



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCE RESEARCH, IDEAS AND INNOVATIONS IN TECHNOLOGY

ISSN: 2454-132X

Impact factor: 4.295

(Volume3, Issue4)

Available online at www.ijariit.com

RTI- An Act Improving Governance

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INTRODUCTION

The right to Information Act 2005 has played a significant role in improving the working system of government and other officials. In other words, it is a check on them by a layman. It directs to response to the applicant within the time who ask for any government information. It is an initiative taken by Department of Personnel and Training, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions to provide a- RTI Portal Gateway to the citizens for quick search of information on the details of first Appellate Authorities, PIOs etc. amongst others, besides access to RTI related information/ disclosures published on the web by various Public Authorities under the government of India as well as the State Governments.

RTI itself is able to bring in a socio-economic revolution but different departments have to work on it as per the spirit of the act. The following departments should perform such duties to make RTI a successful act.

ROLE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

- A proper institutional structure has been formed as per the act requirement which is provided in section 4(1)(b) of the act
- Special programs are setup for Training at Nodal Department for the RTI implementation at Central level
- Special project "Capacity Building for Access to Information" project has been launched whose object is to make buildings of government officials at Central, State, and District level. Also, gives knowledge to the citizens regarding the act.

ROLE OF STATE GOVERNMENT

- Most of the State Governments have adopted and enacted legislation for access to information
- Following the Central initiatives, States have also started working on the act
- Maharashtra has built five centers for the information citizens in Pune, Mumbai, Nagpur, Aurangabad, Amravati for the people so that they can easily connect the nearest centre
- Bihar Government has created a call centre named as a Jhankari Call Centre which provides a caller a draft RTI application and the payment is received through phone bills. Similarly, RTI helpline in Bangalore is providing RTI information to citizens
- A new method is adopted by Assam Government i.e. "Train the Trainers" in which the officials train the NGOs and other organizations
- There is also an official website namely CIC where online complaints and second appeals can be registered
- Likewise, above mentioned State Governments, other State Governments like Tamil Nadu, Goa, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Jammu Kashmir have also adopted and enacted this act and are actively working on it

ROLE OF MEDIA

Media plays a most significant role in spreading knowledge at a high scale with the time, different channels, newspapers, journalists have awarded the people about the procedure for seeking information through this act. Also, they have contributed to bringing transparency through their websites.

EXCEPTIONS

The average citizen can seek any kind of government information. However, the following types of information would continue to be exempt and there would be no obligation, even after the lapse of 20 years, to give any citizen:

- information disclosure of which would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security, strategic, scientific or economic interest of the State, relation with foreign state or lead to incitement of an offence
- information disclosure of which would cause a breach of privilege of Parliament or State Legislature
- cabinet papers including records of deliberations of the Council of Ministers, Secretaries and other Officers subject to the conditions given in proviso to clause(i) of sub-section(1) of Section 8 of the Act. Record Retention Schedule and the Act.

CONCLUSION

Our country is a democratic one and everyone has the right to know every public act, everything that is done in a public way by a government official and it is the responsibility of every official to explain his acts for the safeguard against corruption.