

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR: A MAGNIFICENT TOOL FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND COMBATING CORRUPTION

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Abstract: Right to information is a basic human right of every individual. In the year 1597, Francis Bacon said, Information is power". Indeed information is the oxygen of democracy, it invigorates wherever it percolates. Every progressive society strives towards good governance. As a matter of the fact it is the measure of the efficiency of any administration. Access to official information held by public authorities is the touchstone of a strong and efficient representative democracy. By making maximum disclosure of information in the public domain a rule and secrecy an exception, any country can progress as a strong society of informed citizenry, which as Thomas Jefferson famously said, is bulwark of a democracy. The importance of "right to information as a basic human right" cannot be negated as a potent tool to supplement the concept of checks and balances, to promote transparency and openness in the governance process by infusing a sense of greater accountability. Transformation of governance to good governance is possible if there is possibility of increasing participation of people in governance and free access to information, Dwelling on the relation of constitutional right to freedom of expression and the right to life, various judicial pronouncements endorsed its legal justification. The people have right to know every public act, everything that is done by their public functionaries. In case of Jammu and Kashmir Omar Abdullah belonging to National Conference party was subsequently elected to power and became the state's Chief Minister. A draft bill was tabled on 7 March 2009 and passed by the legislative assembly and legislative council by the 12 March 2009. The act came into force on 2 March 2009. The focus of this research paper is how Right to information Act become a tool for good governance in Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords: Democracy, Freedom of expression, transparency, decision making process, Good governance, Corruption, Public information officer, Chief information officer, freedom of people, decisions, openness and accountability, corruption, implementation etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

Information is an inalienable and natural right of every human being. The participants in democratic system have right to know what, how and why of any decision is made or change by the government and its functioning. In a democratic country each person has right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes right of holding public opinion and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas from the public authorities. Ready access to information generated by society and accumulated through time is a fundamental right of every citizen. It should be ensured by sound legislation. The Right to Information is a weapon for today's democratic citizens to be involved in every political decision which is made for the welfare of the people. Access to information not only promotes openness, transparency and accountability in administration, but it facilitates active participation of people in democratic governance process. We live in age of transformation in which the free flow of information and ideas determines the pace of development and well being of the people. The implementation of RTI Act is, therefore an important milestone in our quest for building an enlightened and at the same time prosperous society. Therefore the exercise of RTI cannot be the privilege of only few.

2. RIGHT TO INFORMATION: A GLOBAL PHENOMENA

The first RTI law was enacted by Sweden in 1766. The law was sponsored by Anders Chydenius an enlightened thinker and politician. Having its origin in Scandinavian jurisdiction, in the year 1766 the parliament provided access to the information held by the King of Sweden, which set the principle that

government records were, by dealt, open to the public and thereby to grant all citizens the right to demand documents from government and public bodies. This piece of legislation and its profound impact on the governance mechanism over centuries can be ascertained from the fact that it stands as one of the least corrupt country of the globe. Another country with long history of freedom of legislation in Columbia, whose code of political and municipal organisation, 1888, allowed individuals to request documents held by government agencies.

The united states of America passed a freedom of information law in the year 1967; followed by Australia and the freedom of information Act, 1982 was passed at the federal level in 1982, applying to all ‘ministers, departments and public authorities’. Then followed by Denmark 1985, Greece 1986, Austria 1987 and Italy 1990. By 1990, the number of countries with freedom of information laws climbed 13. A code on access to information was adopted by Hong Kong in March 1995, and in Thailand, the official information Act came into effect in December 1997. In South Korea, the act on disclosure of information by public agencies came into effect in 1998, and in Japan, the law concerning access to information held by administrative organs was enacted in April 2001. By 2010, more than 85 countries have national level RTI laws or regulations in force including the major developing countries like china and india. Of all these, Mexico has taken the lead with one of the best examples of a well functioning FOIA in the world. The law passed in 2002 represents a vital element of Mexico’s democratic transition, and became a model worldwide. Handling over 200000 requests in its first five years have resulted in Mexico setting a new international standard for transparency legislation.

In Asia so far almost 20 nations have adopted FOI (FREEDOM OF INFORMATION) laws including Kazakhstan [FOI act, 1993], south Korea [Act of Disclosure of information by Public Agencies, 1996 adopted in 1998 and amended in 2004]. In south Asia, countries such as Afghanistan, Bhutan, Maldives and Srilanka, have not adopted any related legislations. Only Nepal [2007], Bangladesh) 2009), Pakistan [2002] and India [2005] have such laws. In Pakistan, the FOI ordinance passed in 2002 has provision to fine up to R 10000 when complaints are deemed to be frivolous, vexatious or malicious the ombudsmen. Likewise, in Bangladesh request for information cannot be rejected on the ground of national security. Jordan is the only Arab country to have enacted a RTI law.

South Africa along with Angola, Uganda and Zimbabwe are the only African countries to have actually passed freedom of information legislation. The 1996 constitution of the republic of south Africa is perhaps unique, not only in the breadth of its guarantee of freedom of information, but also in that it requires the adoption of national legislation to give effect to this right, within three years of its coming into force. Thus enabling legislation, the promotion of access to information Act, came into effect in March 2001. It applies to a record of public body as well as a record of a private body.

3. GRADUAL EVOLUTION OF RTI IN INDIA

The grassroots of RTI movement lie in Dedungri. This impoverished village is in the arid state of Rajasthan. In, 1987 four human rights activists namely Nikhil Dey, Anchi, Shankar Singanadand Aruna Roy settled in Devdungri. The oldest member of the group was Aruna Roy, who had resigned from the elite Indian Administrative Service for her love to work for the people in rural areas. They come to village Devdungri, with only a general idea of their goal of work, to build an organisation for rural poor. With their greater influence, the peasants and labourer formed an association Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatan (MKSS) in 1990. In the winter of 1994, their work entered a new phase, breaking new ground with experiments in fighting corruption through the methodology of Jan Sunwais or public hearings in Kot Kirana in Pali district followed by the similar hearing in Bhim and Vijaypuri both in the Rajasaman and district, in Jawaja in Ajmer district and in Thana in Bhilware district. The mode of public hearings initiated by MKSS, by contrast, commences with the premise of the fundamental right of people to information, about all acts and decisions of the state apparatus. Transparency of all development funds in the respective regions was the demand of MKSS and was based on Jan Sunwais. The MKSS managed to get documents which pointed to irregularities in certain state development projects. The documents related to public works are the muster roll, which lists the attendance of the workers and wages due and bills and vouchers. They learnt that a large number of persons, some long dead or non-existent, were listed as workers and shown to paid wages. The people gained unprecedented access to information. The public hearings dramatically changed this, and ordinary people spoke out fearlessly and gave convincing evidence against corruption, and public officials were invited to defend themselves. This differentiated the Jan Sunwai from other methods in the fight against corruption and demonstrated the potential for collective political activity. The MKSS decided to launch at a small town a Dharna. The demand was to press for the issue of administrative orders

to enforce the right to information. The state government responded by allowing the citizens to inspect such documents for a fee, but not to obtain certified taken in absence of legally valid copy.

In the second half of 1998 the right to information became a topic for Rajasthan assembly election. The congress party with Ashok Gehlot, the candidate nominated for the post of chief minister supported demands of MKSS. The congress won election against BJP, Ashok Gehlot's government formed a commission to draft legislation. The state assembly passed the Rajasthan Right to information Act, in January 1999 which came into force in June 2000. It was echoed in other states. In 1996, a nationwide network of senior and respected media persons, serving and retired bureaucrats and Non Government Organisations(NGOs)activists advocated the removal of official secrets act 1923.The Delhi based National Campaign on people's RIGHT to information (NCPRI) was formed to carry out advocacy on right to information at the national level. Consequently the government of India appointed a working group under the chairmanship of Mr. H.D. Shourie. The working group submitted the draft bill on Freedom of Information in May 1997, but the draft law was criticised for not adopting a high enough standard of disclosure. The Shourie committee law was reworked into Freedom of information Bill, 2000. The bill was sent to parliamentary standing committee on home affairs which consulted with civil society groups before submitting report. The National Freedom of information Bill 2000 was introduced in parliament in 2000. It was passed in December 2000 and received presidential assent on 6 January 2003.Unfortunately a date for the bill coming into force was never notified for various reasons, and it never actually came into operation.

4. PASSAGE OF RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT (2005)

The Coalition Government at the centre led by United Progressive Alliance formulated an agenda called 'Common Minimum Programme'. One of the agenda of Common Minimum Programme was 'The Common Minimum Programme (CMP) stated clearly, ' the Right to Information Act will be made more progressive, participatory and meaningful. In order to look after the implementation of Common Minimum Programme the United Progressive Alliance headed by Dr. Manmohan Singh constituted National Advisory Council (NAC), with the job of recommending changes in the Freedom of Information law 2002. The NAC suggested some important changes to be incorporated, including changing its name from Freedom of Information to the Right to Information Act. Acting on the recommendations of the NAC, the UPA government headed by Dr. Manmohan Singh tabled the RTI Bill in March 2005. The parliament passed the Bill and the President of India consented to the Act, on 15 June 2005.On 15 June 2005, the President gave his assent to the National Right to Information Act, 2005.The central law came into force since it has been published in the gazette on June 21, 2005 as the Right to Information Act 2005. The Right to Information Act, 2005 is a milestone in India's progress as the biggest democracy in the world.

5. AN OVERVIEW OF RIGHT TO INFORMATION IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR

Corruption has been determined as the greatest challenge in the progress of Jammu and Kashmir. The practice of corruption has become well rooted in the society and is anticipated to be a part of any activity. For illegal benefit people paid a bribe or additional fee in the past. But now the RTI ACT has given a opportunity to root out corruption and the culture of secrecy from the government affairs, and pave the way for governance reform, greater accountability and transparency in government affairs. Across the country, a growing number of people are using the RTI applications as weapon to fight corruption and demand their rights. A number of government commissions have noted corruption as being systematic in Jammu and Kashmir because of concentration of power among bureaucrats and politicians. The culture of privacy in governance, which began during the British rule and continues. The Jammu and Kashmir has kept alive corruption where large amount of public money is diverted or redirected by the authorities. But with the Right to Information ACT people say no to bribes. The RTI has been used to bring about policy changes as well as to feed hungry mouths. Some trace the growth of corruption in Jammu and Kashmir to its militancy roots. Corruption is one of the burning issues and has become a matter of serious discussion across the globe. People in Jammu and Kashmir are among the worst sufferers of corruption. According to centre for media studies (CMS) in its annual corruption study 2017 –has placed Jammu and Kashmir along with Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh as most corrupt among 20 surveyed states. The study reveals that Karnataka (77%) followed by Andhra Pradesh (74%), Tamil Nadu (68%), MAHARASTRA (57%) and Jammu and Kashmir (44%) emerged as more corrupt states. The figure of Jammu and Kashmir in 2005 was 69%.The state of Jammu and Kashmir has been a great victim of corruption due to conflict and instability.

The funds meant for development get mismanaged, misappropriated and looted right from village panchayat to CM's secretariat. The special packages worth millions of rupees are announced by the central government to the Jammu and Kashmir state. The local perception prevails that the benefits of these special packages are hardly visible. Jammu and Kashmir is also provided with a special treatment than the other states of country. Enormous changes have taken place in the field of public administration with the growing transparency and accountability and people's participation in policy making and its implementation. The decentralization of power has brought new approaches to public administration from traditional approach to modern one. Privacy no longer now can exist, every human being have right to know about administration, what govt thinks and how it performs the responsibility. In the age of liberalization and globalization the concept of invisible government no longer can be seen. The citizens and civil society must get information from the public authorities relating to their administration, operations or decisions. Right to Information Act in Jammu and Kashmir has come into being only with the parallel work of civil society and people in both rural as well as in urban areas. Using RTI one can only expose corruption or other malpractices, after that it is the job of institutions such as state vigilance commission (SVC) or state accountability commission(SAC) that have to act. Right to know is an important ingredient of participatory democracy. As citizens we should not only participate at the time of elections but on a day to day basis when decisions on policy, laws and schemes are being made. With the involvement of public there will be good quality of good governance. Good governance has become a buzz word in development today. Fighting corruption, raising accountability and promoting transparency are increasingly perceived as being indispensable to the notion of good governance. The concept of good governance is gaining popularity and is being used unsparingly in the international community to promote development, economic and social security and peace there is realisation that robust engagement with the civil society is at the heart of good governance. Transparency and accountability run parallel to each other prevail at national and local levels pertaining to economic development of Jammu and Kashmir. The transparency and accountability have remained absent which has bought a greater deal of disenchantment and even alienation from system. The first initiative in this regard was enactment of Jammu and Kashmir RTI 2004. Which is closely based upon the Central Right to Information Act 2005? The Jammu and Kashmir RTI act 2004 was enacted on 7 Jan-2004.The rules to the act were issued on 30-June, 2005.The enhancement of this act came within the larger context of the right to information movement in India. The movement culminated in the passage of the central Right to information Act. 2005, which was partially intended to supersede the various state level Acts. The central Right to information act 2005 does not apply to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, because of special provision under article 370 of the constitution of India. In September 2007,the government passed the Jammu and Kashmir RTI [amendment] Act, which was duly notified in the Jammu and Kashmir gazette in jan-2008.the Amendment Act, was technically in force, but was never implemented in spirit. In December 2008, National Conference party led by Umer Abdullah announced that new RTI Act was among their 'Election Manifesto GOALS'. The National Conference party was subsequently elected to power, and Umer Abdullah became the state's C.M.A draft bill was tabled on 7th March 2009[07-03-2009] passed by the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council 2009.The ACT was subsequently gazetted and came into force on 20-03-2009.The rules to the Act were gazetted on 06-06-2009.on April 2010 new rules were gazetted which repeated the earlier rules.

6. CENTRAL TRENDS FOR RTI

During the year 2015-16 9.76 RTI applications have been received by the public authorities (PAs). However in 2014-15 almost a quarter of the registered PAs failed to submit their RTI status. the percentage of the PAs to the CIC was only 75.27%.So the data for 2015-16 indicates that the number of RTIs filled with the PAs in GOI continues to display a plateauing trend this year as well with no significant hike in numbers. However the CIC reports that RTI applications have increased by 3.8% in 2015-16 as compared to the previous year.

The PAs rejected 6.62% of the RTI applications processed during 2015-16 (according to CIC). This seems to have come down by 1.77% from the high of 8.39% reported in 2014-15.Nevertheless the figure for 2015-16 is much higher than the lowest proportion of rejection recorded in 2010-2011 at 5.10%.

According to CIC, the highest proportion of RTI applications was rejected not under the permissible exemptions under the RTI Act such as Sections 8, 9, 11 or 24 but under mysterious category of others. At 43% rejections recorded under this category, more than 4 out of every 10 RTI applications rejected were for

reasons other than those permitted by the RTI Act. The Prime Minister's office is one of the PAs that employed this device very frequently.

47% of the 9.76 lakhs RTIs were rejected under various clauses in section 8 of the RTI Act. 1% of the RTIs were rejected under Section 9 (private copyright) and 7% of the RTI were rejected by the security and intelligence organisations partially excluded under Section 24 of the RTI Act.

The CIC has reported that there is a decrease in the number of first appeals received but increase in the number disposed by the first appellate authorities. While this is a new positive trend, it requires a deeper analysis because in previous years the proportion of first appeals has often been higher than the proportion of rejections.

The CIC disposed of 28,188 appeal and complaint cases in 2015-2016 while 25,960 cases were registered during the same period. Presidency of second appeals and complaints on 01 April, 2016 was a whopping 34,982 cases.

The CIC reports that it imposed penalties to the tune of Rs 10.52 lakhs out of which Rs 9.41 lakhs was paid of by the PIOs. Penalties worth Rs 1.25 lakhs imposed in various cases have been stayed by the various courts

The CIC has reported that the amount of fees and penalties reported by the PAs has increased by 12.31% in 2015-2016. However if the amount of penalty imposed is reduced from this figure, the amount of fees collected by various PAs has actually come down from Rs 1.14 crores in 2014-2015 to Rs 1.07 crores in 2016-2017. This trend seems to be at variance with the reduction in proportion of rejections.

The number of public authorities registering with CIC for submitting their RTI statistics is 1903 much lower than the highest figure of 2,333 registered in 2012-13. It has been reported that more public authorities (1965) have filled their annual RTI statistics with the CIC IN 2016-17.

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation and Ministry Overseas Indian Affairs have not reported their RTI statistics despite registering with the CIC. Only 33% of the public authorities from Ministry of Road and Transport and Highways reported their RTI statistics to the CIC. However compliance has been between 60-100% in a large number of Ministries and Departments that have registered with the CIC.

The Prime Minister's office received almost 13% more RTI applications (12.89%) in 2016-2017 as compared to the previous year. In 2016-2017 PMO received 12,787 RTI applications as compared with 11,138 in 2015-2016. Interestingly the proportion of rejection has fallen to 10.21% in 2016-2017 as compared with 20.10% in 2015-2016.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has reported a 3.62% rise in the number of RTI applications received in 2016-2017. 28 public authorities under the Home Ministry received 57,657 RTI applications the previous year. The proportion of rejection has gone up to 16.10% in 2016-2017 from the 14% figure reported in 2015-2016

The Ministry of External Affairs reported a 13.37% increase in the number of RTI applications received in 2016-2017 although the number of public authorities under this Ministry has gone up from 4 in 2015 -16 to 101 in 2016-17. The proportion of rejection of RTIs in 2016-17 has fallen to 0.6% to 5.74% in 2015-16.

The Ministry of Defence reported a backlog of 89,391 RTI applications at the beginning of 2016-17. Only 58,339 fresh RTIs were received this year. However this is an increase of 14.36% over the receipts in 2015-16. The proportion of rejection has fallen considerably to 6.80% in 2016-17 from 11.50% in 2015-16.

The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and pensions –the nodal Ministry for implementing RTI Act in the Central Government received 3% more RTI applications in 2016-17. However the proportion of rejections has jumped to 5.76% from 3.40% reported in 2015-16.

Rashrapati Bhawan received 2.79% more RTIs in 2016-17 but rejected only 0.7% of them. In 2015-16, it had rejected 1.2% of the 2,939 RTIs received.

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India received more than double the RTI applications (5.76%) in 2016-17 as compared to the figures in 2015-16. The proportion of rejection fell drastically from 17.20% in 2015-16 to 3.75% in 2016-17

The Cabinet Secretariat reported a dip of 8.65% in the number of RTI s received in 2016-17 as compared with the previous year. The proportion of rejection has fallen marginally to 6.5% in 2016-17.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) received 13.8% more RTIs in 2016-17 as compared to the previous year. Although the CICs report records 0% rejection in the data table, the ECI rejected 14 RTIs for reasons other than sections 8, 9 and 24.

The Supreme Court of India received 3.8% more RTIs in 2016-17. However the Apex Court rejected a quarter of these RTIs (25.5%) in 2015-16, the court had rejected only a fourth of the RTIs received (21.1%)

The Delhi High Court received 12.18% more RTIs in 2016-17 as compared with previous year. The proportion of rejection has fallen to 23.7% from 27.3% in 2015-16.

Although Delhi Police reported a backlog of 1,925 RTIs at the beginning of 2016-17. The proportion of rejection has fallen by 0.5% in 2016-17 as compared with the previous year. Delhi Police rejected more RTIs (1.88%) for reasons other than sections 8 & 9

7. A RAY OF HOPE FOR PEOPLE JAMMU AND KASHMIR RTI ACT 2009 TRENDS

The people of Jammu And Kashmir State now have the right to have access to information under the control of public authorities. with the enactment of Jammu and Kashmir Right to information act 2009, government has become more open to public scurnity. RTI has given boost to transparency and accountability and has also increased a ray of hope among people with freedom of speech and expression. The proportion of females is very less to exercise RTI act as compared to males. Concerted efforts have been made to make public authorities complaint with section 4, which has resulted into some positive response from almost all the administrative departments and number of line departments during the year under report. Now, the implementers of the Act, the PIOs and FFAs, generally show greater responsiveness to the requests of the citizens in sharing the information. In a significant move the Jammu and Kashmir State Information Commission (JKSIC) has decided to receive RTI applications and second appeals online through commission's official website. The general public can make use of this facility and send their complaints/appeals to the commission through the medium of the above mentioned website

RTI ACT has given a fillip to Public hearings and social audit as tools of effective society, intervention in ensuring accountable administration and to fight corruption we are seeing how the people are using RTI at a tremendous increasing trend from Panchayat level to C.M.s Secretariat, from small government to Governors Secretariat and from district level to High courts.

Jammu and Kashmir RTI performance

| S.NO | Item | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 |
|------|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 | No. Of RTI requests received by Public Authorities | 741 | 3110 | 12136 | 27619 | 19846 |
| 2 | Percentage of rejection of requests under different provisions of the Act. | 9% | 4% | 1.37% | 1.54% | 2.76% |
| 3 | Fee and copy charges collected (Rs) | 30389 | 148613 | 588214 | 876366 | 640455 |
| | Fee appeals received by the FFAs | - | - | - | 1279 | 1877 |
| | First appeals disposed of by the FFAs | - | - | - | 1243 | 1723 |
| 4 | Complaints/2 nd Appeals received by the Commission | 13 | 24 | 974 | 741 | 747 |
| 5 | Complaints/2 nd Appeals decided by the Commission | 0 | 03 | 589 | 902 | 681 |
| 6 | No. Of cases in which penalty imposed u/s 17 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 7 | 9 |
| 7 | No. Of cases in which compensation awarded to the information seekers | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 8 | No. Of depts./Public Authorities which have uploaded Sec.4 (1)(b) on their website. | 0 | 2 | 26 | 9 | 46 |
| 9 | Training programmes conducted by IMPA for PIOs | | | | | |
| | a) No. Of programmes | 0 | 05 | 14 | 15 | 36 |
| | b) No. Of participants | 0 | 213 | 665 | 4492 | 998 |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|----|----|---|
| 10 | PIO meets and interactive sessions with members of cross section of society as part of awareness programmes. | 0 | 1 | 19 | 16 | 1 |
|----|--|---|---|----|----|---|

Source: Annual Report 2013-2014

8. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The Jammu and Kashmir RTI is a magnificent tool for promoting transparency, Accountability and has also removed corruption to some extent. As people in Jammu and Kashmir are worst sufferers of corruption. In Jammu and Kashmir no individual had to access to information held by a public authority up to 2004. information is very essential to participate in the life and governance of society. We can say govt and information are closely related to each other. More the access to information the greater would be responsiveness of the govt. The greater restrictions placed on access to information leads to powerlessness and alienation. A resident of Jammu and Kashmir has a right to access information with the enactment of Jammu and Kashmir RTI act 2009. With the enactment of this act the govt. Has become more open to public media and other sources are playing an eminent role about awareness of RTI act, mostly in case of rural and far-flung hilly areas the RTI Act 2009 was passed by the state legislature to bring an end to culture of secrecy and change the mindset of highest officials. Significant changes have occurred in case of poor people with sharing of information related to new farming techniques, education, and healthcare and afforestation. The RTI act has changed the power equation between the governments and governed. It has become a potent tool to fight against corruption and demands their rights. With the RTI Act people say no to bribes. Transparency has become the norm of day. Transparency enables stronger, more peaceful international relations by allowing for more accurate verification of nations compliance with international agreements and standards, national markets gain greater access to the foreign investment through credible government oversight and more efficient regulation of market authority with more transparency the maturity of society can be measured The Right to Information Act promoted democratic ideology by promoting openness and transparency in administration. Thus it can be said that RTI is powerful tool that can give significant social benefits. IT can support to democracy and can promote good governance by empowering citizen's ability to participate effectively.

9. SUGGESTIONS FOR PROPER IMPLEMENTATION

It is very important to introduce RTI ACT in the school syllabus so that our future leaders may get brief idea about the act with this they have the idea of transparency and accountability.

As it is evident that lack of awareness is the main challenge for proper implementation of the ACT. Therefore it is the responsibility of the government to provide more funds for the publicity of the act in case of rural population, backward classes, like SCs, STs and OBCs

The NGOs and civil society should conduct awareness campaigns to educate rural people, about the Act. because these are the most affected groups (farmers, middle and working class) who suffer due to exploitation of public authorities.

Public Authorities at district level must be given responsibility of monitoring and implementation of the ACT through various departmental authorities within their respective district.

At least at college level RTI ACT should be included in the syllabus so that the coming generation say no to bribes and they should be completely aware about the RTI Act and they will be able to provide democratic ideology among others.

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