward meetings.

A similar problem persisted in the Amravati Municipal Corporation, which too was resolved after RTI was exercised.

Now, civic problems are discussed regularly at Ward Committee meetings and solutions are suggested. These meetings have also helped improve communication between the local residents, civic administration and the concerned Corporators.







# Restoring lands of freedom fighters

**Ganga Tana Bhagat | Ranchi, Jharkhand | 2008-09**

*Thanks to RTI, the land rights of the first 114 Tana Bhagat families were restored on 30 August 2009; the community now annually observes the day as Mukti Diwas.*

## The Problem

Tana Bhagats is a tribal community in Jharkhand, believing in the principle of Ahimsa (non-violence). It carved out its place in the history of India's struggle for independence because of the glorious historical Tana Bhagat Movement (1914-1920). The Tana Bhagats had staged a Satyagraha (civil disobedience movement) to oppose the taxes imposed on them by the British.

The British auctioned the rights of the lands possessed by the community. After India attained its independence, Mahatma Gandhi asked the then Congress leadership to return the lands of Tana Bhagats of Chota Nagpur area. In 1948, the Bihar Legislative Assembly passed the Ranchi District Tana Bhagat Raiyats Agricultural Lands Restoration Act, 1947 (Bihar Act 2 of 1948). In 1992, the Bihar government further passed a legislation to facilitate this community to get back their rightful land.

## Use of RTI

Ganga Tana Bhagat, a former Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), was struggling to secure justice for the Tana Bhagats. He approached Anand, a member of JAWAB, an RTI citizen group, who advised him to use RTI to address the grievance. He filed an RTI application in the office of the Divisional Commissioner but did not get a satisfactory reply. This prompted him to file the first appeal which failed to yield desired results. He then filed a second appeal before the State Information Commissioner, Jharkhand.

The government machinery responded to the cause of the Tana Bhagats. During the hearing of the second appeal, the officials informed SIC that a high level meeting of Land Revenue officials has been convened to which the Tana Bhagats were also invited.





अखिल भारतीय स्वतंत्रता  
संग्राम सेनानी  
टाना आन्दोलन  
के जनक  
जंतरा वीर टाना मगध  
जन्म - 1888 ई.  
स्व 1916 ई.  
मुक्ति रथापित 1938  
राज्य 1999 प्रति किया

The Success

Member, Board of Revenue, Jharkhand, convened a special meeting and instructed the officers concerned to restore the lands of Tana Bhagats. Accordingly, the Deputy Commissioner, Ranchi, restored the land rights of 114 families of Tana Bhagats of Ranchi District. The process also started in Lohardaga, Gumla, Latehar and Palamau District.

More than 2000 families have since been given their own land records and khatiyans. Now their dependents are able to get various certificates like domicile and income certificate. And now they are eligible for benefits of various government schemes. Since land rights of the first 114 Tana Bhagat families were restored on 30 August 2009, the Tana Bhagats now annually observe the day as Mukti Diwas.

*(Source: Shri. Anand, Information and Public Relations Dept., Govt, of Jharkhand)*





# Undertrial dies in jail; wife uses RTI

| Asha Sable | Beed, Maharashtra | 2009-15

*The post-mortem report of the undertrial had mentioned head injuries and FIR had been lodged against some employees of the jail His wife effectively used RTI to get compensation.*

## The Problem

Namdeo Sable was an undertrial prisoner lodged at the district jail of Beed in Maharashtra. He was rushed to a hospital around 2 am on 28 March 2009 and was declared dead. The post-mortem report had mentioned head injuries; newspapers reported the same. Accordingly, First Information Report (FIR) was lodged against some employees of the jail.

The authorities ignored repeated requests of his 25 year old wife, Asha, to inform her the real cause of his death. Instead, they spread the word that Namdeo was fine until the fateful night and died due to some internal bleeding. Sable was the sole bread winner of his family comprising his wife, Asha and their three children aged from 6 months to 4 years. Asha demanded adequate compensation, besides punishment for the culprits. But her pleas fell on deaf ears.

## Use of RTI

Asha then filed an RTI application at the Jail Superintendent's office, demanding a copy of the medical reports, the post-mortem report and a copy of the FIR. The documents provided by the jail authorities clearly mentioned that the cause of death was head injuries. Based on the documents procured, she filed a criminal writ petition in the Aurangabad Bench of the Bombay High Court, stating that a prisoner is the State's responsibility and hence, he should have been protected from inmates and others who harmed him.



मृत बंदी नामदेव वैजीनाथ साबळे याच्या  
जवळच्या नातेवाईकास मा. उच्च न्यायालय,  
औरंगाबाद खंडपीठ यांचे आदेशानुसार  
आर्थिक मोबदला देणेबाबत

**महाराष्ट्र शासन  
गृह विभाग**

शासन निर्णय क्रमांक: COT-०९१५/प्र. क्र. ४५५/१५/तुरुंग-३

दुसरा मजला, मुख्य इमारत,  
मादाम कामा मार्ग, मंत्रालय, मुंबई-४०० ०३२  
तारीख: ३ ऑक्टोबर, २०१५

**वाचा-**

१) क्रिमिनल रिट पिटिशन क्र. ६५७/२००९ प्रकरणी मा. उच्च न्यायालय, बॉम्बे, औरंगाबाद  
खंडपीठ यांचे दिनांक १४.७.२०१५ रोजीचे आदेश.

**प्रस्तावना-**

मा. उच्च न्यायालय, बॉम्बे, औरंगाबाद खंडपीठ यांनी संदर्भाधीन आदेशान्वये मृत बंदी नामदेव  
वैजीनाथ साबळे, बीड जिल्हा कारागृह, बीड याच्या मृत्युस शासन जबाबदार असल्याचा निर्णय देऊन  
उदरनिर्वाहासाठी वंचावर अवलंबून असणारी त्याची पत्नी व ३ मुले यांना रु. ५,००,०००/- (पाच लाख)  
नुकसानभरपाई, दिनांक २८.३.२००९ पासून शासन आदेश निर्गमित होण्याच्या दिनांकापर्यंत ९ %  
व्याज दराने अदा करण्याचे तथा सदर प्रकरणाचे न्यायालयीन शुल्क रु. २५,०००/- अदा करण्याचे  
आदेश दिले आहेत.

**शासन निर्णय-**

मा. उच्च न्यायालय, बॉम्बे, औरंगाबाद खंडपीठ यांचे संदर्भाधीन आदेशास अनुसरून सदर मृत  
बंदी नामदेव वैजीनाथ साबळे याची पत्नी व ३ मुले यांना आर्थिक मोबदला म्हणून रु. ५,००,०००/-  
(पाच लाख), त्यापरील दिनांक २८.३.२००९ पासून शासन आदेश निर्गमित होण्याच्या दिनांकापर्यंत  
एकूण ६ वर्षे ६ महिन्यांचे ९% वार्षिक दराने रु. २,९२,५००/- व सदर प्रकरणाचे न्यायालयीन शुल्क रु.  
२५,०००/ असं एकूण रु. ८,९७,५००/- इतकी रक्कम यांना अदा करण्यास शासन मान्यता देत आहे.

सदर आर्थिक मोबदला अदा करण्यासाठी आहरण व संवितरण अधिकारी म्हणून अधीक्षक, बीड  
जिल्हा कारागृह, बीड यांना प्राधिकृत करण्यात येत आहे मा. उच्च न्यायालय, बॉम्बे, औरंगाबाद  
खंडपीठ यांनी दिलेल्या आदेशानुसार आहरण व संवितरण अधिकारी यांनी आर्थिक मोबदलाची  
रक्कम मा. मुख्य जिल्हा व सत्र न्यायाधीश, बीड यांचे कार्यालयात तातडीने अदा करून त्याची  
नोचपावती शासनास सादर करावी.

## The Success

The Aurangabad Bench of the Bombay High Court, on 14 July 2015, ordered that, "based on the information that was collected under the RTI Act, death due to head injury is confirmed."

The High Court then asked the State government to pay Asha compensation within two months along with interest. Its order stated that, "it is evident that the victim suffered homicidal death for which the employees of the jail have been prosecuted. But the Government failed to extend any compensation to the petitioner. They have been left to fend for themselves. Looking to these aspects, there is no reason why the State should not be saddled with interest as well as costs of this petition."

The Court observed that the Jail failed to use technology like night vision cameras, which would have captured the incident on video. In the absence of this, the State must compensate the affected family which has lost its bread winner. Maharashtra Home Ministry on 3 October 2015 directed that the family of Sable, comprising his wife and three children be paid a compensation of Rs. 5 lakh with 9% interest from the day of his death up to the time that compensation was paid to Asha Sable.





# Fraudulent NGO exposed

| Amit Kumar Jha and Vishnu Rajagadia | Ranchi, Jharkhand | 2016

*RTI exposed a fraudulent advertisement for appointment of district and Panchayat level officers, released by an NGO in a leading daily newspaper.*

## The Problem

An advertisement for appointment for various posts was published in the Ranchi (Jharkhand) edition of *Dainik Bhaskar*, a Hindi Daily, on 14 February 2016. The title of this advertisement was *Gramin Khadya Yojana* (Rural Food Scheme) and it was claimed to be registered by the Government of India. Applications for appointment of District and Block Coordinators were invited and the salaries mentioned were very lucrative. Applications for appointing dealers at Panchayat level were also invited in the same advertisement. This was for a so-called scheme named as Amrit Centre (Food Distribution Centre). It was claimed that daily consumable goods would be provided to the rural Population of Jharkhand at a very cheap rate. Its Head Office was shown to be at Ranchi and the Zonal Office at Dhanbad.

## Use of RTI

Vishnu Rajgadia and Amit Kumar Jha, associated with Jharkhand Foundation had earlier some bitter experience of fraud NGOs engaged in cheating people in the name of job or other opportunities. Amit filed an RTI application at the office of the Public Information Officer of District Supply Office, Ranchi on 18 February 2016. He sought information on details of this scheme along with copies of the correspondence with the government by this NGO, if any. He requested details regarding providing food items to the common people at a cheap rate. He also sought the copy of the rules to check if any organization can invite applications for appointment on behalf of any government scheme.

## The Success

The Public Information Officer at District Supply Office, Ranchi, provided the information on 27 February 2016, stating that the concerned NGO had never contacted the administration regarding such a scheme nor had the government issued any directive regarding the same. He further clarified that there was no provision for such a scheme. The district administration, in consultation with the legal department took action against the officials of the NGO, that led to closing down the activities of the NGO.



*(Source: Shri. Anand, Information and Public Relation Dept., Govt, of Jharkhand)*



Positive role of  
the Public Information  
Officer will accelerate  
emergence of RTI Regime.



# Gram Sabha springs to life

*A village woman in Gujarat uses RTI to revive meetings of Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat and build confidence in other villagers to use this tool for transparency and accountability.*

## The Problem

Bhanuben Parmar is a socially and politically conscious woman belonging to a socially backward class family from Khaksar village in Tarapur tehsil of Kheda District in Gujarat. Not a single Gram Sabha had ever been held in the village that has a population of 2,000. The Gram Panchayat was dominated by the upper caste community. When the first ever Gram Sabha in the history of the village was held in 2009, it was attended by only five people but the Gram Panchayat records showed signatures of 70 people.

## Use of RTI

Bhanuben filed an RTI application seeking information on discussions held at the Gram Sabha and resolutions passed. On not getting the required information from Gram Sabha, she filed another RTI application to the Tehsil Development Officer (TDO). The information provided by the TDO revealed that, though only five people attended the Gram Sabha, fake record was generated showing attendance of 70 people.

## The Success

After some follow up, the TDO called a meeting of the Gram Sabha again. This time it was attended by the TDO, Tehsildar and officials from the irrigation department. Long pending issues of the villagers were discussed and were solved at the Gram Sabha. Villagers were allotted houses under the Indira Awaas Yojana and resolutions were passed to construct a sanitation network in the village and undertake desilting of the village lake.

Ever since, the Gram Sabha is held every three months at Khaksar village and men and women of backward class also participate in it. This has brought political awareness among the people. The first ever Gram Panchayat election in the history of the village was also held in 2009, giving villagers an opportunity to elect the Gram Panchayat members.

*(Source: Hemant Golani, Journalist, Gujarat)*





# He files RTI; gets his delayed passport

**Peyush Rai | National | 2013**

*A young software, professional who was running between the passport office and police commissioner's office to find out the status of his passport application, got instant relief, with an RTI application.*

## The Problem

Peyush's police verification was done on 22 February 2013 for Police Clearance Certificate. However, till 20 March 2013, the online status of his file was seen as 'PCC (Police Clearance Certificate) application is under review at Passport Seva Kendra.'

Says Peyush, "I got a chance to meet the Passport Officer after standing in a queue for three hours. She told me that they do not have information about my police verification in their database and that it was pending at the Pune Police Commissioner's office.

Therefore, they could not issue my passport. When I went to the Police Commissioner's Office, I came to know that the file has already been dispatched on 7 March 2013."

## Use of RTI

Peyush filled an RTI application seeking information about the daily progress made on his application, the names and designations of the officers who were supposed to take an action on his application and who had not done so, the stipulated time frame laid out for generating and delivering a passport and also the stipulated time frame laid out for replying to query/information sought by applicants. He also wanted to know the status of his case and how much more time was required by the RPO to generate and deliver his passport.



## The Success

Peyush Rai filled an RTI application on 21 March and went to the Regional Passport Office on Senapati Bapat Road, Pune. He stood in the long queue at the enquiry counter for a couple of hours. When his turn came, he requested to see the Public Information Officer.

When he went to the PIO's desk, requesting her to accept his RTI application, she told him that she would like to check his case before accepting the RTI application. His name popped up in the system and she promptly gave him the good news that the Police Clearance Certificate (PCC) has been cleared and that the passport would be couriered to him.

A surprised Peyush, stated, "I am amazed that several visits to the Regional Passport Office did not fetch any results; only frustration. Just one RTI application did wonders and that too, without having to submit it and wait for the mandatory 30 days to get the reply."

(Source: [www.moneylife.in](http://www.moneylife.in))





# JSY Incentive Promptly Paid

**Lunaram Singh | Bikaner, Rajasthan | 2008-09**

*'Janani Suraksha Yojana' is a safe motherhood intervention of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) under which a woman is given financial assistance; RTI helped one such woman was denied her rightful money.*

## The Problem

Dhapu Devi from Sadhasar village in Nokha Tehsil of Bikaner District delivered a baby at the Community Health Centre in Nokha on 3 July 2008 but within half an hour after her delivery, she was referred to the PBM Hospital in Bikaner because of some complications. She was discharged after being treated there for five days but the hospital at Nokha refused to pay money to Dhapu Devi under the 'Janani Suraksha Yojana' saying she had delivered the baby at the Community Health Centre at Nokha, 65 km from Bikaner. Lunaram, an RTI user, approached the Community Health Centre at Nokha on behalf of Dhapu Devi, requesting payment. The Community Health Centre authorities did not pay, saying the money would be disbursed at the hospital from where the discharge was given to the patient after delivery. Thus, she was made to run from pillar to post.

## Use of RTI

Lunaram then filed an RTI application with the Community Health Centre at Nokha on 15 December 2008 seeking information as to why Dhapu Devi had not been provided the benefit of the *Janani Suraksha Yojana*, when would she be paid the money and also sought copy of the rules of the scheme. Since he could not get the required information, Lunaram filed second appeal with the State Information Commission in 2009. The SIC posted the matter for hearing on 12 March 2009 and issued a notice to the Medical Officer, Community Health Centre, Nokha.

## The Success

On receiving the SIC notice, the Acting Medical Officer, Community Health Centre, Nokha studied the rules of the scheme and paid promptly an amount of Rs. 1,400 to Dhapu Devi towards benefits under the *Janani Suraksha Yojana*. Since then, mothers of new born babies at the Community Health Centre, Nokha, are paid the benefits of the scheme without any delay.

(Source: Shri. Chetanram Godara, Urmul Jyoti Sansthan, Rajasthan)





# Use eIPO from anywhere across the world

**Commodore Lokesh Batra (retd) | National | 2008-13**

*One can now file a signed and scanned copy of RTI by e-mail in about 2496 Central Public Authorities, from anywhere across the globe by purchasing e-IPO as mode of Fee. The electronic Postal Order can be directly downloaded in pdf form-no need to take a printout.*

## The Problem

Indians residing in various countries were facing problems pertaining to mode of payment of fees for filing an RTI application. They had to pay to Indian embassies in the respective country's currency, by cheque. However, they were not very vocal about it. When Delhi based RTI activist, Commodore Lokesh Batra (retd) visited Boston in 2008, he faced similar difficulty in filing and follow up of RTI application, from abroad. He then discussed with Vishal Kudchadkar, Arun Gopalan, Somu Kumar who are members and activists of USA based NGO AID (Association for India's Development). This was later joined by 316 Indians residing in various countries, through a petition.

## Use of RTI

Batra filed a complaint with the Central Information Commission (CIC) in April 2009. He filed similar RTIs in the offices of PMO, MEA, MOIA, and DoPT; seeking rules for payment of RTI fees from abroad. On 16 April 2010, CIC pronounced order after three hearings and the government was given six months to find a solution. It ordered formulate a system of electronic payment.

A delegation of Indians living abroad also submitted their petition carrying 316 signatures, to the then Prime Minister. Besides USA and UK, Indians residing in Australia, Burundi, Canada, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Holland, Japan, Kuwait, Maldives, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa and UAE appealed him for providing online facility for payment of RTI fees in Indian currency.

DoPT wrote two letters, one to Secretary, Department of Posts (DOP) and the second to the Foreign Secretary. Radhika Doraiswamy, the then Secretary, Department of Posts (DOP), agreed to provide services of Virtual Post using credit/debit cards. On 4 February 2011, the Department of Posts wrote to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) saying that it has developed a portal called 'e-portal' office. Also, it has received a request from the Secretary, DoPT to include provision for the purchase of eIPO for citizens

living abroad, to enable them to seek information under the RTI Act, 2005. The DoPT sought clearance from it to accept debit/ credit card for online payment through e-portal.

On 15 June 2011, RBI replied to the applicants' RTI query stating that it has not taken a final decision on the request of DoPT. Later, on 3 February 2012, RBI informed the applicant that it had sent a 'no-objection' to the government.



INDIAN POSTAL ORDER (#IPO)	
IPPO No. <b>M1415000485</b>	Print date: 23/05/2014
<b>PAY TO</b> The Account Officer Department of Posts	<b>Sender Name and Address Details</b> User ID: 8870588 Passport No: - Expiry Date: - Sender Name: Tatha U 141 Email ID: 887@gmail.com Mobile No. 9999999999 Sender address: D-8 Khem. road may Delhi - 110001 India
Amount: Rs. 10.00	
Issue Date: 09/02/2014 18:12:00	
Subject: RTI	
<b>PUBLIC AUTHORITY</b> Department: Department of Posts Ministry: Ministry of Communications and Information Tech.	



## The Success

In a letter dated 3 February 2012 to Department of Posts, the RBI stated, "the payment gateway provider will be the Axis Bank." Subsequently, on DOP's request, the RBI included other banks too.

DoPT set a deadline of 15 January 2013, and asked the National Informatics Centre (NIC) to complete the work on a war footing. e-IPO service was launched in March 2013. On January 2013, testing of e-IPO module started. AID Activist Vishal Kudchadkar from LA came forward and helped in carrying out live testing. Proposal was then sent by Batra for extension of e-IPO facilities for payment of RTI Fee in 176 Indian Missions by 'Indian Citizens' abroad', which was implemented. He also requested DoPT and DOP for extending e-IPO facilities for "Indian Citizens Living India". On 13 February 2014, e-IPO facility was extended for "Indian Citizens Living in India."

One can now file signed and scanned copy of RTI by email in about 2496 Central Public Authorities, from anywhere across the globe by purchasing e-IPO as mode of Fee.



# RTI helps Indira Awaas Yojana Beneficiaries

| Sukanta Dwivedy | Kendrapara, Odisha | 2011-12

*An aggrieved beneficiary of the Indira Awaas Yojana filed an RTI application seeking details of its implementation in all 18 Gram Panchayats in Patkura Block. The exposure leads to cancellation of funds to undeserving beneficiaries and suspension of several officials.*

## The Problem

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) (now renamed as Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awaas Yojana), is a social welfare flagship programme, created by Government of India to provide housing for the rural poor. There was a problem with allotment of houses under the scheme in post for disbursement of grants under this scheme. In Kendrapara district with the alleged connivance of local politicians and government officers. The local block office and the Kendrapara District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) made the beneficiaries run from pillar to post for disbursement of grants under this scheme.

Sukanta Dwivedy, a native from the interior pocket of Kendrapara district and Patkura Block area, was one of the aggrieved beneficiaries. In spite of spending Rs. 11000 and fighting against red-tapism, he was unable to get the list of beneficiaries.

## Use of RTI

Sukanta Dwivedy filed an RTI application seeking details of the implementation of the Indira Awaas Yojana in all the 18 Gram Panchayats in Patkura Block.

The information provided to him by the government authorities revealed that government funds had not reached the Below Poverty Line (BPL) people for whom they were meant. In Patkura Panchayat, 747 BPL families, were entitled for housing grants. Under Indira Awaas Yojana, grants were given to 1155 families. Still, 189 genuine BPL families were deprived as the grants were released to Above Poverty Line (APL) families.



## The Success

The documents obtained through the RTI were adequate to prove the embezzlement in the court of law. An inquiry was subsequently ordered and allotment of 1800 houses was besides the BDO, Patkura, were suspended.

*(Source: Gopabandhu Academy of Administration and Jayashree Mohanty, Luminous Infoways, Odisha)*





# District Treasury officer uses RTI

| S. Rajendran | Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu | 2015-16

*Government officer uses RTI to address grievances of survivors of pensioners.*

## The Problem

From each of the 33,000 pensioners in Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu (TN), the State government collects Rs. 80 as subscription every month towards Family Security Fund. After the pensioner's demise the government gives an amount of Rs. 50,000 to the survivors. To receive this amount, a survivor is required to submit an application to the district treasury for the Family Security Fund. The District Treasury Officer processes the application and sends it to the Directorate of Pension, Chennai which, in turn, sends a cheque of Rs. 50,000 to the survivors.

Similarly, the list of the pensioners who underwent medical treatment as per the old Medical Health Insurance Scheme is processed by the District Treasury Officer and sent to the Directorate of Pension, Chennai. The cheques for medical treatment are also sent to the pensioner's family by the Directorate.

When S. Rajendran took charge as the District Treasury Officer, Thanjavur, many pensioners and legal heirs of some deceased employees approached him. They complained that they had not received any cheque from the Directorate of Pension, Chennai, even after applying. When Rajendran contacted the Directorate, he was told that the cheques had been sent to the pensioners' postal addresses and some of the cheques had been returned to the Directorate, undelivered. However, he could not get information about the names of the persons whose cheques had been returned and what was the total value of the cheques that were disbursed.

## Use of RTI

Rajendran himself sought the details of the cheques returned, under the Right to Information (RTI) Act from the Public Information Officer, Directorate of Pension, Chennai. A few days later, the Joint Director of the Directorate of Pension, Chennai personally visited the District Treasury at Thanjavur and provided him a long list of unpaid cheques which had been returned as the families of pensioners had shifted their residences after the death of the pensioner. The list also contained cheques of the medical treatment of the Association of Pensioners.



## **The Success**

As a result of these efforts, cheques to the tune of about Rs. 1.5 crore were issued to 327 pensioners on 5 August 2016.

*(Source: Anna Institute of Management, Tamilnadu)*





# Demolitions for fire safety

| **Rajesh Sethi** | **Delhi** | **2014-16**

*RTI helped citizens to get unauthorised constructions demolished so that emergency rescue vehicles can reach their houses.*

## The Problem

Encroachments, unauthorized constructions and illegal extensions of buildings in Pitampura area of Delhi clogged the way to Suraksha Enclave building. As a result, there was obstruction to the movement of vehicles; residents feared that the fire service vehicles would not be able to reach the building in case of an emergency.

## Use of RTI

Rajesh Sethi filed a grievance petition to the North Delhi Municipal Corporation pointing out that the encroachment in the Suraksha Enclave is likely to cause hurdles in the movement of fire service vehicles in case of contingencies and requested the authorities to remove the encroachment. He, however, did not receive any reply. This led him to file an application under the Right to Information Act on 14 November 2014 seeking status of his complaint. The CPIO, after lapse of the specified time limit, informed the petitioner that action is being taken on his complaint but the situation on ground did not change. Since Rajesh Sethi was not convinced with the reply by the CPIO, he filed his first appeal. Since the outcome was not satisfactory, he filed second appeal before the Central Information Commission.

## The Success

Even before the scheduled date of hearing, the encroachments and unauthorised constructions of extensions of balconies were removed. The CPIO informed the CIC about the action taken on the date of the hearing. Now the way to the building has become free for vehicular movements.

*(Source: Anna Institute of Management and Dr. S.N. Venkatesan, Tamilnadu)*



## CENTRAL INFORMATION COMMISSION

August Kranti Bhawan, Bhikaji Cama Place,  
New Delhi 110065

T. No. CIC/WA/A/2015/001815

Date of Hearing : 16.08.2016  
Date of Decision : 16.08.2016  
Appellant/Complainant : Shri Rajesh Sethi, Delhi

Respondent  
CPIO, North Delhi Municipal Corporation.

## Delhi Through:

Mr. Davinder Singh, EE(B), Mr. Rajesh Wadhwa, SEI, Mr. R A Goel, AE(B)III  
Information Commissioner : Shri Yashovardhan Azad  
Relevant facts emerging from appeal:

RTI application filed on : 14.11.2014  
PIO replied on : 08.01.2015  
First Appeal filed on : 17.01.2015  
First Appellate Order on : 11.02.2015  
2nd Appeal/complaint received on : 07.07.2015

## Information sought and background of the case:

The appellant vide RTI application dated 08.01.2015 sought status of his grievance regarding complaint dated 29.09.2014 of fire engines not approachable to Suraksha Enclave, Pitam Pur Delhi 110034 because of encroachment & extra built balcony. CPIO vide letter dated 08.01.2015 furnished that as per record, flat no. 101 & 102, Sureksha Enclave, Pitampura were booked ON 29.11.2014 and both properties were sealed on 04.08.2015. Being dissatisfied with the response, the appellant preferred first appeal. FAA vide order dated 11.02.2015 furnished that RTI application is not an appropriate platform for the grievance. Feeling aggrieved the appellant approached the Commission.

## Relevant facts emerging during hearing:

During the hearing, it was found that the Respondent had placed on record a letter dated 12.08.2016 indicating that response of the PIO vide letter dated 08.01.2015 had been already furnished to the appellant and during the hearing held before the FAA on 11.02.2015, the same was discussed. The Appellant admitted that he received the reply dated 08.01.2015 after he had filed the First Appeal dated 23.01.2015. Even the hearing today, the Appellant submitted that he had received the information. He further added that he appreciated the MCD's effort in removal of the unauthorised construction, upon his complaint and hence wished to withdraw his appeal since the issue he had complained about has since been resolved.

## Decision:

After hearing parties and perusal of record, the Commission finds that since the appellant is satisfied with the action taken by the Respondent, there is no cause of action left to be adjudicated.

The appeal is disposed of accordingly.





# Chandigarh becomes smoke free

**Hemant Ghosh | Chandigarh | 2005-07**

*A citizen files over 300 RTI applications to know about measures taken for putting up public boards for ban on tobacco smoking in public places; follows it up by a writ petition in the High Court; triggers off nationwide implementation.*

## The Problem

The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003 was promulgated but the authorities were taking little interest in its implementation. No Smoking Areas were not demarcated and offence warnings were not displayed at government offices and properties under the control of government. As a result, there was apprehension that the law would remain on paper only.

## Use of RTI

Hemant Ghosh, an RTI user, filed over 300 RTI queries with the Governments of Punjab and Haryana on how the COTPA, which sets out provisions to address smoking in public places, was being implemented in Chandigarh. His applications asked whether the warnings of 'No Smoking Area' and 'Smoking here is an offence' were displayed in offices and premises under government control.

## The Success

On the basis of information received through RTI applications, a writ petition was filed by Ghosh. The High Court ordered the government to follow the Act in letter and spirit.

In 2007, 1800 'warning boards' appeared in all government departments, police stations, hospitals and schools. To keep the momentum going, Ghosh lobbied with the Chandigarh police, which agreed to initiate an enforcement drive as well as train policemen on provisions of the law. In just a month, compliance crossed 70% and the administration became serious about the 'Smoke-Free City' initiative. Finally in July 2007, Chandigarh was declared smoke-free. Ghosh then formed independent monitoring teams and made sure violations are reported.

Ghosh's work proved to be the trigger for a nation-wide campaign to create awareness about the hazards of smoking. On 2 October 2008, the Health Ministry announced that all public places in India would be

smoke-free. Broadcasting of public service messages on television and in films also began.

(Source: [www.huffingtonpost.in](http://www.huffingtonpost.in))







# Bogus disbursement of money stopped

**Rajaram Bishnoi | Bikaner, Rajasthan | 2011-12**

*Information procured under RTI prevented corruption in the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, after information revealed that money was being given in the name of bogus account holders.*

## The Problem

The Gram Panchayat of Mukam Village in Nokha tehsil of Bikaner district undertook the work of repairing the gravel road from the village to the *Jun ki Nadi* under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. Though actual work was not carried out on the spot, bills for payment, totalling to Rs. 1,33,190 were prepared, to settle payments in the bank accounts of bogus workers.

## Use of RTI

Rajaram Bishnoi, a resident of Mukam village, filed an RTI application with the Gram Panchayat in 2011 seeking details of the expenditure as well as the work done under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. When the Gram Panchayat did not provide him the required information, he approached the State Information Commission. The SIC sent a notice to the Secretary of the Gram Panchayat to file a reply and appear personally for the hearing.

## The Success

After the notice, Rajaram received the information which revealed that the work of road repair had not been carried out but bills for the amount of Rs.1,33,190 were prepared for making payments into the accounts of bogus names of workers. Rajaram and some others complained to the Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti about this fraud. Thereafter, a summary inquiry was carried out. Disbursement of the money was stopped. Three employees were suspended.

*(Source: Chetanram Godara, Urmul Jyoti Sansthan, Rajasthan)*







## Backward Area gets a boost

**Villagers and members of NGO 'Jawab' | Jehanabad, Bihar | 2008-09**

*A Patna NGO has been holding a series of workshops to spread RTI literacy in the backward Kako area of Jehanabad district.*

### The Problem

Kako area in Jehanabad district of Bihar has been infamous for its backwardness and infestation of Naxalism. The district mostly comprises rural areas where caste politics influences all walks of life. Workers of Patna based NGO 'Jawab', who conducted a survey in Nonahi, Amathua, Badhauna, Daulatpur and Titai Bigha villages found villagers helpless because of illiteracy and several other problems.

Nonahi Village had witnessed 17 deaths in the 1988 riots. Houses allotted to the riot-affected under the Indira Housing Scheme were dilapidated. Construction of the school building had been left incomplete because of court litigation. Volunteers who visited the village twice a week found that under the garb of providing health services, all that the Primary Health Centre provided was doses of polio vaccine.

In Amathua Village, children of the Urdu School and Primary School had never known what a mid-day meal was all about. The village had no Primary Health facilities and even the social welfare schemes such as NREGA were not implemented. People were given voters' identity cards but not ration cards. Instead they were given coupons for procuring 10 kg rice and 1.5 litre kerosene. People knew a little about RTI but did not know how to use it.

Life in Badhauna village was split in caste equations. People needed hand pumps but the issue was mired in caste politics. Pregnant women had to go to Jehanabad for safe delivery under medical supervision.

Similarly, Daulatpur Village had an Anganwadi but was without a blackboard. There were no medical facilities for safe delivery. Titai Bigha too was a settlement of landless labourers where people did not have BPL ration cards. As a result, they possessed no proof of nationality.

### Use of RTI

Nonahi, Amathua, Badhauna, Daulatpur and Titai Bigha villages were selected for a pilot project to use Right to Information for citizens' intervention for development. They began holding workshops to train

villagers to use RTI. The volunteers created an awareness in the minds of villagers that with the RTI Act, they have the power to inspect functioning in schools and other public buildings.

RTI applications of Nonahi villagers about schools, sanitation, road connectivity, electricity, drinking water, welfare schemes and scholarships were submitted to the PIO of DM's office, Jehanabad. However, there was no reply from the PIO. The Jawab then District Magistrate, who then decided to conduct the hearing in the respective villages.



## The Success

The first appeal resulted in the district administration getting into action in these villages. Work of the school building work was completed; students got mid-day meals and BPL ration cards were issued to the villagers.

*(Source: Shri. Anand, Information and Public Relation Dept., Govt. of Jharkhand)*





# Compilation of displaced persons

**Rolly Shivhare | Madhya Pradesh | 2007**

*Information Commissioner spells out the job of rehabilitation department of state government, directing it to compile lists of persons displaced due to various projects.*

## The Problem

The Rehabilitation Department of Madhya Pradesh was not providing information on the rehabilitation of the project-affected persons, stating that rehabilitating project-affected persons was not its job. Its responsibility was only to rehabilitate the refugees from Bangladesh and Pakistan.

## Use of RTI

Rolly Shivhare, an RTI user and Madhya Pradesh State Unit Convenor of NCPRI, filed an RTI Application in 2007 seeking information about the rehabilitation of project-affected persons in the state. The Rehabilitation Department refused to provide the requisite information. The first appeal filed by Shivhare was also rejected. This prompted her to file Second Appeal before the State Information Commission. Shivhare, who studied the State's model rehabilitation policy, came to know that the Rehabilitation Department was the nodal agency for She brought this to the notice of the SIC, during the hearing.

## The Success

When the appeal came up for hearing, SIC pointed out that the Rehabilitation Department had failed to do its job and directed the department to make a list of displaced people and provide information to the applicant. The Rehabilitation Department promptly wrote to all departments concerned and compiled information of people affected due to projects, undertaken by various departments. This information was provided to the applicant.

*(Source: Mahatma Gandhi State Institute of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj, Madhya Pradesh)*







# Date of Birth on Aadhar Cards

**Avinash Prabhune | National | 2012-16**

*Earlier, all Aadhar cards issued did not have Date of Birth, despite it being recorded during enrolment. A resident from nagpur invoked RTI and UIDAI accepted his suggestion to include Date of Birth for all Aadhar cards, post September 2013.*

## The Problem

The Planning Commission, under its UID Project, began issuing Aadhar Cards to provide identification for every citizen and for efficient delivery of welfare services. However, though the address of the card holder, which could be temporary and subject to change, was mentioned but the Date of Birth (DOB) was missing even though it was collected during enrolment. Instead, only the year of birth was mentioned on the cards.

## Use of RTI

Avinash Prabhune, a resident of Nagpur, wrote a letter to the then UIDAI (Unique Identification Authority of India) Chairman on 9 November 2012 requesting him to add the "date of birth" on Aadhar Cards. Despite three reminders thereafter, he did not receive any reply till January 2013.

This silence propelled him to file an RTI application, seeking information on action on his communication. The UIDAI informed him on 22 March 2013, that his request has been considered and all UID cards issued after September 2013 would mention the Date of Birth.

On 20 April 2013, Prabhune had also requested through a communication to reissue UID cards to those who had already been issued the cards, as the Date of Birth was missing in them. This letter too received no reply and, therefore, he filed application under RTI Act for status and action taken against his letter dated 20 April, 2013. Since no action was noticed, he filed his first appeal and later his second appeal before the CIC.

The Central Information Commission heard his second appeal on 27 March 2015 and directed the PIO to provide the information. The UIDAI reprinted and reissued Aadhar Card of Prabhune on 29 May 2015. Now every AADHAR card bears the Date of Birth of the card holder.



## The Success

On 11 February 2016, the Information Commissioner, CIC passed the following order : 'This is a case involving a citizen, who made a suggestion out of good intention to the public authority, in the interest of AADHAR card holders in general and not because he had a personal grievance. He had to struggle to get a response out of the public authority regarding what view had been taken on his suggestion. The appellatant has had to make considerable effort and undergo mental harassment to get response from the public authority. It is difficult to quantify in monetary terms the detriment suffered by him on account of the above. However, this case merits award of a token compensation. Accordingly, we direct the public authority to pay compensation of Rs. 1000 to the Appellant within 10 days of intimation to the Commission.'

Subsequently, the UIDAI paid Prabhune, compensation of Rs. 1000 by Demand Draft on 2 March 2016.



राष्ट्रीय विशिष्ट पहचान प्राधिकरण

भारत सरकार

Unique Identification Authority of India  
Government of India

संलग्नक क्रम / Enrollment No 2017/00122/00512

To,  
Avinash Vinayak Prabhune  
Avinash Vinayak Prabhune  
S/O Vinayak Prabhune  
113 Pandurang Gawande layout  
Ranapratao Nagar  
Opp ravindra Sabagruh Ranapratao Nagar  
Ranapratao Nagar S/O  
Ranapratao Nagar Nagpur  
Maharashtra 440022  
9049800156

11/01/2012

Ref: 4334 / 07L / 658466 / 658472 / P



UE693993869IN



आपका आधार क्रमांक / Your Aadhaar No. :

**8883 2693 9135**

आधार - आम आदमी का अधिकार



भारत सरकार  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



Avinash Vinayak Prabhune  
Avinash Vinayak Prabhune  
जन्म वर्ष / Year of Birth : 1963  
पुरुष / Male

Before



8883 2693 9135

आधार - आम आदमी का अधिकार



राष्ट्रीय विशिष्ट पहचान प्राधिकरण

भारत सरकार

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9049800156

11/01/2012



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आपका आधार क्रमांक / Your Aadhaar No. :

**8883 2693 9135**

आधार - आम आदमी का अधिकार



भारत सरकार  
Government of India



Avinash Vinayak Prabhune  
Avinash Vinayak Prabhune

After

जन्म वर्ष / DOB : 01/1963  
पुरुष / Male



8883 2693 9135

आधार - आम आदमी का अधिकार



# Empowering Women Self Help Groups

**Prof V. Vidyasagar | Chennai, Tamilnadu | 2012-14**

*Sensitising members of Self Help Groups about the RTI Act resulted in proactive use of the law by women and led to increase in the number of SHGs and their activities.*

## The Problem

Members of women Self Help Groups (SHG) in Chennai wanted to increase the spectrum of SHGs to facilitate their reach-out to a maximum number of families. They also wanted access to more information about the government schemes and SHG support programme schemes so that they could scale up their activities.

## Use of RTI

Self Help Group members were sensitized about the provisions of the RTI Act, 2005 as a part of the capacity building and training initiative. Out of 10,000 women SHG members across the State, 300 members from every district, were provided training on RTI over a period of two years. As a result, awareness about RTI increased considerably throughout the State.

## The Success

By the end of 2014, SHG members had started using RTI to procure the required information. This helped to further the activities of the SHGs as they became aware of different schemes and funding patterns. They also found it easy to use RTI to access information from the public authorities as the PIOs were co-operative. Thus, they became happy beneficiaries of schemes of which they were unaware earlier.

This along with other factors gave a major boost to the SHG movement. As a result, the number of SHGs and the number of SHG members increased substantially.

*(Source: Anna Institute of Management, Tamilnadu)*







# e~Gazette made available for free

| C.Ramesh | National | 2009-11

*An RTI user succeeded in enabling citizens to download gazette notifications from e-Gazettes free of cost.*

## The Problem

The Department of Publications, working under the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India launched the portal [www.egazette.nic.in](http://www.egazette.nic.in) to maintain duly categorised gazette notifications online to provide easy access to citizens. However, the users were required to pay fees / charges prescribed by the government to download the soft copies.

## Use of RTI

C. Ramesh, a resident of Sathuvachari, Vellore filed a complaint dated 19 February 2009 before the Central Information Commission, under Section 18(1) of the RTI Act, 2005 in this regard. In his complaint against all the concerned Government officers, the applicant prayed for an order to provide the e-Gazettes free of cost to the public.

The complaint came up for hearing on 8 August 2011. The hearing was conducted through video conferencing facility. The applicant was present in the Vellore studio of the NIC, while the respondent government officer was present in the chamber of the Chief Central Information Commissioner, New Delhi.

## The Success

The Central Information Commission issued orders on 8 August 2011 directing the Cabinet Secretariat to inform all ministries / departments of the government to make available digitized version of the gazette notifications to the citizens not only for charges. Consequent to this CIC order, downloading of the e-Gazette in the portal [www.egazette.nic.in](http://www.egazette.nic.in) has been made free.



केन्द्रीय सूचना आयोग  
Central Information Commission  
सूचना के अधिकार का सुदृढीकरण



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# Domestic gas Cylinder agency nailed

| Vishwajit Deshmukh | Parbhani, Maharashtra | 2011-12

*Armed with information, under RTI, a resident of Parbhani in Maharashtra relentlessly pursued a matter in which a gas agency insisted that consumers buy a gas stove and other accessories from the Agency along with a new gas connection, leading to a Government Resolution.*

## The Problem

A gas agency in Parbhani, Maharashtra, would compel consumers to buy gas stoves and other accessories, along with their new gas connections. Vishwajit Deshmukh, a resident of Parbhani, too was asked to do so, when he went to buy a new gas connection from the agency, sometime in 2011.

## Use of RTI

Deshmukh filed an RTI application on 26 April 2011 with the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., Mumbai, seeking information on whether it is mandatory to buy a gas stove and other accessories along with a new gas connection. The Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. replied on 6 May 2011, that it was not mandatory to buy a gas stove with other accessories while taking a new gas connection.

Armed with this information from the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., Mumbai, Deshmukh visited the same agency again and informed them about the communication from IOC. Despite the reply of the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd, the agency refused to give him the new gas connection and insisted him to buy the gas stove and accessories also.

Deshmukh lodged a complaint with the District Collector, Parbhani and after that with the Divisional Commissioner, Aurangabad, on Lokshahi Din. At the citizen complaints forum he showed the letter sent by the Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., Mumbai, which he had received in reply to his complaint under the RTI Act, 2005 but no action was forthcoming. Finally, he filed a complaint with the Chief Minister of Maharashtra in December 2011.



## The Success

Acting on Deshmukh's Lokshahi Din complaint, the Chief Minister gave instructions to the concerned department which in turn issued a Government Resolution (G.R) on 19 March 2012. It directed gas agencies across the state of Maharashtra, to provide new gas connections at the government-sanctioned rate only and not to force the sale of gas stoves and other accessories.





# Farmer gets subsidy for water tank

**Adv. Ashwani Sharma | Solan, Himachal Pradesh | 2009-10**

*RTT helps an octogenarian farmer to get subsidy for water tank.*

## The Problem

Construction of a water tank of 200 cubic meter capacity at an estimated cost of Rs. 4,36,000/- was undertaken by an octogenarian farmer, Murlidhar Sharma from Solan. This scheme was authorized under the Central Government's *Pandit Deendayal Kisan Bagwan Samridhi Yojana*. It was implemented by the Sub Divisional Soil Conservation Officer, Arki in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh.

As per the norms, the applicant is entitled for 50% subsidy, which amounted to Rs. 2,18,000/- After completion of the construction of the water tank, disbursement of subsidy was requested through a letter dated 4 May 2010. On 21 June, a Jr. Engineer, visited the spot. He assessed the subsidy amount and brought it down to Rs. 1,70,000/- instead of Rs. 2,18,000/- He also put a condition on the beneficiary that the subsidy would be released only after the internal plastering of the RCC tank was done, though there was no such provision in the guidelines of the scheme.

Sharma's wife, Raksha Sharma, wrote to the Soil Conservation Officer, Arki, stating that Sharma had suffered a paralytic attack and since he had constructed the water tank costing Rs. 4,41,669 through his own savings, the entitled subsidy of Rs. 2,18,000 should be immediately released to take care of this emergency. After some follow up with the Deputy Director, the Jr. Engineer sent his list of objections that the structure was not plastered, the flooring was not made and there were cracks in the concrete bed, etc. Most of them were baseless, but the department also reiterated the same objections.

After relentless follow up, Mrs. Sharma finally received Rs. 1,85,000 in cash. She then sent a letter of protest to Deputy Director, Agriculture of Solan and to Sub Divisional Soil Conservation Officer, Arki, demanding payment of the remaining amount of Rs. 33,000, but to no avail.

## Use of RTI

Sharma's nephew Adv. Ashwani Sharma filed an RTI application with the Sub Divisional Soil Conservation Officer but the information was denied on the ground that the Sub Divisional Soil Conservation Officer, Arki was not the APIO/PIO. Sharma's friend Manish Sharma filed a separate RTI

application seeking relevant information on provisions of the scheme. The PIO and Deputy Director, Agriculture clubbed both the applications and replied in his letter of 18 October, asking for Rs. 2996 as additional fee to provide information consisting of 994 pages. Adv. Sharma then filed a complaint before State Information Commission under Section 18 of the RTI Act against the deemed refusal of the other PIO to supply the information.

## The Success

Even before the matter came up for hearing, the withheld subsidy amount of Rs. 33,000 was paid through a Demand Draft by the Sub Divisional Soil Conservation Officer, Arki and proceedings pending before the SIC were withdrawn.

(Source: *Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration*)





# Masonry Bund upgraded

**Irfan Banka and Nasir Hussain Sofi | Baramulla, Jammu & Kashmir | 2016**

*Flood Protection Masonry Bund at Baramulla upgraded within three days of use of RTI.*

## The Problem

Mala Buchan village in Pattan Tehsil of Baramulla district in Jammu and Kashmir is located in the midst of the mountainous area of Pir Panjal forests and faces floods from Nallah Ferozpora every year. These floods would damage the roads linking different villages besides destroying agricultural land and houses in at least three villages. This phenomenon would be witnessed every year and assurance to solve the problem never materialized.

## Use of RTI

Irfan Banka, an engineer and Nasir Hussain Sofi filed two RTI Applications with the Irrigation & Flood Control Department, Tangmarg on 25 March 2016, under Section 7 of the Jammu and Kashmir RTI Act. This section compels the PIO to provide information within 48 hours from the date of receipt of the application. When they went personally to the office of the PIO to submit their RTI applications by hand, they found that there was no board displaying the name of the Public Information Officer (PIO). The office clerk who received the application, did not put the official seal, signature, name of PIO, designation and contact number on the acknowledgment copy of the application. The applicants brought this to the notice of the PIO but he refused to do anything about it.

## The Success

Within two hours of the filing of RTI application, some contractors went to Irfan Banka's house, asking him, as to what would make him withdraw his RTI request. He told them that they should construct a flood protection bund and widen and de-silt the Nallah Ferozpora. Later that night, the officials of the department concerned promised to take action if he withdrew his application, which he flatly refused. Finally the masonry bund was constructed within just three days from the date of filing the RTI application, although there was no new budget allocation for it. They were also provided the information they had sought, albeit late.





# RTI bestows justice to power connection seekers

**Mangilal Arya | Bikaner, Rajasthan | 2010-12**

*RTI brings justice to the power connection seekers on priority list who were kept in the dark while connections were given to later applicants.*

## The Problem

Several villagers from Sadhuna village in Nokha tehsil of Bikaner district applied for electricity connection under the Chief Minister Electrification Scheme. This was to be given on first-come-first-serve basis. However, applicants who were the first ones to apply for power connection were left out. But those who applied later were provided electricity by installing 36 new poles and laying cables.

## Use of RTI

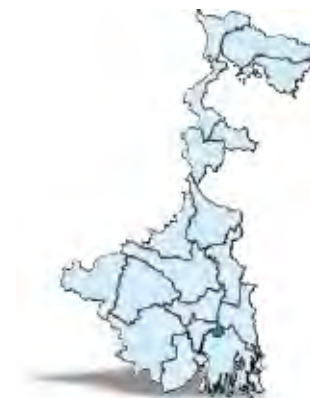
Mangilal Arya, a resident of Sadhuna village, filed an RTI application with the Assistant Engineer of Jodhpur Electricity Distribution Company Ltd. at Nokha on 7 December 2010. He sought information about the priority in the list of applications and the reasons, in case, connections had been provided to applicants who were not in the priority list. When he did not receive the information in time, he filed Second Appeal with the State Information Commission in 2011.

## The Success

After the State Information Commission issued notice to the Jodhpur Electricity Distribution Company Ltd, the company swung into action and started taking corrective measures. Firstly, the 36 poles erected to provide out-of-turn connections to people were pulled out and the cables laid to provide those connections were also removed.

*(Source: Chetanram Godara, Urmul Jyoti Sansthan, Rajasthan)*





# Supreme Court upholds Students' right

**Pritam Rooj & Divya Jyoti Jaipuria | Kolkata, West Bengal | 2007-11**

*A student in Kolkata who was denied copy of his answer sheet under RTI sought legal intervention, finally leading to a historic Supreme Court judgment.*

## The Problem:

A Kolkata student Pritam Rooj scored 91.6% in the Class 10 examination and 80.8% at Class 12 examination. He enrolled for the graduation course in mathematics honours in Presidency College, Calcutta University. In the Part II examination, he was shocked to note that he had scored only 28 marks out of 100 in one of the subjects. So, his total aggregate score came to use to him as he still did not get a first class. So, he could not pursue his dream of getting admission to the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru.

## Use of RTI

On 14 August 2007, Pritam made a request under the RTI Act, seeking a copy of his answer-sheet for the subject in which he had scored 28 marks. The PIO replied saying, "It has been decided that henceforth no inspection of any answer sheet of any examination conducted by the University shall be allowed to any applicant under the Right to Information Act, 2005." This prompted Pritam to seek legal intervention. The Single bench of Calcutta High Court allowed petition of Pritam Rooj and directed the University of Calcutta to disclose the answer-sheets vide its order dated 3 March 2008.

This order of High Court was challenged before the divisional bench of the Calcutta High Court by University of Calcutta and CBSE. The divisional bench of the Calcutta High Court upheld the earlier order of the Single bench.

On 5 February 2009, the Calcutta University and the CBSE approached the Supreme Court of India. Various other institutions such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, Assam Public Service Commission, West Bengal Board of Secondary Education, West Bengal Council for Higher Education, West Bengal Central School Service Commission and Bihar Public Service Commission conducting examinations also joined in disclosure of answer-sheets. On 3 April 2011, Human Rights Law Network (HRLN) represented by Advocate Divya Jyoti Jaipuria filed an intervention application on behalf of

Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and Join Operation for Social Help (JOSH) in the interest of students across the country.

**SOLUTION 1**

**Q. 1. (A)** Select and write the most appropriate answer from the given alternatives in each of the following sub-questions: (8)(12)

(i) If  $\alpha, \beta = \pi$ ,  $\beta - \alpha = \pi/2$ , then the both values of  $\sin \alpha \sin \beta$  is  
 (a)  $1/2$  (b)  $2/3$  (c)  $1/3$  (d)  $2/5$  (3)

(ii) If  $A^{-1} = \frac{1}{9} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 4 & -2 \\ -2 & -5 & 4 \\ 1 & 3 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$  and  $|A| = 3$ , then  $(\det A)^{-1} =$  \_\_\_\_\_

(iii)  $\frac{1}{10} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -2 \\ -2 & 4 \\ 1 & -3 \end{bmatrix}$  (ii)  $\frac{1}{3} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & -2 & 1 \\ -2 & 4 & -3 \\ -2 & 4 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$  (iii)  $\frac{1}{3} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 4 & -2 \\ -2 & -5 & 4 \\ 1 & -3 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$  (iv)  $\frac{1}{3} \begin{bmatrix} -1 & -4 & 3 \\ 2 & 5 & -4 \\ 1 & -3 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$  (3)

(iv) The slopes of the lines given by  $12x^2 + 6xy - y^2 = 0$  differ by  $\pi$ . Then the value of  $k$  is  
 (a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 4 (d) 5 (3)

**Q. 1. (B)** Attempt any THREE of the following: (8)

(i) In  $\triangle ABC$ , with usual notations, prove that:  $\frac{a - b \cos C}{b - a \cos C} = \frac{\cos B}{\cos A}$  (3)

(ii) Find 'X', if the equation  $Ax + By + C = 0$  represents a pair of straight lines. (3)

(iii) If A, B, C, D are four non collinear points in the plane such that  $\vec{AD} = \vec{BC} + \vec{CD} = \vec{0}$ . Then prove that point D is the centroid of the  $\triangle ABC$ . (3)

(iv) Find the direction cosines of the line  $\frac{x-2}{2} = \frac{y-3}{1} = \frac{z-4}{-1}$ . (3)

(v) Show that the points  $(1, 1, 1)$  and  $(-1, 1, 1)$  are equidistant from the plane  $F: (5, 6, -12) \cdot \vec{r} = 0$ . (3)

**Q. 2(A)** Attempt any TWO of the following: (6)(14)

(i) Using vector method prove that  $p + q + r = (p + q) + (-p + -q)$  (3)

(ii) Prove that a homogeneous equation of second degree,  $ax^2 + bxy + cy^2 = 0$  represents a pair of straight lines passing through the origin, if  $h^2 - ab \geq 0$ . (3)

(iii) Prove that the volume of a parallelepiped with coterminal edges  $\vec{a}, \vec{b}, \vec{c}$  is  $(h, k, l)$ . Hence find the volume of the parallelepiped with coterminal edges  $\vec{i}, \vec{j}, \vec{k}$  and  $\vec{a} = \vec{i}$ . (3)

**Q. 2(B)** Attempt any TWO of the following: (3)

(i) Find the inverse of the matrix  $A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 \\ 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 3 & 4 & 5 \end{bmatrix}$  by using column transformations. (3)

(ii) In  $\triangle ABC$ , prove that  $\sin \frac{A+B}{2} = \frac{a+b}{2c} \cos \frac{C}{2}$ . (3)

(iii) Show that the lines  $\frac{x+1}{-3} = \frac{y-2}{4} = \frac{z+1}{1}$  and  $\frac{x-2}{1} = \frac{y-2}{-2} = \frac{z+2}{2}$  are coplanar. Find the equation of the plane containing them. (4)



## The Success

The bench of the Apex Court ruled that the evaluated answer-sheets are covered under the definition of 'information' under the RTI Act. This judgment applies to all examinations including the Public Service Commissions, Universities, CBSE and other Boards, Professional Bodies such as ICAI, in fact, every examination conducted by any government agency in India. This proved to be a historic judgement which ensured that no deserving student would be inadvertently deprived of his/her rightful marks.

(Source: [www.moneylife.in](http://www.moneylife.in))





# Online facility for checking answer sheets.

**| Anupam Jena | Cuttack, Odisha | 2014**

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*A student from Cuttack uses RTI for accessing photo copy of his evaluated answer sheet of HSC Examination, prompting the Board of Secondary Education to start an online facility for the same.*

## The Problem

Anupam Jena, a 15-year-old student appeared for HSC examination conducted by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha in the academic year 2014-15. On receiving the statement of marks, he found that the score was not up to his expectations. Then he realized that there was no mechanism for transparent evaluation; as a result of which hundreds of other students were also affected.

## Use of RTI

Anupam filed an RTI application with the Public Information Officer (PIO) of Saraswati Sishu Mandir, Balu Bazaar, Cuttack seeking detailed information about the evaluation of his answer sheets and also demanded photocopies of the answer sheets from the District Inspector of Schools. The concerned PIO forwarded the application to the Board of Secondary Education, Cuttack (BSE). Since the BSE did not take any action, a petition was filed before the High Court, Cuttack. The High Court directed the BSE to recheck the answer sheets. Again the result was negative.

Anupam then filed another RTI application with the BSE asking for copies of the re-checked answer sheets. Since the Board did not provide the copies, an appeal was filed before the Odisha State Information Commission.



## The Success

The State Information Commission upheld the demand of Anupam and directed the Board to provide copies of answer sheets. He was provided the same and subsequently got marks corrected within 45 days. On the direction of the State Information Commission, the BSE came out with a notification that any student can apply for re-checking and photo copy of answer sheets after the result. The BSE since then has also launched an online facility ([www.indiaresults.com](http://www.indiaresults.com)) for rechecking, evaluation and supply of photo copies of answersheets.

(Source: *Gopabandhu Academy of Administration and Jayashree Mohanty from Luminous Infoways, Odisha*)





# Facilitating social audits in schools

| Saurabh Sharma | Delhi | 2011

*Some socially active citizens of Delhi used RTI to pave the way for parents and residents of any city, town or village to conduct school audits in schools.*

## The Problem

Saurabh Sharma and other members of Joint Operation for Social Help (JOSH) joined the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) to conduct social auditing of schools in June 2011. This meant visiting schools for physical inspection of infrastructure and records in the school office. However, Sharma and others were not allowed to enter the school premises maintaining that 'only parents are allowed and not NGOs'. Several parents, supported by Sharma, also tried to conduct inspection but they too were denied entry.

## Use of RTI

Saurabh Sharma then consulted RTI experts who opined that inspection of school records and facilities come under the suo motu disclosure under Section 4 of the RTI Act. They advised him to send an official complaint to the Central Information Commission (CIC), seeking suo motu disclosure which would facilitate citizens and NGOs to conduct inspection and carry out social audits. Sharma and his colleague, Aheli Chowdhury, sent an official complaint to CIC on 8 June 2011 appealing that citizens be allowed inspection of various documents of schools which come under suo motu disclosure of Section 4 of the RTI Act, such as admission records, students' and teachers' attendance records, budget allocations, sanctions issued and expenditure incurred, expenditure on educational tours, mid-day meals, VKS/SMC, sanitation, and CEP, records of disbursements made to students on account of scholarships, uniforms, books and all other incentives given under any scheme and various registers like inspection register, movement register. They also suggested that the schools run and maintained by the education department and the Government of Delhi should display hard copies of all the mandated information at premises.





## The Success

On 29 July 2011, CIC ordered the schools to immediately give access to all documents asked for by Sharma, for public scrutiny. CIC ordered the Director (Education), GNCTD, to send a consolidated compliance report of these directives to the CIC by 15 September 2011. After one round of inspection of 60 schools, it was revealed that, almost all of them did not adhere to the physical infrastructural and staff facilities prescribed by the Right To Education Act. The Additional Director of Education (Schools) also halted such efforts by an order on 28 October 2011 directing that 'any NGO or person is not to be allowed to carry out any inspection or interaction without the prior authorization of the department.'

Sharma moved CIC once again. CIC ordered the inclusion of the words 'inspection of infrastructural facilities' in school inspection, in order dt. 11 March 2012. The CIC also directed the dates/timings when such inspections can be carried out.

Thanks to RTI, parents and NGOs can now scrutinize school records and physical facilities.

(Source: [www.moneylife.in](http://www.moneylife.in))



# Fees reduced for copies of documents

**| Nabam Pali | Arunachal Pradesh | 2014-16**

*A young RTI user from Arunachal Pradesh takes the State government to Court over high fees for copies of documents under RTI.*

## The Problem

The Government of Arunachal Pradesh passed the Arunachal Pradesh Right to Information (6th amendment) Rule, 2010 whereby the rate of per page information to be provided to an applicant was increased from Rs. 2 to Rs. 10.

Nabam Pali, a resident of Arunachal Pradesh, found the fees of Rs. 10 per page of information document too high, particularly when, in 2012, he asked for 57,570 pages of documents pertaining to the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) scheme, which is one of India's largest programmes for early childhood development. He was asked to pay Rs. 5,75,700 by the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the Office of the Child Development Project, which he did pay with the help of friends.

Pali says, "Officers of various departments used to charge huge fees to give out information, which is unjust."

## Legal Fight for RTI fees

Nabam Pali filed a writ petition in the form of PIL in the High Court at Naharlagun challenging hike in fees. Additional Advocate General, Arunachal Pradesh, submitted that such increase has been made as per the cabinet decision dated 15 July 2010. He also stated that the cabinet was prepared to revisit the matter regarding such fixation of rate.

## The Success

The High Court directed the State Government to reduce the fees from Rs. 10 per page (A4 size) to Rs. 2 by re-amending the RTI rules, preferably within three months.

Arunachal Pradesh, Department of Administrative Reforms, promptly acted upon the HC verdict and on 11 November 2014, notified that "for information in the form of communication, letter - Rs. 2 per page; for other than priced publication- Rs. 2 per page; for information on CD or DVD - actual price; Inspection of records - free for the first hour and for the subsequent each 15 minutes, Rs. 5".

(Source: [www.moneylife.in](http://www.moneylife.in))

The screenshot shows the official website of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh. The header includes the state emblem and the text "Official website of Government of Arunachal Pradesh". Navigation tabs include "At a Glance", "Government", "People", "Tourism", "Biodiversity", and "Directory". A sidebar on the left lists categories like "Services", "Schemes", "Forms", "Acts", "Rules & Regulations", "Documents & Notifications", "Tenders", "Announcements", and "Weblinks". The main content area is titled "Announcements" and contains the following details:

- Concerned State : Arunachal Pradesh
- Concerned Department : Department Information, Public Relations & Printing
- Title of Announcement : HC directive to Govt on RTI Act
- Concerned Date : 27 / 12 / 2014
- Details : In the State of Arunachal Pradesh, the High Court directive has reduced the fees for information under the Right to Information (RTI) Act from Rs. 10 per page (A4 size) to Rs.2 by re-amending the RTI rules vide Govt. of AP Notification No.AR-47/2014 dated 13th November, 2014. The Gauhati High Court, Itanagar Permanent Bench, Naharlagun while hearing a PIL filed by one Pali Nabam challenging the high fee charged for obtaining information under RTI in the state, has directed the state government to reduce the fee from Rs 10 per copy to Rs.2.

At the bottom right of the announcement, there is a link "<< Back". At the very bottom of the page, there are links for "Photo Gallery", "Arunachal Statistical Map", and "Census documents".

# How an activist forced Arunachal Govt to reduce fees for copies under RTI

**Nabam Pali, a young RTI activist from Arunachal Pradesh was felicitated last week, for having sought legal intervention, compelling the state government to reduce fees to Rs.2 from Rs. 10 for obtaining copies of documents under the Act**

ET Bureau  
Itanagar, Jan 22

The official website of the Government of Arunachal Pradesh has this announcement, declaring that it has reduced the fees for information procured under RTI from Rs10 to Rs2:

"In the State of Arunachal Pradesh, the High Court directive has reduced the fees for information under the Right to Information (RTI) Act from Rs10 per page (A4 size) to Rs2 by re-amending

the RTI rules vide Government of Arunachal Pradesh Notification No.AR-47/2014 dated 13 November, 2014. The Gauhati High Court, Itanagar Permanent Bench, Naharlagun while hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by one Pali Nabam challenging the high fee charged for obtaining information under RTI in the state, has directed the state government to reduce the fee from Rs10 per copy to Rs2."

The young activist Nabam Pali, from Arunachal Pradesh, has been fighting the case since

## THE HIGHLIGHTS

- The young activist Nabam Pali, from Arunachal Pradesh, has been fighting the case since 2012 as he found the fees of Rs.10 per page of information too steep for early childhood development.
- He was asked to pay Rs 5,75,700 by the Public Information Officer of the Office of the Child Development Project.
- In 2012, he asked for 57,570 pages of documents pertaining to the Integrated Child Development Service scheme, which is one of India's largest programmes.

2012. He filed a writ petition in the form of PIL. The High Court ordered the state government to address the grievance of the petitioner within three weeks of the order; the AP government notified the revision of fees.

Nabam Pali, like other citizens of the state, found the fees of Rs10 per page of information document too steep, particularly when, in 2012, he asked for 57,570 pages of documents pertaining to the Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) scheme, which

is one of India's largest programmes for early childhood development. He was asked to pay Rs5,75,700 by the Public Information Officer (PIO) of the Office of the Child Development Project, which he did pay with the help of friends.

As per last week's news reports in various dailies of Arunachal Pradesh, Pali, while thanking the Arunachal RTI activist Forum (ARTIAF) for felicitating him, stated that the road was very tough for him. "When I initially started filing

RTIs in 2007-08, the officers used to charge me Rs50 for an application, which was not right and I had to spend a huge amount of money as treasury challan to get the information. I somehow managed to arrange the money then but what about the poor ones who cannot afford it," said Pali showing records of him paying Rs3.40 lakh and Rs1.21 lakh in two instances as treasury challan to get information.

■ *Contd. on Page 3*



# Kamla gets finance for her house

**Kamla Moirangthiem | Imphal (East), Manipur | 2006-09**

*Kamia, a village woman from Manipur used RTI to get funds she was entitled to for construction of her house, under Indira Awaas Yojana.*

## The Problem

Kamla Moirangthiem is a resident of Uchekontakhok village of Manipur. In 2006, her village Pradhan had taken her details for the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY). However, only three applications were approved and she did not know whether she had made it to the list of beneficiaries.

## Use of RTI

Kamla's friend filed an RTI application, seeking information of the list of beneficiaries under the IAY scheme. The information revealed that Kamla was selected as one of the beneficiaries. When Kamla approached the Pradhan of her Gram Panchayat with a request for money for her house, he asked her to submit two photographs along with her signature on a blank sheet. When Kamla asked what he planned to write on the blank sheet signed by her, he did not give any reply. When she asked him the amount that she would be paid, he told her that, after deducting a percentage for the insurgent groups, she would be given Rs. 18,000 to build a house. Knowing that she was entitled to Rs. 35,000, Kamla refused to sign the paper.

She then filed a complaint with the District Collector but no action was taken, upon which she filed a writ petition in the Guwahati High Court, Imphal bench in 2009. The High Court directed the administration to take appropriate action on her complaint.

## The Success

The District Collector responded on 11 May 2009 and directed the Block Development Officer to release the payment.

Finally, Kamla got her money in two instalments. She became the first person to get the entire amount not only in her village but also in nearby areas. Now, people look up to her and promise her that they too would fight for their entire money that they are entitled for, under the Indira Awaas Yojana.

Kamla and her friends are a part of a group that has been trained in the effective use of RTI Act by Macha Leima, a women's organisation. It is one of the oldest women's organisations in Manipur. After the implementation of RTI Act, Macha Manipur and trained them to use the RTI Act.

*(Source: Department of Personnel and Training, GoI)*





# Land sharks let go of land

Several Below Poverty Line villagers | Nizamabad, Telangana | 2007-12

*Several villagers of Shadkal village in Nizamabad district of Telangana, who had migrated to the Gulf countries, found their lands grabbed, after their return. With the help of Samachara Hakku Chattam Rakshana Vedika, an NGO, the lands were restored to rightful owners.*

## The Problem

The State Government, under its *Bhoo Pampini* scheme, allotted 11 acres of land to several Below Poverty Line (BPL) families in Shadkal village, Jakranpalli Mandal of Nizamabad district of Telangana. Some of these families had migrated to Gulf countries due to drought and their lands remained uncultivated. These lands were occupied by some local leaders. When the land owners returned in 2007, they came to know about the land grab and approached the revenue department but to no avail.

## Use of RTI

After waiting for three years, the aggrieved land owners with the help of an NGO filed an RTI application with the Mandal Revenue Officer seeking information pertaining to the allotment of the land in question and details of the current possessors of the land.

## The Success

After receipt of the RTI application, the revenue department authorities carried out a survey of the lands. It was proved that the lands of the aggrieved people had indeed been grabbed. Rights of the land in question were subsequently restored to the rightful owners.

*(Source: Dr. MCR HRD Institute, Telangana)*





# Leave encashment money released

**Rakesh Prashar | National | 2008-10**

*Former employee of Ordnance Factory, Jabalpur uses RTI to get leave encashment, totalling to Rs.60 lakh released to 57 employees.*

## The Problem

Rakesh Prashar served in the Vehicle Factory, Jabalpur, a unit of Ordnance Factories, till he resigned in May 2007. He then took up a new assignment with the Himachal Pradesh government. Even after 18 months of quitting the job, he did not receive his leave encashment that was due to him soon after his resignation.

## Use of RTI

Rakesh Prashar filed an RTI application asking details about his leave encashment and expected date of its release. However, the PIO did not reply to this query. Therefore, he filed his first appeal to the Appellate Authority, who issued an order stating that Rakesh Prashar not entitled to leave encashment.

Subsequently, Prashar got to know that many others had also been refused leave encashment and so he moved a series of RTI applications by which it was revealed that there were 57 persons whose leave encashment totalling to Rs.60 lakh had been held up. He then filed an RTI application with the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) which replied that leave encashment is admissible even on resignation.

Rakesh Prashar then moved an RTI application to the head office, i.e. the Ordnance Factory Board, Kolkata, which confirmed that the leave encashment was as per the rules.

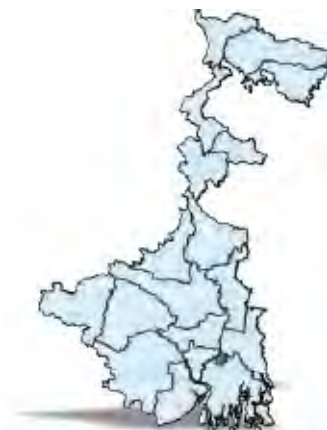
## The Success

After Rakesh Prashar's three year long struggle and about 30 RTI applications, leave encashment was paid to the aggrieved employees.

*(Source: Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration)*







# Pension disbursed in 30 days

**Reba (Mitra) Sinha | Kolkata, West Bengal | 2011-15**

*A Kolkata woman gets her pension which was stuck for more than three years, within 30 days of using*

## The Problem

As per the Employees' Pension Scheme 1995, a member who has not attained age of 50 years but has left the PF membership is issued the Scheme Certificate by EPFO. Such a certificate is required to be submitted in original along with the pension claim form for settlement of monthly pension. Reba (Mitra) Sinha submitted her application for monthly pension along with the original Scheme Certificate of her EPF Account in February 2011. However, the original Scheme Certificate was later found missing in the office of the EPFO and her claim could not be processed.

On 3 November 2011, the Assistant Provident Fund Commissioner, Regional Office, Kolkata wrote to her asking to resubmit her application for monthly pension along with the necessary documents. This was done. Thereafter, Reba Sinha visited the office of the Assessing Officer on several occasions in 2013, 2014 and 2015 requesting him to release the pension but to no avail. The officer then verbally intimated her that her Original Certificate had been returned via post but she never received such a letter.

## Use of RTI

On 16 November 2015, Reba (Mitra) Sinha filed an RTI application with the C.P.I.O, Regional Provident Fund Commissioner, W.B, seeking the information about various details of her application with original certificate and its status.

It was revealed that her Original Scheme Certificate which was essential for settlement of monthly pension was not submitted by the officer as it was apparently misplaced. A photocopy of the Original Scheme Certificate was made available to the applicant and a note was initiated for accepting the photocopy of the scheme certificate since the identity of the claimant had been proved. The Assistant Commissioner accepted the request and processed for settlement of the pension claim.





# RTI helps in getting Increments released

**Mukta Thakur | Shimla, Himachal Pradesh | 2011-12**

*An Assistant Engineer from Himachal Pradesh Planning Department uses RTI to challenge arbitrary decisions of a Department, which resulted in the held up increments of the staff, being released.*

## The Problem:

The Head of the Himachal Pradesh's Planning Department had issued a written order, making it mandatory for every staffer to intimate the department about his or her increment and other routine service particulars; failing which, increments would not be released. This order was not based on any Rules in force.

Many staffers were unaware of the date of their increment as the service books are kept in the custody of the Head Office. As per the order, every staffer was to produce proof that he was present on the first day of the month in which his/her increment was due but the leave records, Service Books etc were with the Head Office itself. Increments of the staff remained with held as this practice remained in force for two years.

## Use of RTI

An Assistant Engineer Mukta Thakur filed an RTI application challenging the order of the HoD seeking to know reasons for with holding the annual increments for two years.

## The Success

The orders of the HoD, which were found in contravention of the Fundamental Rules and other Rules, were set aside and the annual increments were released for all department staff.

*(Source: Himachal Pradesh Institute of Public Administration)*



# SALARY





# Held up Scholarship money released

**Ritesh Singh | National | 2012**

*Two hundred student scholars of IIT Roorkee were denied their full scholarship. RTI helped them to get the scholarship.*

## The Problem

Some 200 students of IIT Roorkee won the Ministry of Science & Technology's Scholarship for Higher Education, as a part of the 'Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research Scheme' but were receiving only a partial amount.

## Use of RTI

In January 2012, RTI Anonymous, an online service, through which any Indian citizen can file Right to Information (RTI) applications, took up the cudgels on behalf of the students. It asked the PIO, Department of Science & Technology (DST) the following information:

- How many students received the scholarship in the year 2009-10 and 2010-11?
- What is the basis on which the distribution of scholarships to the students is decided? Are there any rules and regulations for such scholarship distribution? Provide an attested copy of all related governing orders/directions and laws
- Has the department made any arrangement/system for fair and just distribution of scholarships to the deserving students?
- If any student has not been given the scholarship during the year 2011-12, then specify the reason for the same.

## The Success

The RTI reply from DST made it very clear that IIT Roorkee was giving only partial scholarship money i.e. Rs.60,000 instead of Rs. 80,000. The DST stated in its reply, "funds for IIT Roorkee are granted annually on the basis of Rs. 80,000 per scholar. IIT Roorkee was never instructed by the DST to retain Rs. 20,000 as mentorship cost." On receipt of this information, the students took up strongly with their educational institution. As a result, not only did the students of IIT Roorkee get the scholarship in full, but

students of all other IITs received the scholarship of the complete amount, including IIT Kharagpur where Ritesh Singh was also a student, then.

(Source: [www.moneylife.in](http://www.moneylife.in))







# Commercial endorsements declared illegal

| Dr. K V Babu | Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala | 2008-10

*Kerala doctor's RTI campaign forces Medical Council of India (MCI) to take action against commercial endorsements by Indian Medical Association (IMA).*

## The Problem

In April 2008, Indian Medical Association (IMA) signed a Rs. 2.25 crore contract with Pepsico, permitting Tropicana fruit juice and Quaker oats to use the IMA logo on their packets for three years. Dr. K. V. Babu, an IMA Central Committee member, complained to MCI on 6 June 2008 contending that the IMA should cancel the endorsement because scientific studies had shown that excessive consumption of packaged fruit juices was harmful to the health of the children. Hence IMA's endorsement of such products by various companies was in violation of medical code of ethics.

Dr. Babu pointed out that under the Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics Regulation, 2002) endorsement of commercial products was an unethical act. Section 6.1.1. which says: "Soliciting of products directly or indirectly, by a physician, or a group of physicians or institutions or organizations is unethical."

## Use of RTI

Dr. K. V. Babu used the Right-to-information Act extensively to source relevant documents. He marshalled a plethora of information through RTI requests, which helped him argue his case effectively in front of the Ethics Committee of the Medical Council of India (MCI). The Committee initially backed the IMA's decision of these endorsements, stating that it does not apply to a group of doctors. However, in December 2009, the MCI made amendments to its Code of Ethics adding Section 6.8 to regulate the "code of conduct for doctors and professional associations of doctors in their relationship with pharmaceutical and allied health sector industry." Dr. K. V. Babu pointed out that the IMA came under the definition of 'professional associations of doctors'.

Since MCI did not reply to his RTI application on whether endorsement by medical associations was unethical or not, Dr. K. V. Babu approached the Central Information Commissioner (CIC).



## The Success

The CIC directed MCI to reply. Dr. K. V. Babu's contention was proved right when the MCI declared that the IMA's endorsement was indeed illegal and unethical.

## The Struggle Continues

Dr. K. V. Babu is now urging the MCI to take 'appropriate and exemplary action' against all the 187 doctors who attended the meeting of the IMA's central committee held at Puri, Orissa on April 12-13, 2008, where endorsements were given the official nod. Soon after his complaint in this regard, the IMA, led by the doctors against whom he had complained, decided to expel him. In June 2013, the MCI Ethics Committee that heard his complaint found that four doctors were guilty of misconduct and recommended removal of their names from the IMA register for a year.

*(Source: Institute of Management in Government, Kerala)*

# Whistleblower doctor wins battle against MCI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health's intervention has finally brought to close an eight-year-long campaign waged by K.V. Babu, a physician from Kannur, whose relentless fight against the Indian Medical Association's (IMA) product endorsements and the legal hassles that followed had eventually led him on a collision course with the Medical Council of India (MCI).

In 2008, Dr. Babu had complained to the MCI against IMA, which had signed a Rs.2.25-crore deal with Pepsico for endorsing its products and which Dr. Babu pointed out was in violation of the MCI's Code of Ethics Regulations, 2002.

The whistleblower doctor had all the while been fighting expulsion by the IMA Kerala branch and harassment by the MCI, which, instead of upholding the code of ethics had exempted the IMA from within the ambit of the ethics regulation and had turned against Dr. Babu and his wife

Bindu for going to the press.

The MCI, following the intervention of the PSC, has finally given up and has agreed to unconditionally drop the complaint against Dr. Babu and close the case. The PSC's report was tabled in the Lok Sabha on Monday. The MCI

has also been forced to retract its earlier statement that professional association of doctors such as the IMA did not fall within its jurisdiction.

Talking to *The Hindu*, Dr. Babu said that he had re-

lentlessly pursued the case because morally, ethically and legally, he was right on every count and hence, none had the right to harass him.

"According to the Code of Ethics, every medical practitioner should be a member of a professional association, which gives me the right to be a member of the IMA. But the IMA's unethical endorsement of a product does not suit my ethics. The Code of Ethics also says that it is the responsibility of a medical professional to oppose any unethical practice," he said.



K.V. Babu



# Taking up the failed ATM transaction

| Sharad Phadke | Pune, Maharashtra | 2009-10

*Not many know that banks are liable to pay a penalty of Rs.100 a day, if the wrongfully debited amount during ATM transaction is not paid within seven days of the consumer's complaint. An ordinary citizen successfully fights this case through RTI and brings in public awareness.*

## The Problem

On 18 October 2009, an ATM withdrawal of Rs.1000 made by a Pune-based senior citizen and entrepreneur Sharad Phadke, failed. He tried once again and this time he was successful. However, the initial failed transaction was also debited from his account in Bank of India. Which meant that Rs. 2000 was debited instead of Rs.1000.

On the same day, he lodged an online complaint with Bank of India, but there was no response. He came across a circular dated 17 July 2009 issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) u/s 18 of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act 2007. It stated that the RBI has made it mandatory for all banks to restore failed transaction amount of the customer within 12 days of lodging the complaint or pay the penalty of Rs. 100 per day to him. (Subsequently, RBI has reduced it to seven days instead of 12 days).

After Phadke lodged several complaints to Bank of India, Laxmi Road branch, an amount of Rs. 1000 was credited to his account on 7 February 2010 but replies about compensation of Rs. 100 per day for the 65 days delay by the Bank of India, were evasive.

## Use of RTI

Phadke then filed an RTI application at the Bank of India's head office, in Mumbai, on 7 February asking for information about reasons for not crediting compensation money to his account on the day Rs. 1000 was credited back to him and information regarding the name and designation of the officer, responsible for this act.



## The Success

Within three weeks of lodging the RTI application, the compensation amount of Rs.6500 was credited to Phadke's account. He pursued the campaign further by invoking RTI to find out the detailed data of similar cases in various banks and found, much to his horror, that it amounted to a large amount of money. He also began making requests for inspection of files.

Phadke then filed an appeal to the first appellate authority as well as Central Information Commission, as Pune's Laxmi Road branch of Bank of India was not permitting him to inspect files pertaining to the ATM compensation issue.

On 4 November 2010, the CIC directed the PIO of Bank of India (Headquarters) in Mumbai "to assemble all records and documents, circulars and guidelines relating to the proactive disclosures at the Laxmi Road Branch and to invite Phadke to inspect them on any mutually convenient day within five working days from receipt of the order." The replies showed that instances of failed ATM transactions and banks not paying compensation were not rare.

Phadke also made an RTI application to the RBI asking for copies of quarterly reports of ATM transactions submitted by banks and the action taken against defaulting banks. Phadke passed away in 2015 but he has paved the way for hundreds of harassed customers who can now take the RTI route and get their wrongly debited amount back.





# Teacher guides student to get scholarship

**B. Manoj, A class 5 student | Nizamabad, Telangana | 2011-12**

***A Class 5 student of MPP School, Wadi Village of Nizamabad District, Telangana, successfully uses RTI to get his Rs.1000 scholarship.***

## The Problem

B. Manoj, a class 5 student from Velpur, Telangana is a child of a beedi worker's family. Through the Backward Class Welfare Society, the Labour Department, Telangana releases scholarships for the children of Beedi Workers. Manoj was one of the eligible students for the annual scholarship of Rs. 1000 for the year 2011-12, but he did not receive the money.

## Use of RTI

On advice of his teacher, Manoj filed an RTI application seeking information from the labour department in the district. In his application, he sought the reasons for not releasing the scholarship.

## The Success

In response to Manoj's RTI application, the authorities released the annual scholarship of Rs. 1000 for the year 2011-12 not only to Manoj but also to 14 other eligible students of the schools, under the B.C.Welfare

Society. The authorities also sent a letter to Manoj informing him about the action taken by them on his application under the RTI Act. Encouraged by this, Manoj later used RTI to seek information from the Archaeology Department on forgotten history of Nizamabad district.

*(Source: Dr. MCR HRD Institute, Telangana and Mr. Ankam Naresh)*



To  
Sri B. Manoj  
w/o Gangasailu  
Wadi (V) Chengal (PO)  
Velpur (M) Nizamabad  
503307

*Copy of the Reply from the Labour Department*

Sir

Sub:-- Supply of information under RTI Act 2005.

-o-o-o-

With reference to your application dated 20/09/2013 received in this office on 11/12/2013 you are informed that the financial assistance for education sanctioned to 10 students out of 15 students studying in Primary School Vailpoor Nizamabad district has been handed over to UBI Ramkote, Hyderabad on 06/12/2013 for crediting the scholarship amount in their respective accounts as per the statement issued by the Head Master, Primary School, Vailpoor, Nizamabad District.





## **The RTI Teacher**

A good teacher makes a sea of difference in student empowerment. Ankam Naresh, a teacher from Government run MPP School at Wadi village, Velpur Mandal in Nizamabad district of Telangana, teaches his students not only the academic curriculum but laws which would help them in their lifetime. B. Manoj, who used RTI Act to get delayed disbursement of his scholarship, is his student.

Naresh, who is the former District President of Samachara Hakku Chattam Rakshana Vedika, Nizamabad district, has been encouraging his students to use the RTI.

Thanks to his guidance and encouragement, children studying in Class 4 and 5, have used the RTI Act successfully. His Class 4 student, Mamatha, had several doubts about the tiger population and protection of the endangered animal in the state when a lesson on Project Tiger was being taught in her class. Naresh helped her obtain the information of tiger census in the State and steps taken to protect tigers by forest department.

Another student, Kavitha, succeeded in solving a problem faced by residents of Wadi village. The state transport buses did not go to the village, because of which, the villagers had to depend on the whims and fancies of private transporters. She used the RTI Act and made the State Road Transport Corporation launch a special bus service for the village.



# Widow gets medical compensation

**Purobi Kotoky | Sivasagar, Assam | 2003-16**

*Widow of an employee of a government treasury uses RTI, gets medical bills of her late husband, cleared after 13 years.*

## The Problem

Madhob Kotoky was an employee of Sivasagar Treasury. His medical reimbursement bill amounting to Rs. 62,605 for treatment at Apollo Hospital, Chennai was forwarded to the Director of Health Services (DHS), Assam vide letter dated 28 May 2003 by Deputy Commissioner of Sivasagar. The medical reimbursement bill was still pending when Kotoky expired on 16 July 2012.

## Use of RTI

Purobi Kotoky, widow of Madhob Kotoky, who resides in Jorhat filed an RTI application before the Director of Health Services (DHS) on 21 April 2012 seeking information on the status of the medical reimbursement bill of her late husband, reasons as to why the bill had not been sanctioned and how many days were needed for its sanction. Since there was no reply, she filed first appeal with the Directorate of Health Services, Assam on 29 October 2012. Since there was no response for the first appeal too, she filed second appeal with the State Information Commission on 27 December 2013.

The SIC, Assam heard both parties and perused the records. The DHS, in his written submission, stated that there was no record of receipt of the medical bills and RTI petitions in his office. The Commission observed that nonavailability of records does not necessarily establish that the petitioner never submitted her claim with the office of the Directorate of Health Services, Assam. The SIC was of the view that the corroborative documents available in the case records indicate that the original medical bills, RTI application and the first appeal were either lost or misplaced and it would be unreasonable to expect the applicant to obtain copies of the medical bills and other related papers from Apollo Hospital, Chennai after 13 years and submit them again.



## The Success

On 31 March 2016, the SIC passed following order:

- The Directorate of Health Services should pay a sum of Rs.1,62,605 towards reimbursement of the medical bill along with Rs.25,395 as estimated simple interest at the rate of 10% per annum from the date of the RTI application and an additional amount of Rs.12,000 as a token compensation for the harassment and mental agony the applicant faced due to the delay in getting information in response to her RTI application and first appeal.
- The Director of Health Services should conduct an enquiry into missing medical reimbursement bills and take appropriate action against those found guilty.
- The Director of Health Services should maintain a record of receipt and disposal of all RTI applications and first appeals in a systematic manner.
- The Commissioner and the Secretary, Health and Family Welfare Department, Government of Assam were directed to verify and confirm the compliance of the orders of SIC.

In compliance with the SIC's order, the Health and Family Welfare Department of the Government of Assam sanctioned payment to Purobi Kotoky on 29 June 2016.

*(Source: State Information Commission, Assam)*

# BILLING STATEMENT

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO  
ADDRESS  
1111 222-3333

PLEASE CHECK METHOD OF PAYMENT

Card Number	Exp Date
Account	
Signature	
Statement Date	2/23/25
Account No	

Name  
Family Care  
100 Elm Street  
Anytown, ST 12345

DESCRIPTION	CHARGE	PAYMENT	ADJUST	PAYMENT
PHYSICIAN STATEMENT	160.00			160.00
PHYSICIAN STATEMENT	110.00			110.00
PHYSICIAN STATEMENT	190.00			190.00
PHYSICIAN STATEMENT	125.00			125.00
				-115.00





# **RTI Reach Out**



# Social media to address public grievances

**Government of India, Ministry of Railways**

*The Indian Railways addresses public grievances through Twitter and Facebook for quicker redressal and has thereby garnered over 1.5 million followers.*

Apart from the conventional channels of redressal of public grievances and customer engagement, like *Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)*, Complaint Management System Web Portal (COMS - APP, SMS, Web), and Helpline No.138, Indian Railways has recently got social media savvy. It has devised a system (Social Customer Relationship Management - CRM Tool) to address the large volume of requests/grievances of railway passengers through Social Media.

The Social Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tool, an integrated dashboard for various channels of complaints, is being used in the Ministry to manage complaints received on the twitter handles and official Facebook page presently. This CRM Tool ensures effective capturing of relevant tweets and posts; and creates them into individual tickets and helps officials to collaborate on the tool to get the best results from the efforts put in. Registers have been replaced by automatic data registration made by the social CRM. The effort of manually screening the tweets and noting down every action was not only time consuming but was also impacting effective and quick resolution. Through this unique initiative Railways have been attending to the needs of the travelling passengers on a real time basis.

## **Transparency & Accountability**

All activities of receiving complaints, forwarding to the concerned authority, its escalation to relevant senior officials, whenever required, action taken by them and the feedback of passengers are in public domain. With the automatic categorisation of tweets/posts, pop ups when time limit breaches, the staff spends less time per case and this enables the concerned authority to take prompt action on the tweets/posts. The tweets/posts forwarded to the concerned authority and action taken by them automatically gets recorded in the system which can be retrieved for future reference ensuring complete accountability.

Due to speedy resolution of issues of the passengers the twitter handle and FaceBook page of the Ministry has gained popularity and reached one million mark on 27 April 2016. Presently, the twitter handle of Ministry of Railways has 1.5 million followers. Time and again, this system has shown examples of

social audit by citizens. Delay/inaction on the part of any authority results in innumerable posts/tweets of criticism from other citizens, resulting in corrective gesture/action by the concerned citizen/authority.







# Paving the way for openness

**Government of India, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways**

***Initiatives taken by Ministry of Road Transport and Highways to provide access to information and to promote transparency has restated in interactive governance.***

In the Road as well as the Transport Sector, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has initiated several measures for the convenience of citizens as well as for private agencies that collaborate with it for various projects. Following are some of the measures:

**DigiLocker:-** In Transport Sector steps like linking of Driving License and Registration certificate with DigiLocker scheme has been initiated Ministry. DigiLocker is a key initiative under Digital India, the Indian Government's flagship at providing citizens a shareable private space on a public cloud and making all documents/certificates available on this cloud. Indian citizens who sign up for a DigiLocker account get a dedicated cloud storage space that is linked to their Aadhaar (UIDAI) number. This measure will go a long way in helping citizens avoid harassment faced in carrying relevant documents while driving the vehicles.

**ePace:-** ePace (Projects Appraisal & Continuing Enhancements) is an online tool to monitor and improve the progress of works at the click of a button. This is in Public Domain and all the information therein is accessible to the general public. The initiative captures the static and dynamic information for all the projects executed by MoRTH, NHA and NHIDCL. The system aims at capturing project information which would help in monitoring and accelerating the pace of the projects. In the long run this would help develop over the top applications through crowd sourcing wherein project photographs/videos can be uploaded to collate and compare the official information.

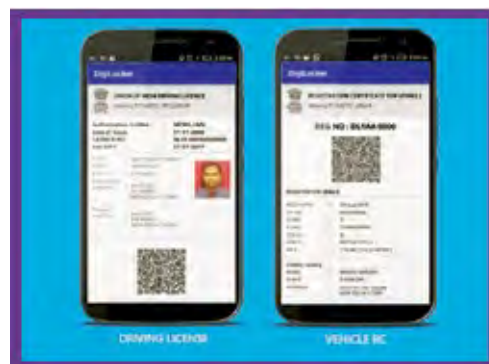
**INAM-Pro:** INAM-Pro (Platform for Infrastructure and Materials Providers) is a web based application for Infrastructure and Materials Providers and is set up as a common platform for Infrastructure material providers viz. Cement/Steel Companies, Infrastructure providers, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and other stakeholders. It facilitates contractors and cement/steel buyers engaged in executing the Central/State funded Roads and Highways/Bridge construction projects to place cement/steel orders online with the registered cement companies offering cement/steel at competitive rates in the vicinity of project execution locations. Cement/Steel companies are facilitated to update their offered stock on the portal with the prices agreed upon with MoRTH. The application is in Public Domain, giving a host of information to general public also.

**RAMS:-** This Ministry is in the process of creating a Road Asset Management System (RAMS) which is a strategic and systematic process of maintaining, upgrading, and operating road assets effectively. Information collected and made available through this system will be useful for the agencies responsible for road development and maintenance, investors, as well as road users. The software is interfaced with Google Earth for providing additional information to road users.

**HAS:-** Highway Advisory Service (HAS) is aimed at providing real time information to highway commuters on the condition of road and traffic density is under implementation on a pilot basis.

**VAHAN & SARATHI:-** MoRTH has taken up a Transport Mission Mode Project for creation of a National Register and State Register of driving licenses and registration certificates of motor vehicles. Two flagship applications Vahan (for Vehicle Registration) and Sarathi (for Driving License) have been developed and implemented through National Informatics Centre. Hundred percent automation of 1000+ RTOs all across the country has been achieved. Almost all states and UTs of the country are using versions of these applications developed by NIC. Almost 19.2 crore Vehicle records and 9.2 crore License records are available in its central repository (National Registry). The consolidated data in State and National Registry act as the base for a large number of online citizen-centric applications and information services.

Under such initiatives, ease of governance is being achieved making the working of this Ministry transparent and citizen centric.







# Information at a click of the mouse

**Government of India, Ministry of Labour and Employment**

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*Ministry of Labour and Employment's initiative in making various services provided by the Employees' Provident Fund Organization. (EPFO) transparent and user friendly has increased customer satisfaction.*

The Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO), which is the world's premier social security provider organisation, is focusing its efforts and energies in bringing about transformative changes in its service standards. It has recently launched a series of steps to bolster the confidence of its members and beneficiaries and to rise to their expectations. The prominent amongst them are:

**Universal Account Number (UAN)** has been issued to all the existing members of the organisation. The UAN allows about five crore members to have a single account number for the entire service period and ensures portability on change of employment. The UAN seeded with Aadhaar further enables unique identification of the members.

**Claims settlement process** has been streamlined with the help of Information Technology. More than 80% of the claims are being settled within 10 days. Many of the offices are now settling claims within three days though the statute mandates that the claims be settled within 20 days.

**Benefits are being paid electronically** to more than 93% beneficiaries. Almost 54 lakh pensioners are being paid their pensions electronically (through Core Banking System- CBS) every month. EPFO has won the Financial Inclusion & Payment Systems award 2013 for its work in online payment of Provident Fund and Pension benefits.

**SMS based claims-tracking system and account balance enquiry** is through real-time MIS on claims settlement and updating of member accounts is now available on public portal ([www.epfindia.gov.in](http://www.epfindia.gov.in))

**Members can directly view and print their PF accounts statement** through the member portal. Earlier this information was distributed manually through their employers.

**A search facility to locate establishments** registered with EPFO anywhere in India and their compliance status is available on the public portal. The compliance status is updated immediately after establishment submits due returns and remittances.

**For updating Annual Accounts**, batch processing facility has been introduced from the current financial year. All member accounts have been updated as on 1 April, 2016.

**EPFO has a very robust e-enabled grievance management portal.** The record of grievance disposal in EPFO is probably the best in Government sector in India. During the period from 1 January to 31 August, 2016, about 1,67,745 grievances were received in the portal and 1,63,535 were disposed of, leaving a balance of 4,210 cases.

EPFO is working towards centralisation of its Information Technology based applications, database, portals and operations which would usher in the next level of reforms in the organisation. The centralised operations would facilitate the organisation to introduce on line services such as like on line submission and processing of claims, real time double entry accounting systems, real time portability of accounts and seamless services for members. Under the centralised operations interfaces with service providers and employers for various kinds of services such as mobile applications, ATM based services, payment and collection systems of banks and other institutions, Aadhaar based authentication and service delivery would be made possible.





# Employees' Provident Fund Organisation

(A Statutory Body under Ministry of Labour & Employment, Government of India)

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- ATTN** " ATTENTION CANDIDATES FOR DR SSA - CLICK HERE FOR INFORMATION "
- ATTN** "Dear Employer : Kindly submit Cheques/ Demand Draft and Challans at the SBI co
- ATTN** "Kindly mention Mobile Number and e-mail ID while lodging Vigilance Complaints an

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- [Operational Statistics](#)
- [RTI Act 2005](#)
- [Citizen's Charter](#)

## FOR EMPLOYEES

- [Member Portal \(Download your E-Passbook\)](#)
- [Know Your claim status](#)
- [Know Your EPF Balance](#)
- [EPFiGMS \(Register your Grievance\)](#)
- [Establishment search \(Also View Remittances & Member Name\)](#)
- [Locate an EPFO Office](#) [\[Help - How to Use\]](#)
- [Know Which Claim Form to Submit](#)
- ATTN** [Online Transfer Claim Portal \(OTCP\)](#)



S. J. A. Sankar A. S. Sankar



# e-Auction for transparency in coal sector.

**Government of India, Ministry of Coal**

*As a sequel to the Supreme Court order of 2014 which canceled allocation of 204 coal block citing arbitrariness, the coal ministry conducted an e-auction and there after has brought in several measures to ensure transparency in its governance.*

## **Coal Mines auction/ allocations**

The Supreme Court by an order, on 24 September, 2014, cancelled allocation of 204 coal blocks on the ground that the mechanism for allocation of coal blocks was not transparent and in fact arbitrary.

The Government promulgated Coal Mine (Special Provisions) Ordinance 2014, within 27 days of the judgement, for allocation of these 204 cancelled coal mines to ensure continuity in coal mining operations and production of coal thereby minimizing adverse impact on core sectors such as steel, cement and power utilities and also to ensure smooth transfer of right, title and interests in the mine along with its land and other associated mining infrastructure to the new allottees to be selected through 'auction' or 'allotment' to Government companies, as the case may be.

Subsequently, the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Bill 2015 was notified as an Act on 30 March 2015, providing for allocation of coal mines by way of 'auction' to a company or their Joint Venture and 'allotment' to a Government company or their JV, without auction.

Auction was conducted on an electronic platform through a transparent mechanism i.e. Forward e-Auction for non-regulated sector and Reverse-cum-Forward e-Auction for regulated sector. The online bidding process comprised two stages - Stage I - e-tendering system and Stage II - e-auctioning system. Till date, a total of 83 coal mines (76 coal mines for specified end users and 07 coal mines for sale of coal) have been allocated.

## **Auction of Coal Linkages**

The Ministry of Coal also proposes to provide coal linkages through auction. The proposed auction of coal linkages is transparent, and creates a level playing field. It ensures that all market participants have a fair chance to secure the coal linkage, irrespective of their size. The auction methodology leads to discovery of price through a market mechanism; it does not seek to maximize revenue. The policy on

auction of linkages of non-regulated sector has been approved by CCEA and has been circulated on 15 September 2016 to all concerned for implementation.



### **Third Party Sampling: A Concern For Quality**

- An independent Third Party Agency has been empanelled by Central Institute for Mining and Fuel Research (CIMFR) at loading end on behalf of both the power plant (consumer) and the coal companies (supplier). It involves enlisting third party agencies for certifying quality of coal dispatch. This new system has commenced on 1 January 2016. This is a measure to increase trust between the coal companies and the power plants regarding quality of coal supplied.
- CIMFR has signed tripartite MoUs covering 304 MT coal supply to power sector unit for third party sampling. It is also in the process of signing tripartite agreements with all the Government and private sector power plants. The coal sampling by CIMFR has already started and for the balance Government Sector plants, it is expected to be started within October 2016. By November 2016 it is expected that independent Third Party sampling coverage shall be available for all Power Plants.

### **Measures Adopted For Greater Transparency**

- A new Web Portal related to "Coal Allocation Monitoring System" (CAMS) for Small and Medium sector consumers of Coal India Limited (CIL) has been launched to bring transparency in the process of allocation and utilization of coal.
- Online coal project monitoring portal (e CPMP) has been launched to interact with all the stakeholders to resolve issues and avoid delay. All the coal companies are updating structural information on the portal.
- Alternate Dispute Resolution Mechanism (ADRM) has been introduced for resolution of disputes between CIL (and its subsidiaries) and the State Electricity Agencies through ADRM forum with the condition that they will accept the decision of the ADRM Committee and will not go to any other Judicial forum. So far, 8 meetings were held and 6 disputes have been resolved.





# Web portals and Mobile Apps for transparency

Government of India, Ministry of Power

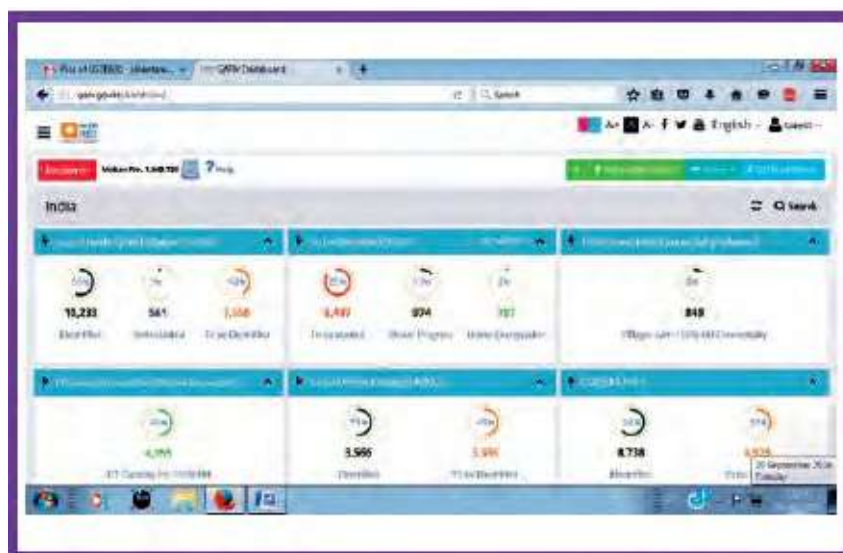
*Be it rural electrification, digital initiatives in urban areas, IT web/mobile based platform to provide status of Intra State Transmission Projects or financial turnaround of power distribution companies, transparency is the keynote for the functioning of the Ministry of Power.*

The Ministry of Power and its organisations have embarked upon a series of digital interventions to enhance efficiency in terms of information dissemination and customer convenience. Some of the initiatives are:

## **GARV (Grameen Vidyutikaran App)**

This platform displays the "Real Time electrification Status of Unelectrified (UE) Villages in the country on a web portal/mobile app. As an extension to this, GARV-2 will be launched in October 2016 to monitor the access to village households.

GARV acts as a powerful monitoring tool to meet the targets of village electrification set by Government of India. The entire information of status of electrification is monitored on 12 crucial milestones and shared in public domain. GARV is serving as a powerful tool in ensuring transparency in Rural Electrification works in the country.



## ***URJA (Urban Jyoti Abhiyan)***

URJA is a digital initiative to place before the people, the performance of distribution utilities (Discoms) in IT enabled towns, with a vision to generate a sense of positive competition amongst the stakeholders and urge all concerned for better performance in consumer centric parameters. The parameters covered by URJA pertain to resolution of consumer complaints, release of new power connections, e-payments made, ATC loss indices of onboard towns etc.

## ***UJALA (Unnat Jyoti)***

UJALA scheme aims to promote efficient use of energy at the residential level; enhance the awareness of consumers about the efficacy of using energy efficient appliances and aggregating demand to reduce the high initial costs thus facilitating higher uptake of LED lights by residential users. Keeping in view the above objectives, UJALA app provides real time status of LED distribution along with locations of its distribution centres in the country.

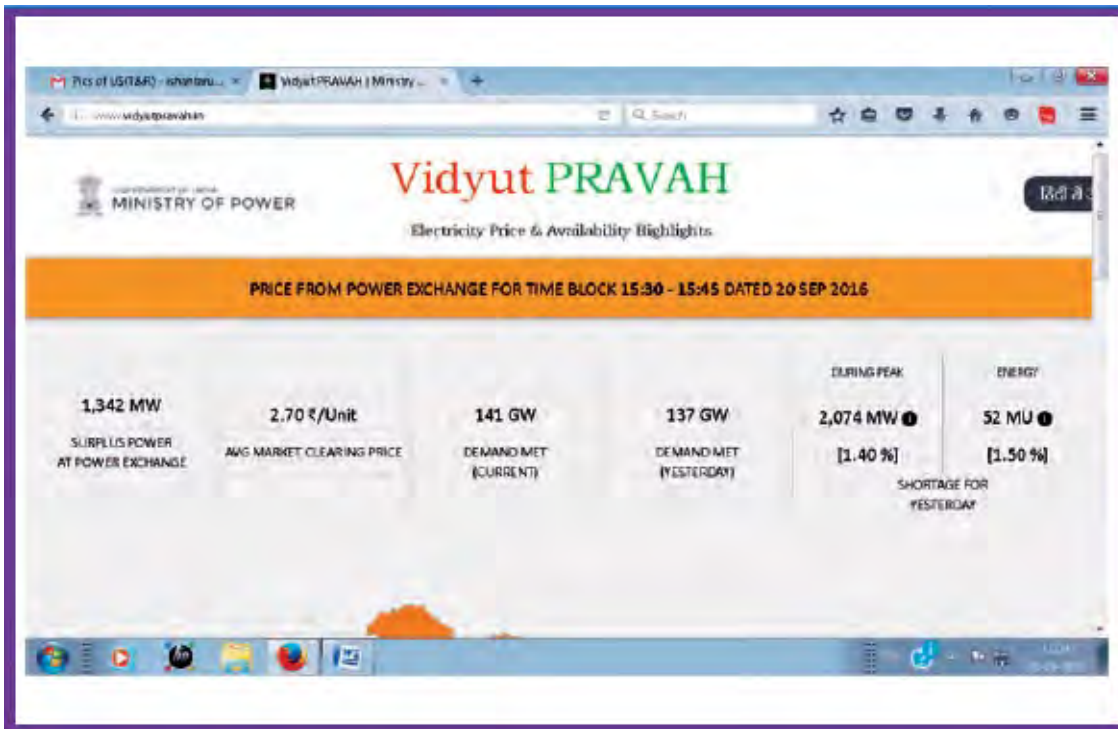
## ***TARANG (Transmission App for real time monitoring)***

TARANG is an IT web/mobile based platform to provide status of both Inter and Intra State Transmission Projects in the country. This platform also shows the prospective upcoming Inter State as well as Intra State Transmission Projects along with NITs being floated by different Transmission Utilities Pan India for better participation of bidders. TARANG will also include status of stalled/delayed transmission systems in country which would enable the stakeholders viz. Ministry of Power, State Governments, all private sector Transmission developers and PSUs like Power Grid etc. to work for expeditious completion of such projects.

## ***UDAY (Ujwal Discom Assurance Yojna)***

UDAY is a scheme for operational and financial turnaround of electricity distribution companies of India (DISCOMS) initiated by the Government of India with the intent to bring down their ATC losses to 15% and reduce gap between cost of power and revenue realized by DISCOMS to Zero in the next 3-4 years.

UDAY web portal/app will place performance vis a vis target status of all crucial operational/ financial parameters for DISCOMS in public domain and hence act as a powerful monitoring tool. Availability of State power department/ Discom health cards in public domain will bring more accountability and transparency in the working of Discoms.



## VIDYUT PRAVAH

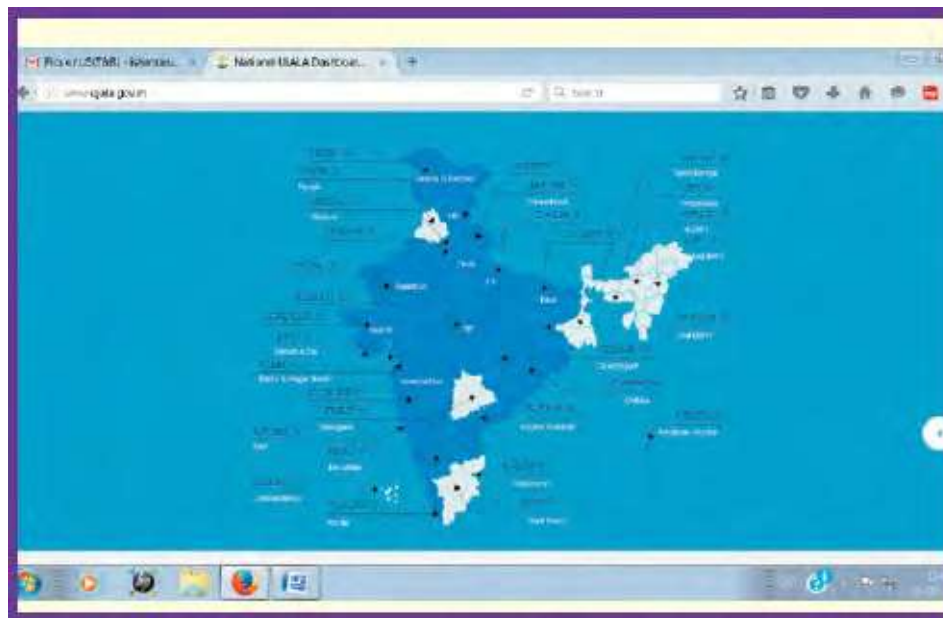
VIDYUT PRAVAH mobile app provides highlights of the power availability in the country on real time basis. It also provides data pertaining to market price of power from power exchange, value of current all India demand in GW and all India and State shortage including peak hour and total energy shortage. The real time data and comparison with previous day/year data is also available. Data from multiple sources, including the States and Power Exchanges, has been made available through a single portal for convenience of all.

This application will make State governments more accountable and will empower citizens to demand 24x7 power from the States.

## DEEP (Discovery of Efficient Electricity Prices) e-Bidding Portal

In order to bring uniformity and transparency in power procurement by the DISCOMs and also to promote competition in electricity sector, 'DEEP (Discovery of Efficient Electricity Price) e-Bidding Portal' was launched by Hon. Minister of State (I/C) for Power, Coal, NRE & Mines on 12 April 2016 initially for procurement of short term power (i.e. up to one year) and has been extended on 17 August 2016 for procurement of medium term power.

This e-Reverse auction process for competitive procurement is expected to result in overall reduction of cost of procurement of power thereby significantly benefitting the ultimate consumers. This will also provide a common e-bidding platform with e-Reverse Auction, provide nation-wide power procurement to a wider network including the stakeholders in power sector and to bring uniformity in the process of power procurement. The portal will be implemented for Power Banking and long term procurement of power also.

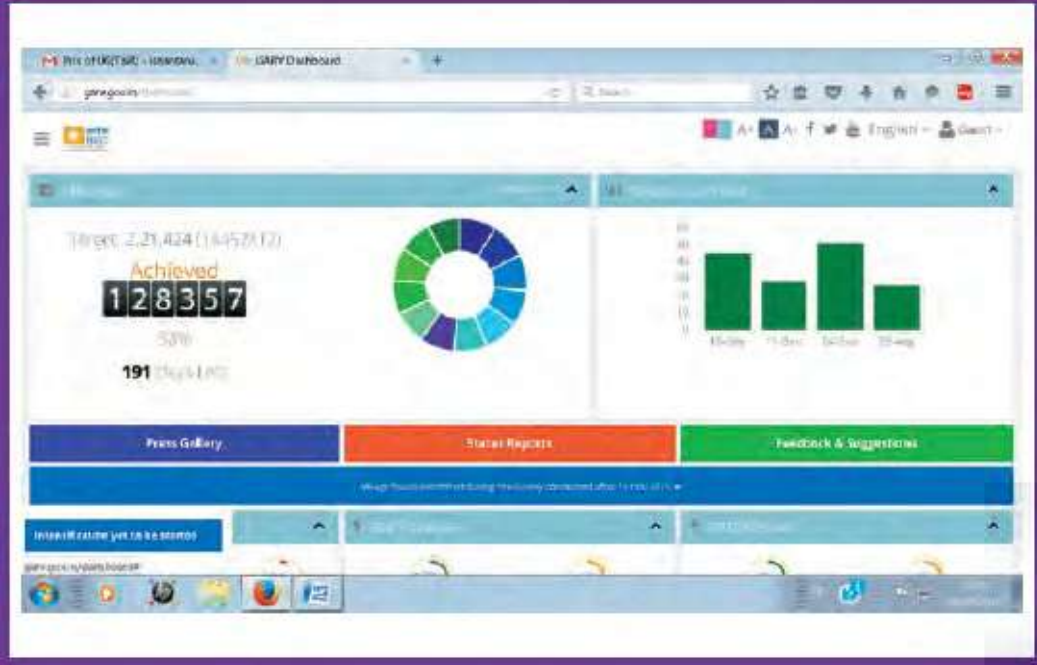




The screenshot displays the NASEN e-Bidding Portal website. The browser address bar shows the URL [www.nasenc.commerce.com](http://www.nasenc.commerce.com). The page features a header with the Ministry of Power logo and the NASEN logo. The main content area is titled "DEEP E-Bidding Portal- Discovery of Efficient Electricity Price". Below the title, there is a search bar and a "Log In" button. The central section displays event details:

Event No.	Bid Start Time
DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED/DCS/ JIS-11/PA19	2009/01/19 14:00:00

Additional information includes "DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED" and "DISTRIBUTION COMPANY LIMITED". On the right side, there are links for "Power Proc. Quoties", "Valid Tender Documents", "Bid/Candidate Availability", and "RAW JOURNAL ONLINE". The footer contains "User Guide", "Java Download", "Ministry of Power", "DCS Guide", "Contact Us", and "Copyright © NASEN LIMITED 2018".





# Power and energy of Transparency

**Government of India, Department of Atomic Energy**

*The Department of Atomic Energy has adopted measures to improve transparency and dissemination of information of its programmes and in the fields of research and development.*

The Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has been engaged in the development of nuclear power technology, applications of radiation technologies in the fields of agriculture, medicine, industry and basic research. The thrust of the activities of the Department relate to the three stage nuclear power programme and in the research & development fields. The Department has been ensuring that all information in these two important areas of activities is made available to all stake holders. Several initiatives towards voluntary self-disclosure, have been taken:

## **Power generation related activities**

Two PSUs under the Department, viz., Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidhyut Nigam Limited (BHAVINI), mandated with the design, construction, maintenance and production of electricity through nuclear power plants, have been making available Information regarding power generation levels from existing reactors, installed capacity, power plants under construction and future programmes. Safety related information giving adequate details of the safety standards being followed; mechanism for monitoring and the remedies available are also made public.

- Acts, Laws and rules relating to atomic energy statutes governing the regulation of safety and the rules there under to support the operation of the statutes for implementation of the safety regulations, FAQs regarding some important aspects of power generation and safety of the power plants, and the people in the vicinity of the nuclear power plants, radiation effects and important provisions in the Acts and Rules under the Statutes are all freely available to stakeholders.
- Personnel related information covering recruitment notifications, career opportunities and voluntary disclosure of the results of the recruitment process, tender notifications for procurement of stores and equipment and construction and maintenance activities initiatives relating to neighbourhood development and corporate social responsibility activities are other measures adopted for a citizen friendly regime in the department.



## Research & Development related activities

The Constituent Units, Industrial Units and Aided Institutions under the Department undertake research and development activities in cutting-edge areas and basic research related to atomic energy. In order to highlight the continuing activities, these organisations have taken steps for information dissemination in the following areas through their respective websites and periodic publications:

- Societal benefits and health care, rural development, benefits to industry, use of spin off technologies such as radiation technologies in agriculture, food preservation, water purification, etc.
- Technologies for fuel reprocessing
- Technologies for radioactive waste management
- On-going activities relating to development of advanced nuclear reactors
- Environment monitoring mechanisms
- Management of nuclear/radiation disaster in pursuance of the various instructions issued by the Government of India and the decisions of Central Information Commission.

The Department carries out periodic reviews of the contents of the information provided through different media. The Department and all the constituent units, public sector undertakings, and aided institutions

under its administrative control endeavour to adhere to the instructions from time to time in letter and spirit.





# Citizens can access information, 24x7

## Government of Odisha

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***The award-winning online RTI-Central Monitoring Mechanism of the Odisha government is a one point access for all information under the RTI Act, at the click of a mouse. It also facilitates the online receipt, disposal and transfer of RTI Applications.***

Even though the Nodal Department of the Government of Odisha had issued many directives to all public authorities to implement the Right to Information Act, the compliance from the authorities was not up to the mark. The Odisha Information Commission was struggling to find a way to ensure effective implementation of the RTI in the State.

While disposing a complaint (case no.1452/2008) the Odisha Information Commission instructed the State Government to put in place a robust monitoring mechanism to enforce the mandatory provisions envisaged in Section 4 and Section 25 of the RTI Act, 2005. The Department of Information and Public Relations, which is the Nodal Department for implementation of the Act in the State, evolved the RTI Central Monitoring Mechanism as an appropriate mechanism to fully comply with the RTI Act, 2005 and track the progress in a single network.

The RTI-CMM ([www.rti.orissa.gov.in](http://www.rti.orissa.gov.in)) is a web-based centralised database system hosted on web server provided by NIC, Government of India. It became fully operational from 1 October 2010. Its objective is to provide single point access to all RTI related information catering to Section - 4, 6, 7 and Section-25 of RTI Act 2005 in a uniform manner and to provide the required information to citizens.

Its salient features include:

- IT Intervention in Implementing the Act and Rules
- One Point Information
- Uniform Presentation of Information in prescribed manual
- Open Public opinion forum ensuring valid and updated data and information leading to a transparent system
- Online Receipt, Disposal and Transfer of RTI Applications

- Paperless Office.

Citizens can access the services through the Internet; from office, home, Internet cafes as also from RTI Kiosk Centres and RTI Clinics (Lok Soochna Kendra). They play the role of facilitation centre for dissemination of information at grass root level, at the Common Service Centre (Jana Seva Kendra) and at the e-Seva Centre.

Presently, the Public Authorities are not only updating their proactive disclosures but also maintaining information register, cash register and appeal register in their RTI-CMM public authority account. Besides, they are making use of the RTI-CMM to prepare an annual report and forwarding it to the nodal department. Since its implementation, the RTI-CMM has connected more than 2000 offices including 25 Collector offices, 100 Urban Local Bodies, 80 Tehsils, 100 Blocks and 20 District Information & Public Relations Offices into this single network.

The RTI-CMM has received the 'Best IT Service Provider Award' on 11 February 2010 for notable innovations in implementing the RTI Act from CII-Bhubaneswar Chapter and Government of Odisha. The World Bank has highly appreciated this novel endeavour. RTI-CMM has made a mark in South-Asia bagging the e-INDIA Citizen Choice Award 2010 and Best User Friendly Website award from India e-Gov in the field of e-governance and ICT.

*(Source: Gopabandhu Academy of Administration and Jayashree Mohanty, Luminous Infoways, Odisha)*



Besides launching the RTI-CMM, the Odisha government has taken great efforts to sensitize public authorities about the Right to Information Act and its provisions. The Gopabandhu Academy of Administration, Bhubaneswar has been organizing a number of training programmes for sensitizing Public Information Officers (PIOs), Assistant Public Information Officers (APIOs), First Appellate Authorities (FAAs) and Nodal Officers in-charge of publishing information in the public domain, under Section 4 of the RTI Act. The Training programme is monitored by RTI Faculty and Course Director

(GAA) P. R. Giri under the auspices of a scheme for improving Transparency and Accountability in the governance through effective implementation of the RTI Act. This is sponsored by the DoPT, Government of India.

[Skip to Main Content](#)

Accessibility Options { A- | A | A+ }



# RTI Central Monitoring Mechanism

Online Monitoring of RTI Applications

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର  
Govt. of Odisha



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- Departments
- Districts
- Nodal Officers
- RTI Act
- RTI Campaign
- Downloads
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Usage Dashboard

Submit RTI Application / Appeal

Check Your Application Status

Help Line



# Creation of Information Committees

## Government of Chhattisgarh

***District Information Committee in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh is a novel attempt at bringing together government personnel, eminent citizens, activists and college students to spread awareness about RTI Act.***

Bilaspur, the second most important district of Chhattisgarh pioneered the RTI Act through workshops and training programmes, ever since the implementation of the Act in 2005. It began with bureaucrats, activists, journalists and lawyers being empowered with the use of this transparency law, in the issue of fair price shops and food and supplies department.

In September 2005, a three-day training programme resulted in the creation of a State level model for public awareness. The Administrative Training Academy, Chhattisgarh took great efforts and formed a group in Bilaspur district to carry out innovative practices. The 20-member group comprised government employees, journalists, lawyers, educationists, opinion leaders and activists.

This has led to the concept of creation of District Information Committees at the district and the development block level. It was unanimously decided to make the District Collector the chief of the District Information Committee.

Activities of District Information Committees are as follows:

- Guide RTI applicants to write easy-to-understand RTI applications
- Provide the names of APIOs, PIOs and AAs of various public authorities to the citizens
- Form Information Committees at the village level through Development Block level Committees and establish Co-ordination with District Information Committees as and when required
- Co-ordinate between Appellate Authority, Public Information Officers (PIOs) and Assistant Public Information Officers (APIOs) to spread awareness about RTI and share information on various issues

District Level Committees hold meetings in every Development Block. The working plan of these committees is prepared and sent to the Administrative Academy, the nodal agency of the state. Public awareness was magnified through Rath Yatras and RTI camps. A periodical titled '*Soochna Adhikar Varta*' is being published by the District Information Committee.



Some more activities of the Information Committees are as follows:

- Imparting training to police personnel and employees of Zilla Parishad and Health Department on RTI Act.
- Co-ordinating and holding workshops for heads of departments of public authorities, colleges and school students and media persons.
- Imparting RTI training to NCC cadets and NSS volunteers.
- Conducting workshops at Nehru Yuva Kendra.
- Collecting and documenting success stories of RTI.

(Source: *Chhattisgarh Academy of Administration*)





# Dial to file an RTI and to report threats

## Government of Bihar

***Bihar has the distinction of being the first state in India to set up 'Jaankari', a government-initiated call centre, which accepts RTI applications, first and second appeals over the phone. It also has a helpline where citizens can report, if they have received threats as a result of using this transparency law.***

'Jaankari' means 'information'. However, in Bihar, it goes beyond mere information, as it empowers a citizen to simply make a phone call, to file RTI applications and First as well as Second Appeals.

'Jaankari' is a unique Bihar Government Initiative whereby ICT (Information, Communication and Technology) has been innovatively and effectively employed in making Right to Information Act more broad based and accessible to the common man by bridging the literacy and digital divide. It is a facilitation centre with phone-in services, which helps people to generate ss applications and get information under the RTI Act.

The system has been designed in an "information at your doorstep" format whereby the hassles of physical movement by the common man have been removed. It works on the premium rate services of the BSNL - premium rate call number 155311 for RTI applications and 155310 as help line number on normal tariff. Charging of premium tariff for RTI application has been applied in order to fulfil the RTI Act requirement of payment of mandatory fees without physical transaction of money.

Jaankari was set up in January 2007 and has been running successfully till date, generating applications under RTI for people all over Bihar. It has also been awarded 'Best e-Governance Initiative' by the Government of India. Thereafter, in 2009, Phase-II of Jaankari was launched, which facilitates citizens to file RTI applications through e-mail. The link is provided in the website [www.biharonline.gov.in](http://www.biharonline.gov.in)

The operation centre of Jaankari is in the premises of the State Secretariat in Patna, wherein a staff of six personnel take citizens' calls between 8 am and 8 pm. As per information from this centre, so far, 1,53,352 RTI applications, First Appeals and Second Appeals have been received.

In a unique and citizen-sensitive step, a helpline was launched in 2009 to facilitate people to telephonically lodge complaints against government officials or any other individual for harassment or threats for using RTI. The helpline number is 0612-2219435. This service has helped in making RTI applicants feel safe. This Bihar Model is one of the best innovative practices of RTI Act.



An article in Dataquest magazine aptly elaborates this unique telephonic function, "the primary and mandatory requirement was to charge the RTI application fee (Rs.10) from the citizen without physical transaction of money. This was fulfilled with the help of BSNL premium rate services. Software was designed in consultation with officials who had been operating e-Janshikayat software from CM Secretariat. Under the overall supervision of the CM Secretariat, the state public sector undertaking Bihar State Electronics Development Corporation (BELTRON) was entrusted with the responsibility of operationalizing the RTI Facilitation Centre. Amendments were made by the state government to lower the fees for filing first and second appeal to Rs. 10 each, to enable e-transactions through phone calls to receive payments.'





# Platform for Citizen Empowerments

**Vijay Kumbhar | Maharashtra | 2009-10**

***RTI Katta (Katta is a Marathi word which means platform) is a meeting place in Pune's public garden, which empowers citizens through discussions and guidance in the use of RTI, every Sunday.***

In an innovative and fun-loving approach, leading RTI user Vijay Kumbhar, who is the founder of Surajya Sangharsha Samiti, launched the '*RTI Katta*' in 2014 at Pune's premier public garden, Chittaranjan Vatika.

The objective of the '*RTI Katta*' is not to preach about the RTI Act, says Kumbhar, "but to empower oneself through discussions amongst each other. It is an umbrella where the attendees get an insight into various issues that crop up during an informal chat. A person's query or problem is answered by several people which results in a healthy and relevant solution than one RTI expert providing the answer."

States Kumbhar, "Although RTI is here for 10 long years, citizens are yet not aware and informed about this powerful Act. At the *RTI Katta*, we also encourage people to do file inspection under Section 4 of the RTI Act so that they can get information faster.

There are some rules for forming *RTI Katta*'s: "RTI Katta should be formed in such a public place where no official permission is required; a public garden is the best bet; the name of any individual or organisation should not be added wherever the RTI Katta is being formed; the meeting should be purely a discussion forum and there should be no one-sided speech; any attendee is welcome to seek advice on his RTI applications; any attendee is welcome to give his opinion, however he or she should ensure that he is not misguiding the person; no one should object or scorn if an attendee, new to the RTI Act asks an irrelevant question - he/she should be enlightened through this forum; there should be no exchange of money for either asking a query or answering it; since this forum is all about individual empowerment, no person should try to solve the problem of the other but encourage the individual to fight his/her own RTI battle."

(Source: [www.moneylife.in](http://www.moneylife.in))





# RIGHT TO INFORMATION

A CITIZEN GATEWAY

An Initiative of Department of Personnel & Training, Government of India



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## Kids Corner

## Thanks to RTI

## RTI Video/Audio

## Publications

[Study on RTI](#)

[Guidelines for RTI Fellowship](#)

[RTI Fellows' Reports](#)

[RTI Internship Reports](#)

[RTI Guides and Handbooks](#)

[Compendium of Best Practises on RTI \(Vol-I\)](#)

[Compilation of OMs & Notifications on RTI](#)

## RTI Act

PDF	HTML
<a href="#">English</a>	<a href="#">English</a>
<a href="#">Hindi</a>	
<a href="#">Assamese</a>	
<a href="#">Bangla</a>	
<a href="#">Gujarati</a>	
<a href="#">Kannada</a>	
<a href="#">Malayalam</a>	
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[RTI RULES \(English\)](#)

[RTI RULES \(Hindi\)](#)



# The unique RTI~On~Wheels Movement

## Government of Gujarat

***Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel (MAGP), an NGO, launched a multimedia vehicle in 2008 called RTI-On-Wheels, which travels to deep interiors not only to spread awareness on RTI but also to help people file RTI applications. Today, it has traversed through several States, including Jammu & Kashmir.***

Creating RTI awareness and empowering rural folk to use this citizen-friendly Act, is a big challenge. In a unique endeavour, the NGO, Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel' (MAGP), launched a novel movement, RTI-On-Wheels, in 2008, which has created a social revolution of sorts, in the deepest pockets of not only Gujarat, but in several States, including Jammu & Kashmir.

Developed with the support of Association for India's Development (AID), Pankti Jog, member of MAGP and the one who is in the driver's seat of this campaign, explains the concept. Says she, "We wanted to give RTI power in the hands of powerless. We wanted it to become a 'Voice' for the voiceless as early as possible. Wheels play a crucial role in the progress of the human race. So, an idea giving 'wheels' to RTI law emerged. Thus, we came up with the idea of developing a mobile legal ambulance in a multimedia vehicle."

The vehicle is equipped with an LCD projector, screen, and computer with an internet connection, scanner, printer, copier and a small library. It is manned by two volunteers who screen films on RTI, distribute pamphlets and help people to file RTI applications. The vehicle has three flaps - two on the sides and one on the rear side, to enable distribution of leaflets, filing of applications, multimedia presentations and screening of films. Says Jog, "the vehicle opens up completely and can be converted into a moving theatre. It also has illuminated screens on the sides with slogans scrolling down".

MAGP also travels through remote villages. Jog provides an insight into one such visit. Says she, "by late afternoon we reached Veerpur, a beautiful village at the foothills of Aravalli. The only challenge we have faced in entering small villages are the low hanging wires/cables, as we have solar panel fitted on the top of the bus. We parked the vehicle in a school compound as it was a Sunday. By the time we were making preparations, children had already started gathering around and were peeping from every window. We started motivational video songs for them. Youths spread a mat at a short distance from the vehicle. Over 40 persons were seated. One old lady with the help of a walking stick, approached us and asked, "Can I get injections for my body pain?" RTI-On-Wheels resembles an ambulance and is sometimes mistaken as a mobile clinic."

RTI-On-Wheels has traversed through various states including Jammu & Kashmir, post 2014 floods. Report of India Together states: "Since the flood relief phase of October-December, people had asked several times for information on the surveys, the criteria for selection of beneficiaries and reasons for discrimination in compensation. Some sustained severe damages and got Rs. 3000 in compensation while people with *pucca houses*, which suffered relatively little damage got as much as Rs. 73,000."

It was only after volunteers of the Jammu & Kashmir RTI movement organised the flood-affected people and gave them an orientation in the use of the Right to Information Act, that this came to light. Citizens got together and on 24 February, filed 200 applications for information. On the very next day, the information came into public domain.

*(Source: Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration ,Gujarat and Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel)*







# Open days to inspect files: A sterling example of citizen empowerment

**Deepak Kumar Gupta | Maharashtra**

*Allocating one day, every week, to facilitate citizens to inspect files in several government offices in Maharashtra, connotes a significant step towards transparency.*

Maharashtra is a forerunner in RTI use. In the city of Pune, inspection of files under RTI is widely used by activists and citizens. Their campaign to make the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), allocate one day every week, as open day for file inspection, was taken forward by the then State Information Commissioner, Vijay Kuvalekar, who directed the Municipal Commissioner to facilitate the same.

The Commissioner ordered all departments of PMC to keep their offices open for inspection of files by citizens, between 3 pm and 5 pm, every Monday. The tradition continues ever since it was launched in 2010. Any citizen can visit any department of PMC for procuring information and seeking photo copies of documents, during this specific time. The PMC initiative also inspired other public authorities to follow suit.

The Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), in 2011, went a step further as it opened its doors for two hours every day on all working days, between 3 pm and 5 pm. During this time, citizens can also meet civic officials, inspect on-going projects and take samples of the materials. The PCMC also directed its officials to update its records and make them available for public inspection under the RTI Act. If the officials fail to make the records available for public scrutiny, strict action would be taken against them. Thereafter, the Pune District Collector's office has also moved towards this transparency mode and every Friday is reserved for inspection of documents by citizens. In 2014 PWD Department (North Pune) also declared open day for citizens for file inspection.

Recently, in Jalgaon, Deepak Kumar Gupta, an RTI user, wanted that the process to seek information from the administration should be made user-friendly and consume less energy, effort and time.

Gupta initially made oral representations to the District Collector, Jalgaon and Sub Divisional Officer, Jalgaon to provide information required by the citizens without seeking any formal applications under the RTI Act, once a week. They asked him to give a written request. Accordingly, he wrote a letter to the District Collector requesting him to observe one day, every week, as RTI Day. Later on, he sent a letter with a similar request to the Sub Divisional Officer, Jalgaon.

The District Collector issued an order announcing that every Friday would be observed in his office as

'RTI Day' and information would be made available between 4 pm and 6 pm without filing any formal application under the RTI Act, 2005. The Sub Divisional Officer too issued a letter announcing that every Tuesday and Friday would be observed in his office as 'RTI Days' and information would be made readily available between 4 pm and 6 pm without filing any formal application under the RTI Act.







# Pensioners' life made easier.

**Government of India, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare | Government of India, Department of Electronics and Information Technology**

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*Use of Information Technology and biometric systems for submission of pension applications and life certificates makes life easier for pensioners.*

## **Bhavishya**

The Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare is responsible for formulation of policy and coordination of matters relating to pension policy and welfare of Central Government pensions. Approximately 40,000 employees retire from Central Civil establishments every year. The pension sanction process starts almost a year before the date of retirement and requires coordination amongst the administrative authorities, Pay and Accounts Offices, Directorate of Estates and the Banks. From a study of complaints received it was observed that a large number of retiring employees do not get their retirement benefits and the Pension Payment Order (PPO) in time. More importantly, the employees after retirement lose all contact with the Government set up and in case of delays, are likely to face harassment at various levels. To address this, the Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare has launched Bhavishya - an online tracking system for pension sanction and payment.

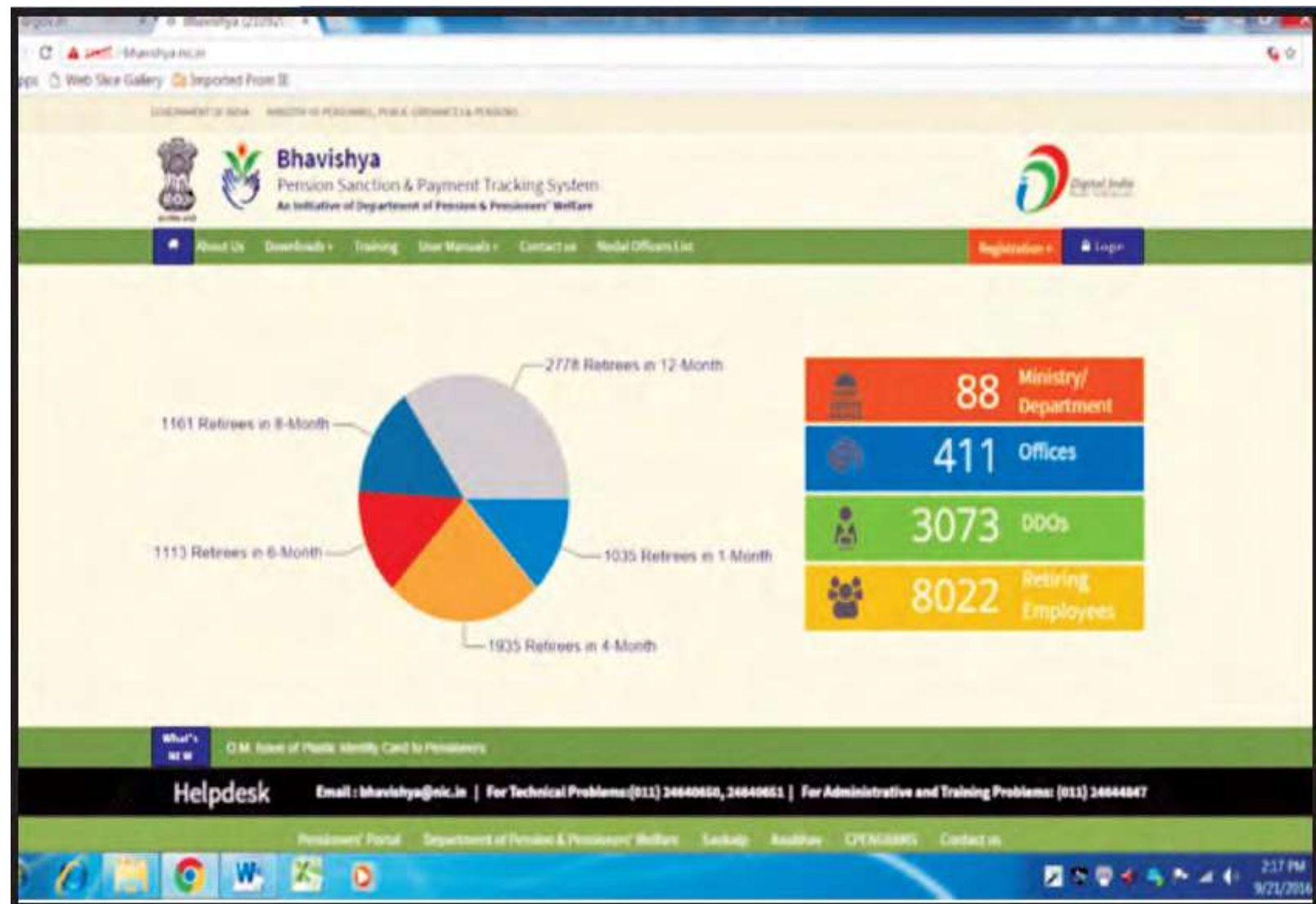
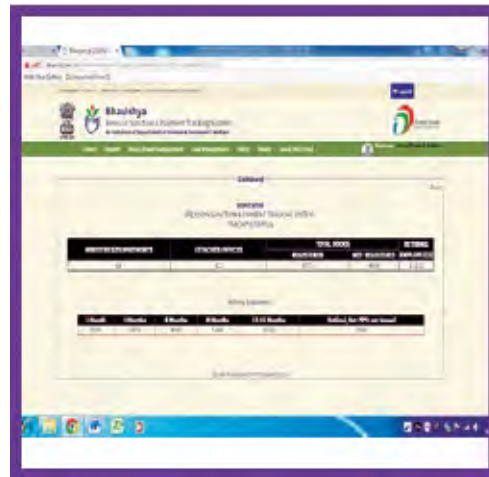
The system allows online filing of application for pension by the retiring employees, encapsulates the Pension Rules required for processing pension cases and generates all forms necessary for finalizing pension cases as well as reports needed for monitoring by the Departments.

## **Jeevan Pramaan**

Conventionally, pensioners are required to give a Life Certificate to the Pension Disbursing Authority in November, every year - either by presenting themselves before the Branch Manager or by means of a certificate issued by a Gazetted Officer or other designated authorities.

In November, 2014, the Department of Electronics and Information Technology started Aadhaar-based biometric verification system "Jeevan Pramaan" to enable pensioners to submit a Digital Life Certificate (DLC) online. This facility is in addition to the other existing methods of submitting Life Certificate. It spares the pensioners and family pensioners the trouble of visiting pension disbursing agency or Gazetted/designated authority for submission of Life Certificates. Instead it enables the pensioner to

submit the Life Certificate from personal computers and laptops or by visiting a conveniently located Common Service Centre. The system also ensures authenticity of pension and other payments. During November, 2015, about 4 lakh pensioners used 'Jeevan Pramaan' application to get their Life Certificates registered with their pension disbursing banks. Till date, about 16.8 lakh pensioners have used 'Jeevan Pramaan' application.





# Revenue Department shares vital information

**Government of India, Department of Revenue**

***Whether it is the business processes of GST, the 40,000 representations for the GST Model law or the micro data of the Income Tax Department, the Revenue Department has uploaded it all in the public domain.***

In the Revenue Department, all the information is being systematically disclosed in Public Domain. It is now the normal practice to put all draft Laws and Rules in Public Domain before finalising them. For example, the business processes of GST was put in Public Domain since October 2015 and the GST Model Law is also in Public Domain since June 2016. The guidelines for Place of Effective Management (POEM) were also put in Public Domain. Almost every single Draft Policy is now placed in the Public Domain before taking a final view. This has helped the Revenue Department in effective policy formation.

In response to the Draft GST Model Law, the Revenue Department has received 40,000 pages of representations, which are being looked into by a Committee of State and Central Government officers and based on these representations, decisions are being taken to make changes in the Draft Law. Policies on something as important as GST needs to be made after full public consultation so that there is no undue harassment to businesses subsequently, when the GST is implemented

Another experiment was to publish micro data of Income Tax Department in terms of what is the break-up of income tax received from individuals, small businesses, companies and so on and also in terms of salary income, long-term capital gains, rental income, income from business and soon.

The information in respect of how many people are paying income tax in the country and in which slab is also revealed. When this information was put in Public Domain, people for the first time came to know that in Assessment Year 2012-13, there are only 14 lakh individuals who are paying income tax in 30% slab which means that only 14 lakh individuals in the country have declared income more than Rs. 10 lakh. This information triggered a debate among people and the Revenue Department is hopeful that lot of good suggestions will emerge out of sharing of data about how to widen and deepen the income tax net in the country.

One of the major pain-points of public grievance in the Income Tax Department is the issue of Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) mismatch. Because of automation, as the TDS deductor files a return (which is every quarter now), the details of TDS deducted in respect of every individual is reflected in Form 26 AS which can be viewed by anybody online. This has really facilitated a lot. Now, Revenue Department

is working towards a system in which it should be possible for a deductee to get instant SMS as soon as the deductor has deposited TDS amount **into** Government Treasury. Imagine the comfort that people will have by being informed on SMS that their TDS has been credited to their account.





MAY I HELP YOU

MAY I HELP YOU

यहाँ में अपनी सहायता का सकते हैं।

यहाँ में अपनी सहायता का सकते हैं।

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# Meghalaya's RTI Act in Braille is a hit

## Government of Meghalaya

***A training programme for the visually challenged in 2010 led to the idea of publishing the RTI Act in Braille; thanks to the enthusiasm shown by the participants. Ever since, it has helped this community to be pro-active in procuring information.***

In what can be termed as an 'inclusive initiative', the English booklet, '*Guide to the Right to Information Act 2005 for the Visually Impaired*', has empowered hundreds of visually challenged citizens of Meghalaya to use the RTI Act for their personal grievances such as procurement of certificates required for education/jobs and soon.

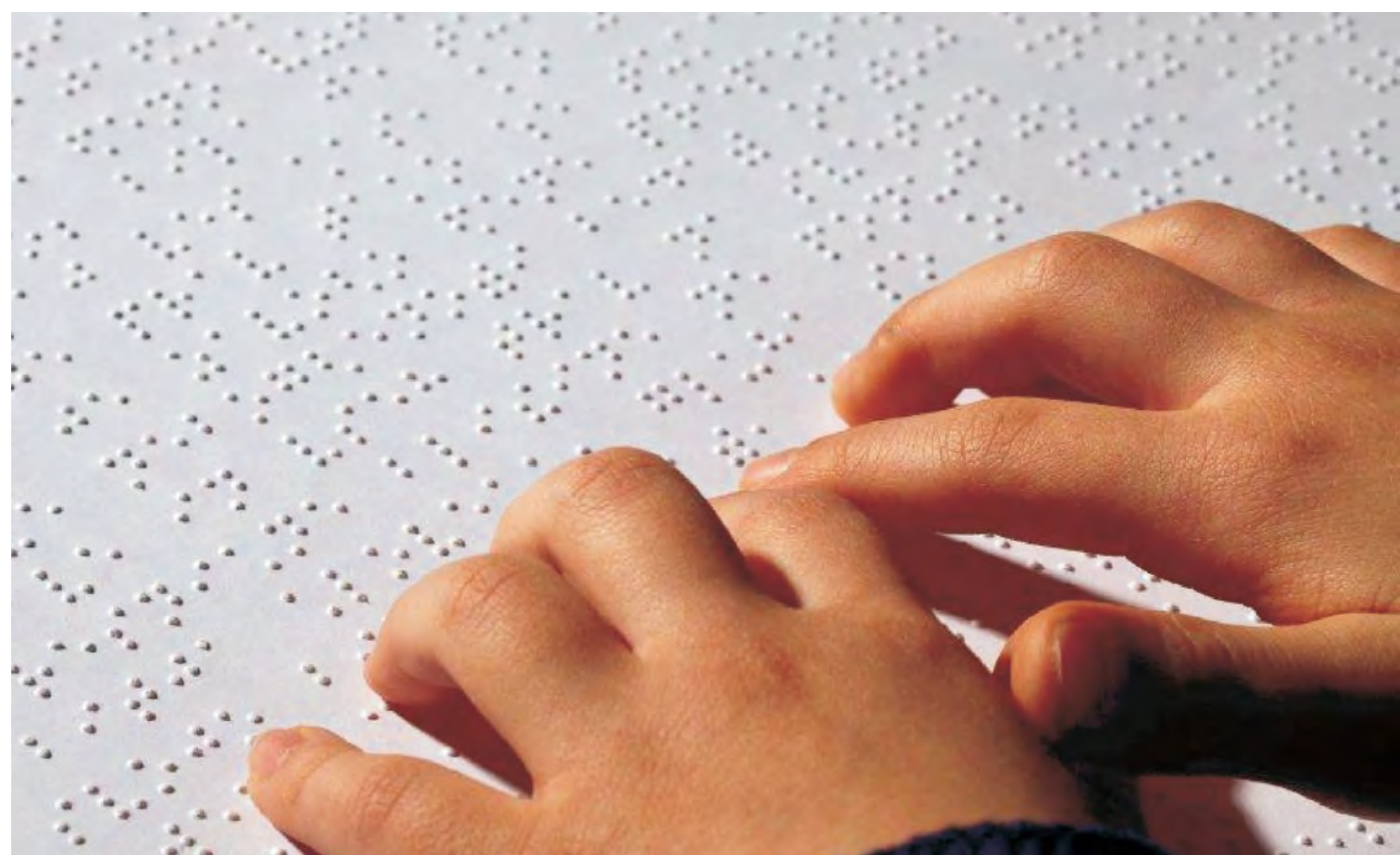
An initiative of the Legal Awareness Cell, Bethany Society and the Meghalaya Administrative Training Institute, the English book in all sections of the RTI Act. It also guides the reader on the procedure to file an RTI application and gives other tips.

It all began in 2010, says Anita Kharpor, the former director of the Meghalaya Administration and Training Institute, who triggered off this novel initiative. Says she, way back in 2009 and 2010, we used to hold training programmes on human rights and other issues, for special groups. Once, we conducted a training programme for empowerment of the physically challenged and RTI was one of the topics, we found that they showed immense interest in the use of RTI. So, we invited them for a specific RTI workshop.

Some of the visually challenged participants mentioned that they are unable to pro-actively use RTI as they are unable to read anything about it. Kharpor says she requested Carmo Northona, Executive Director of the Bethany Society, a prominent NGO, working for differently abled. Says she, 'they transcribed the RTI Act in Braille, on our request. We printed 20 copies of the book. Since there was a further demand, we printed 100 more copies and they too were distributed, during the RTI workshops that we undertook in various districts'.

Ever since the knowledge of the RTI Act, the visually challenged are filing RTI applications in Braille. The officers require a translator to understand the application and provide the required information.

*(Source: Meghalaya Administrative Training Institute)*



## **Disclaimer:**

*This souvenir is for limited circulation and academic purpose only. Some of the data and pictures herein are taken from the internet.*



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