

262 officials booked under RTI Act in Bihar
as reported by Amarnath Tewary | Patna Daily Pioneer

When the Bihar Government set up State Information Commission to provide information to seekers under RTI Act through Jankari on telephone a year ago, it was first of its kind in the country, prompting other States to emulate it. Again, another achievement: 262 Government officials were punished in a year for not supplying information, willingly or unwillingly, to RTI applicants.

In recent times several reports have come up when Government officials had demanded huge sums of money up to Rs 74 lakh in the name of miscellaneous charges from RTI applicants.

The State Information Commission took notice of such cases and others before cracking the whip against the erring officials.

While addressing a seminar on Sunday, Secretary of State Information Commission SK Mishra said in the last one year altogether 262 officials have been charged under RTI Act. “Besides, during the last three years, altogether 12,000 cases were brought to the notice of the commission and around 1.35 lakh people sought various kinds of information from different departments,” he said.

“The RTI Act has become a potent tool in the hands of the common people and more and more are using it for their purpose,” said Mishra. The given information even surprised a team of young researchers from the US and China who had visited the State recently. The visiting team wondered why so many Government officials from top to bottom were punished for not providing the required information within stipulated time.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had launched the Jankari scheme, through which one can get information by making a phone call.

“This system has worked wonders and the Government has been taking action against those officials who were found guilty of not providing the required information on one pretext or other,” said Nitish Kumar. “There should be transparency in the functioning of the Government and everyone has the right to know what he wants to know,” he said.

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