

Right to Information Act

In 1987, a few laborers in Rajasthan were refused their wages on charges of inconsistent performance. Mazdoor Kissan Shakti Sanghathan (MKSS), an activist group fought for these workers and demanded that the government produced the necessary proof to verify the worker's performance records. After a series of protests, the MKSS got the copies of rolls, which also brought to surface the corruption existed among the officials. Provoked by such discrepancies, the MKSS protested for the RTI. This protest turned into a national event leading to the passing of the Freedom of Information Act 2002 which became the RTI Act 2005. A Pune police station received the first RTI application in the year 2005.

Right to Information Act, RTI means that any Indian citizen can request any information (which is supposed to be public knowledge) from the offices and departments of the state or central governments. The act mandates that the said offices and departments must process such requests in a timely manner.

The Government of India has implemented the RTI in order to see that the Indian citizens are enabled to exercise their rights to ask some pertinent questions to the Government and different public utility service providers in a practical way. RTI Act replaced the Freedom of Information Act 2002.

The RTI Act mandates that any Indian citizen is free to seek any information from any public or government authority and the authority is under liability to respond to such a request within a period of 30 days from the date of receiving such an application. However, the information sought must not be related to defense, national security, or personal details.

Before the advent of the RTI act, the disclosure of information in India was restricted by the Official Secrets Act and some other special laws. The RTI Act relaxed many such laws in the country.

The RTI act has also made it mandatory for computerizing the records for the purpose of wide spread relay so that any information sought by the public can be processed quickly aided by the information categorization.

Any Indian citizen is free to seek answers from a Government Authority like applying for a delayed IT refund, driving license or passport, or details of a repair or infrastructure project completed or going on. Information sought can also be related to the funds allotted under the different kinds of relief funds in the country.