

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT: AN ENDEAVOUR FOR DEEPENING DEMOCRACY

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ABSTRACT

The Right to Information Act, 2005 is a legislation passed after years of people's struggle for securing transparent, accountable and public participatory governance. The passing of this law by the parliament marks a notable milestone in the evolution of the Indian democracy. In this Act the authority mainly responsible for the dissemination of information and for responding to the request for information. The State Acts also facilitate access to information by making it obligatory for each public authority to maintain its records and make available all the basic information that a citizen may require about its organisation, functions and personnel.

The competent authority/public authority/every office of the State Government or In-Charge of Office, is under a statutory obligation to maintain and update all its records consistent with its operational requirements, duly catalogued and indexed, in accordance with the procedure laid down under the relevant law. Since the Supreme Court has held that the right to information was included within the right to freedom of speech guaranteed by Article 19 (1) (a) and since that right is guaranteed only to citizens, most of the state Laws on RTI have provided for citizens alone to be entitled to seek information. Rule of Law, equal participation, transparency, accountability and responsibility of public authorities are basic elements of good governance. Right to information has been said to be a powerful tool for strengthening democracy and enhancing good governance.

KEYWORDS: Information, Democracy, Competent Authority, Public Authority, Central Information Commission, Central Public Information Officer, Record