

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3543

ANSWERED ON:18.03.2015

ASSESSMENT OF RTI ACT

Giluwa Shri Laxman;Khaire Shri Chandrakant Bhaurao

Will the Minister of PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has made any assessment of the Right to Information (RTI) Act;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether applicants, under RTI Act are still facing a number of problems with regard to the RTI;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the mechanism put in place by the Government in order to obtain desired information on time?

Answer

Minister of State in the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office.
(DR. JITENDRA SINGH)

(a) & (b): A study was conducted during the year 2008-2009 through an independent organization to assess the key issues and constraints in implementation of the Right to Information Act, 2005. The report on the implementation of the RTI Act, 2005 points out that there was inadequate planning by the public authorities in regard to supply of information; awareness about the Act in rural areas is much less than in urban areas; awareness amongst women is much less than men; the gap in implementation of the Act is because of lack of clear accountability in respect of various functionaries etc. In this regard, the study recommended measures for improving awareness on right to information; improving convenience in filing information requests; improving efficiency of the Information Commissions, enhancing accountability and clarity of various stakeholders, etc.

(c) & (d): The Government has taken steps to build the capacity of the demand and supply side through training, on-line certificate course, and publication of guides on the Right to Information Act. Awareness Generation has been undertaken through print, electronic, outdoor media and workshops. The Government apart from a number of clarificatory orders has also issued OMs No. 1/18/2007-IR dated 21st September, 2007 and OM No. 1/6/2011-IR dated 15th April, 2013 impressing upon the public authorities to disclose maximum information proactively so that citizens need not resort to filing of RTI applications to access information available with the public authorities.

(e): The Right to Information Act, 2005 has an inbuilt mechanism to ensure that the applications under the Act are disposed off in time. The Act, inter-alia, provides that if a Public Information Officer does not furnish information in time, a penalty of upto Rs.25,000/- may be imposed on him by the Central/State Information Commission.