

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Commission held on 14.2.2006
in the chamber of CIC**

Present:

- 1. Shri Wajahat Habibullah, CIC in chair**
- 2. Smt. Padma Balasubramanian, IC**
- 3. Dr.O.P. Kejariwal, IC**
- 4. Prof. M.M. Ansari, IC**

Joint Secretary & Registrar and Under Secretary assisted the Commission.

The Commission approved the minutes of the meeting held on 7.2.2006. The Commission was briefed on the action taken on the minutes of the meeting held on 31.1.2006.

The Commission noted that some of the Secretaries proposed nominating an officer of the rank of Joint Secretary to attend the meeting of Secretaries, since the Commission's letter of invitation mentioned that they could send officers not below the rank of Joint Secretary. From the response received till date it seemed that many Secretaries had assumed that they could depute one of the Joint Secretaries to attend this meeting. Since the meetings are to be held by the full Commission, the Commission desired that a letter to the Secretaries may be issued where their presence may be once again requested and they may depute Joint Secretaries only as a fallback, since a holistic review of the implementation of the RTI Act is required in the public authorities working under the administrative control of Ministries/Departments.

2. The Commission approved that the second appeals from appellate authorities of the Union Territories would be handled by the Information Commissioners/ CIC as per regional allocation made among the Commissioners i.e. appeals arising against the orders of the appellate authorities of Delhi and Chandigarh Union Territories with CIC: Lakshadweep and Pondicherry with IC (PB): Andaman and Nicobar Islands with IC (K) and the remaining with IC (T). The information on the website may accordingly be modified to reflect the above arrangement. (Action by Mr. Paul of NIC)

3. The Commission desired that whenever the Information Commissioner or Chief Information Commissioner visited the State Headquarters it may be appropriate to hold a meeting with senior officers of Central Government posted there on the RTI issues. Coordinating mechanism set up in various State Capitals in this regard may be determined. (Action by AO (N)).

4. The Commission has received various appeals for allowing access to answer sheets available with various public authorities that conduct examination for various purposes. The Commission's decisions have been placed on website. However, Commission felt that it would like to have a legal opinion from eminent lawyers to have a legal insight of the issues involved. (Action CIC)

5. For the meetings proposed to be held on February 20, 23rd and 24th, 2006 with the Secretaries of various Departments, the Commission approved the following agenda for the meetings:

1. Welcoming the participants
2. Opening remarks/talking points by the Information Commissioner/CIC
3. Open House discussion
4. Vote of thanks

Joint Secretary will prepare common talking points which could be substantiated by the relevant Information Commissioners who would be chairing the Session according to the session when majority of Departments allotted to them were represented.

6. The Commission discussed the issue in the complaint filed by Shri Sarabjit Roy against DDA on the issues on which CIC and IC (PB) had reserved their judgment.

7. The Commission Joint Secretary will take up with DOPT for amending fee rules to provide for alternative options of accepting Rs.10/- while making RTI application. This could include postal order, non-judicial court fees stamp or any other stamps that can be bought from the Post Offices or by depositing this money as an unclassified receipt in the Post Offices.

8. The Commission was briefed that anticipated cost of holding national competition for selection of a logo was between Rs.5 to 10 lakhs. Taking into

account various factors including time and cost of the advertisement campaign, the Commission approved the logo as discussed in its meeting held on 10 /1/2006. A copy of the logo is attached. The Commission discussed the honorarium to be paid to the creative artist Shri Dushyant Parashar for the logo and requested IC (K) to check if Rs.10,000/- as honorarium for preparing the logo would be acceptable .

9. The Commission conveyed its serious concern for lack of government's effort for allotting suitable residential accommodation to the Information Commissioners. A letter from CIC would be issued. (Action : CIC)

10. The Commission was briefed about the budget of Rs.5 crore that DOPT has approved for 2006-07 as against Rs.11.92 crore requested by the Commission. The Commission requested CIC to take up this with MOS (PP) as the amount approved was not adequate to meet the Commission's requirement.

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