

File No.CIC/30/2016-Rgr.  
Central Information Commission

.....

New Delhi, dated the 23rd September, 2016

ORDER

Sub: Conduct of hearings before the Commission.

It has been noticed that many a time during the hearings of appeals and complaints under the Right to Information Act, 2005 in this Commission, the parties to a case carry with them mobile phones, cameras and electronic devices including recording devices. This results in disruption of smooth conduct of hearings. Further, sometimes the appellant/complainant or the respondent is accompanied by a number of persons or officers to assist them. Many times, the appellant/respondent seeks permission to allow the accompanying person(s) to speak on his behalf. Ordinarily, the hearings of the cases before the Commission are open to general public. However, there may be cases when a party to a case requests for hearing the matter in the presence of the parties only. In other words, the request made is that the proceedings should be conducted "in camera" to the exclusion of others.

2. The matter has been considered and for smooth and better conduct of hearings in the cases in the Commission, it has been decided that –

- (i) A notice shall be displayed at the entrance of the chamber of the Chief IC/ICs reading that "Mobile phones, cameras and other electronic devices including recording devices not allowed. Deposit the same with the personal staff against a token."

Suitable arrangements for receipt and delivery of these items will be made by the Sr. PPS/PPS concerned. For video conference hearings, NIC shall impose similar restrictions.

- (ii) Whenever a party to a case makes a request for hearing the matter in the presence of the parties only, i.e. to conduct the hearing "in camera" to the exclusion of others, the Commission would consider such a request in the light of the submissions made in this regard. If the request is acceded to, the reasons for holding the proceedings "in camera" would form part of the decision in the case.
- (iii) It is necessary that some restriction on the number of persons to assist a party to a case should be imposed for smooth conduct of hearings. Keeping in view the nature of RTI requests and the grounds generally taken in the appeals and complaints, it would be reasonable that only one person may be allowed to assist the appellant/complainant or the respondent or any other party to a

pe

case. However, if any specific request is made by a party to a case for seeking assistance of more than one person, the Commission would take a decision in this regard.

For the purpose, the following para may be incorporated in the notices of hearing issued by the Commission:

"The parties may note that only one person shall be allowed to assist them during the hearing of the case."

*[Signature]*

(Dr. M.K. Sharma)  
Registrar

To

1. Sr.PPS/PPS to Chief IC and ICs.
2. Shri Subhash Sharma, DR to Chief IC *23/9/16*
3. Shri R.L. Gupta, DR to IC (BS). *23/9/16*
4. Shri Ram Parkash Grover, DR to IC (YA). *23/9/16*
5. Shri Vijay Bhalla, DR to IC (SH). *23/9/16*
6. Shri T.K. Mohapatra, DR to IC (MP). *23/9/16*
7. Shri K.A. Talwar, DR to IC (KY). *23/9/16*
8. Shri Dinesh Kumar, DR to IC (SA). *23/9/16*
9. Shri V.K. Sharma, DR to IC (SB). *23/9/16*
10. Shri K.L. Das, DR to IC (BJ). *23/9/16*
11. Shri Raghubir Singh, DR to IC (DP). *23/9/16*
12. Shri A.K. Talapatra, DR to IC (AB). *23/9/16*
13. DR (C.R.) *23/9/16*

Copy to:

1. PSs to Secretary/Addl. Secretary. *23/9/16*
2. JS (A)/JS (MR)/JS (P&B). *23/9/16*
3. NIC with the request to instruct all concerned and also to upload it on the website of the Commission. *23/9/16*

*[Signature]*

(Dr. M.K. Sharma)  
Registrar