Subject-wise Analysis of BSNL Cases & Study of All Public Authorities Subjects

Research Paper

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Abstract

The RTI Act, 2005 is certainly a great step taken by the government in setting up foundation for a better democracy and encourages a fully responsive functioning of Government and its agencies. Although a number of subject-wise analysis would have been done on the list of RTI cases of different public authorities but this research paper presents a broader study over the cases and the quantity of cases of particular subject is shown on the pie charts and graphs for better analysis. It includes research and analysis of cases related to BSNL and many other public authorities. It presents a brief suggestion to minimize the quantity of RTI applications and appeals. It suggests reducing the complaints and grievances within the department itself.
Acknowledgement

At the outset, I thank the Hon'ble Chief Information Commissioner of Central Information Commission for giving me this Opportunity of working under the MR department of CIC and the affection shown by him to the interns. I take this opportunity to thank the Joint Secretary (MR) for giving me the opportunity to study and research on the subject-wise analysis of All Public Authority Cases and BSNL cases. I express my deep sense of gratitude and heartfelt thanks to Gajendra Sir for providing adequate infrastructure for my research work and also for the supervision & guidance during the preparation of this research paper. Last but not the least, I express my gratitude to MY PARENTS for their support and encouragement.
**Right to Information**

In 1994, Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) started a grassroots campaign for Right To Information, which was successfully accepted & enacted by the Indian government in 2005. It replaced the Freedom of Information Act, 2002. The RTI Act, 2005 is certainly a great step taken by the government in setting up foundation for a better democracy and encourages a fully responsive functioning of Government and its agencies. Its implementation ensures good governance and eliminates corruption in government organizations.

It is the right of every citizen to get the information from any public authorities, which are responsible to the citizen of India. All the public authorities are liable to disclose the sought information from the RTI appellant. Information disclosure in India is restricted by the Officials Secrets Act 1923, multiple sections under RTI Act 2005 including section 8 and various other special laws.

**Public Authorities**

Public Authorities are the organisations which government owned and are managed by government only. They are liable to follow all instructions of government and are answerable to government and citizen of India. As these organisations are for public domain i.e. the services provided by such organisations could be used by public.

So, to eradicate corruption within such Public Authority, transparency & information disclosure rights has been given to the citizen.

One of such public Authority is Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). It was inaugurated on 1st Oct 2000 and is one of the landmark events in the history of telecommunication where the department of telecom was corporated and named as BSNL. The public authority, BSNL also come under the ambit of Right to information and transparency and is liable to disclose all the necessary information.
**Study of All Public Authority Subject**

This research is mainly based on the study and analysis of approx 4500 Public Authority Subjects of approx 400 Public Authorities such as IIM, IIT, CDRI, Banks, Border Road Organisation, CGHS, Airport Authorities etc belonging to approx 60 Ministries. This study clearly shows that there are multiple subject matters regarding which RTI applications and 1st appeal & 2nd appeal were registered. These cases mostly deal with Human Resources and their Pay Related Matters such as Appointment, Recruitment, Transfer, Promotion, Employee Details, Employment, Service Details, Remuneration, Pension, Provident Funds, Benefits, Allowances etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>RTI SUBJECTS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>12.01%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Employee &amp; Employment</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Admission &amp; Examination</td>
<td>4.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Tender &amp; Contract</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Remuneration</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Grievances</td>
<td>3.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Allowances &amp; Benefits</td>
<td>3.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Academics &amp; Administration</td>
<td>3.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Vacancy</td>
<td>3.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Research &amp; Reports</td>
<td>2.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Court Cases</td>
<td>2.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>2.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>46.31%</td>
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</table>
Miscellaneous Cases are Sub-divided as:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>PERCENT %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Schemes &amp; Policies</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Accommodations &amp; Hostel</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Dismissals/Removals</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>HR Related Matter</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Assets &amp; Properties</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Disciplinary Cases</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Taxes</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Reservation</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respective Pie-chart Representations

Subject-wise Classification of RTI Cases
After studying approx 4500 public authority subjects of various Public Authorities, we could classify the subjects in 12 major categories. Thus the 12 majorly classified subjects are:-

1) **Vacancy**

RTI Applications regarding the details of vacancies against various public authorities such as vacancies in educational institutions, banks, research centre etc. It is in reference of seeking information & details related to vacancies and the vacancy policies. There are total of 125 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which amount to approx 3.03% of the total 4121 public authority subject.

2) **Transfer**

RTI Applications regarding the details of Transfer against various public authorities. There are total of 88 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which is approx 2.14% of the total 4121 public authority subject.
3) **Tender & Contract**

RTI Applications regarding the details of Tender & Contract against various public authorities including the details of tender job given to corporate or individuals or the details of contract. There are total of 182 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 4.42% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

4) **Employee & Employment**

RTI Applications regarding the information of Employee and Employment against various public authorities includes personal details of employee & officers, details of their service and employment related details. This also includes the details related to service books, attendance, work, employment etc. There are total of 380 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 9.22% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

5) **Remuneration**

RTI Applications regarding the details of remunerations against various public authorities includes information related to salary, wages, pay etc. There are total of 173 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 4.2% of the total 4121 cases.

6) **Recruitment**

As per the study and analysis, most of the cases registered for RTI is related to recruitment. RTI Applications regarding the details of Recruitment against various public authorities includes recruitment of the employee & officers, appointments, compassionate appointments, etc. There are total of 495 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 12.01% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

7) **Purchase & Expenditures**

RTI Applications regarding the details of Expenditures & purchase against various public authorities includes information related to expenses incurred on ministerial visits, expenditures of organizational schemes and projects and the details of all purchases made by the organisation. It is in reference to seeking information & details related to expenses,
purchases & expenditures. There are total of 92 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 2.32% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

8) Grievances

RTI Applications regarding the details of grievances or complaints registered by the complainant against various public authorities mainly includes complaints or grievances registered by the appellant for seeking the status of their complaint in the organisation. These cases amount to total of 145 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 3.52% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

9) Admission & Examination

RTI Applications regarding the details of admission & examination against various public authorities includes information related to admission in the educational institutions, entrance examinations for any course, departmental examinations in the organisation itself, marks & results related to the exam answer-sheets and the cut offs. There are total of 192 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 4.66% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

10) Court Cases

RTI Applications seeking the details of court cases against various public authorities includes information related to the orders and decision of the court case or simply seeking the details of the particular court case. There are total of 89 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 2.16% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

11) Allowances & Benefits

RTI Applications regarding the details of allowances & benefits against various public authorities includes the information related to the allowances payable or paid, provident funds, gratuity, medical benefits, travel allowances, retirement benefits etc. These cases amount to total of 127 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 3.08% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.
12) Academics & Administration

This RTI subject classification has a very broad concept. RTI Applications regarding the details of academics & administration against various public authorities includes academic details of an institution, details related to administration, administrative cases etc. There are total of 125 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 3.03% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

13) Pension

RTI Applications regarding the details of pension against various public authorities includes information related to pension, payment of pension amount, non-payment of pension amount etc. There are total of 112 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which are approx 2.72% of the total 4121 public authority subjects.

14) Miscellaneous –

Apart from the cases classified subject-wise, there are many other cases related to various subject matters of RTI such as taxes, reservations, promotions, accommodations, assets & properties etc. There are total of 1796 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, which is approx 46% of the total public authority subjects. The various subjects of RTI under miscellaneous category are:-

a) Taxes & GST

RTI Applications regarding the details of Taxes such income tax, sales tax etc and GST amount to total of 53 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to paid taxes and return and GST.

b) Schemes & Policies

RTI Applications regarding the details of schemes and policies of the public authority amount to total of 85 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to various schemes and policies.
c) **Reservation**

RTI Applications regarding the details of reservations of SC/ST, physically disabled etc in various fields of different public authorities amount to total of 46 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to reservations & the reserved peoples.

d) **Promotion**

RTI Applications regarding the details of promotion of the employee and officers, grounds of promotions, rules & provisions followed etc amount to total of 62 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to promotions.

e) **Accommodation & Hostel**

RTI Applications regarding the details of accommodations provided to the employees & officers, quarter and information related to hostel & mess in the institutions etc amount to total of 80 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to accommodations & hostels.

f) **HR Related Matters**

RTI Applications regarding the details of Human Resources employed in the public authority amount to total of 71 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to Human Resources.

g) **Assets & Properties**

RTI Applications regarding the details of assets & properties of any particular officer or employee or any organisation or properties under any public authority amount to total of 33 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to assets & properties.
h) Budget

RTI Applications regarding seeking information related to budget, fund & financing etc. amount to total of 65 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to budget, fund & finance related.

i) Disciplinary Cases

RTI Applications regarding the details of disciplinary case against any employee or officers or any departmental enquiry against such employee or officer amount to total of 44 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to disciplinary cases and departmental enquiry.

j) Dismissals/Removals

RTI Applications regarding the details of dismissal or removals of any employee by the means of voluntary retirement, dismissal, suspension, termination etc. amount to total of 59 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects, seeking information & details related to dismissals & removals.

k) Others

Overall there are various public authority subjects which couldn’t be classified subject-wise. Such public authority subjects are finally kept under the “others” section of the miscellaneous subjects. As it has very broad range of subjects, which could include details & information related to martyrs, drugs & medicines, registration & licensing etc. There are approx 600 subjects out of 4121 public authority subjects.
Study of BSNL Cases

The another part of the research contains the study & analysis of 300 cases which belongs to the Public Authority – Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). These cases are the 2nd appeal case which hasn’t been redressed at the initial level and the 1st appeal. Mostly the RTI application which are being registered against the BSNL are of subject matter such as Connection & Call Details, Employee Details, Employment Details, Reimbursement, Orders, Circulars, Application Status etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>SUBJECTS</th>
<th>PERCENT %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Connection &amp; Call Details</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Reimbursement</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Employee &amp; Employment</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Application Status</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Pay &amp; Salary</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Order/Circular/Notesheet</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Bills &amp; Payments</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Provision &amp; Policy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Examination</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Tower &amp; Network</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>18%</td>
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</table>
Other BSNL Cases are sub-divided as:

<table>
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<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>SUBJECTS</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Reports &amp; Survey</td>
<td>8.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Expenditures</td>
<td>6.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Pension</td>
<td>6.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Transfer</td>
<td>6.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Fund</td>
<td>4.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Income Tax</td>
<td>4.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>4.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>57.39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pie-chart Representation**

Subject-wise Analysis

- Agreement: 18%
- Application Status: 8%
- Pay & Salary: 8%
- Tender: 4%
- Examination: 3%
- Order/Circular/Notesheet: 7%
- Reimbursement: 12%
- Provision & Policy: 5%
- Employee & Employment: 11%
- Tower & Network: 6%
- Bills & Payments: 3%
- Connection & Call Details: 2%
After studying approx 300 cases of BSNL, we could classify the cases in 12 major categories. Thus the 12 majorly classified subjects are:

1) Agreements

RTI Applications regarding the details of agreements, mostly contains information regarding agreements between BSNL & Facebook and other agreements as well. There are a total of 6 applications out of 263 2\textsuperscript{nd} Appeal cases, seeking information & details of the agreements, which are approx 2.3\% of the total 2\textsuperscript{nd} appeal cases against BSNL.

2) Application Status

RTI Applications regarding the status of the application of the appellant amounts to a total of 20 Applications out of 263 2\textsuperscript{nd} Appeal cases. These applications refer to the cases in which the appellant’s last RTI hasn’t been disclosed/redressed and to check the status of the last application, one registers another RTI application. These cases are approx 7.6\% of the total 2\textsuperscript{nd} appeal cases against BSNL for seeking information.
3) **Pay & Salary**

RTI Applications regarding Pay and Salary mostly includes the information related to salary, pay scale, Pay Commission etc which amounts to a total of 19 cases out of 263 2\textsuperscript{nd} Appeal cases. These applications which are available in 2\textsuperscript{nd} appeal against BSNL would be approx 7.22\% of all the appeals against BSNL.

4) **Tender**

RTI Applications regarding Tenders mostly includes information related to Tenders of BSNL, which has been given to various corporate and individuals. The appellants apply to seek details related to the tender. Such applications amount to 9 cases out of 263 2\textsuperscript{nd} Appeal cases, which is approx 3.42\% of the total 2\textsuperscript{nd} appeal cases against BSNL.

5) **Employee & Employment**

RTI Applications regarding the information of Employee and Employment includes details of employee & officers and their service and employment related details. This also includes the details related to service books, attendance, work, employment etc. These appeal cases, amounts to 28 out of 263 2\textsuperscript{nd} appeal cases, which are approx 10.64\% of the total 2\textsuperscript{nd} appeal cases against BSNL.

6) **Examination**

RTI Applications regarding the information related to departmental examinations and its results. These appeals were registered to seek the information regarding employee’s departmental examinations and results. These cases amount to 7 out of 263 2\textsuperscript{nd} Appeal cases, which is 2.67\% of the total 2\textsuperscript{nd} appeal cases against BSNL.

7) **Order/Circular/Notesheet**

RTI Applications regarding the information related to Notice, Circulars or Notesheet of various programs of BSNL amounts to 18 out of 263 2\textsuperscript{nd} Appeal cases. It includes notices of the administration or public authority, circulars regarding forwarding applications and notesheets of correspondence letters. These cases are approx 6.84\% of the total 2\textsuperscript{nd} appeal cases against BSNL.
8) Reimbursement

RTI Applications regarding the subject of Reimbursement of claims, seeking information related to reimbursement of medical claims & bills, encashment of leaves and refund of security deposits. These cases amount to 29 out of 263 2nd appeal cases, which are approx 11.02% of the total 2nd appeal cases against BSNL.

9) Provision & Policy

RTI Application regarding seeking the information related to provisions, rules and policies of the public authority i.e. BSNL. It includes the provisions & rules of the respective authority, schemes & policies they adopt in the organisation. These cases amount to 12 out of 263 2nd appeal cases, which are approx 4.56% of the total 2nd appeal cases against BSNL.

10) Towers & Networks

These RTI Applications are registered to seek information regarding the details of networks & network range of the connection and details regarding towers and details related to it. Such cases amount to 8 out of 263 2nd appeal cases, which are approx 3.04% of the total 2nd appeal cases against BSNL.

11) Bills & Payments

RTI Applications registered against BSNL to seek information regarding details of bills & payments made within the organisations, amounts to 14 out of 263 2nd appeal cases. It includes payments of bills, invoices, interests etc. These cases are approx 5.32% of the total 2nd appeal cases.

12) Connection & Call Details

Most of the RTI Applications are registered regarding this particular subject and most number of appeals are also registered regarding this subject. It includes Call details i.e. outgoing & incoming call details and details of the telecom connection (PCO, Landline etc) holder. These cases amount to 32 out of 263 2nd appeal cases, which are approx 12.17% of the total 2nd appeal cases.
13) Others

These are the remaining cases which includes multiple subjects of RTI Application -

a) Reports

These RTI Applications are registered regarding the information of Surveys & Reports such as Screening Committee Reports, chargesheet reports etc. It is includes of 5 cases out of 263 2nd appeal case.

b) Promotion

These RTI Applications are registered regarding the information of promotion of employees. It is subject to 3 2nd appeal cases out of 263 cases.

c) Transfer

These RTI Applications are registered regarding the information of transfer of employees. It is subject to 4 2nd appeal cases out of 263 cases.

d) Fund

RTI’s related to funds, budgets & finance are kept under this subject and amount to only 3 cases out of 263 2nd appeal cases.

e) Income Tax

RTI’s related to income & taxes are kept under this subject and amount to only 3 cases out of 263 2nd appeal cases.

f) Expenditures

RTI Applications registered to seek the information related to purchases & expenditures within BSNL. These cases amount to 4 cases out of 263 2nd appeal cases.
g) Pension

These RTI Applications are registered seeking the information of pension of employees. It is subject to 3 2nd appeal cases out of 263 cases.

h) Miscellaneous

This miscellaneous section within the remaining cases of subject-wise classification of the BSNL’s 2nd Appeal cases includes cases related to retirements, product & sales, meeting details, office related etc. These cases amount to 37 cases out of 263 2nd appeal cases.

SUGGESTIONS

❖ For All Public Authorities

➢ All the public Authorities should be more transparent in the subject of Appointments and Recruitments. As most of the cases registered under RTI Applications belongs to Recruitment & Appointment.

➢ The detailed information of the appointment & recruiting of every employee should be availed on the respective websites of the public authority.

➢ All the public authority should have their own grievance redressal cells.

➢ The public authorities should be very particular and transparent in the subject matter of Remunerations & Pay. The pay & PF deductions of every employee should be very transparent and should be informed at the early stages.
➢ The grievance redressal cells should be more efficient in providing the required information to the persons having grievances.

❖ For BSNL

➢ BSNL should be very particular in providing call details and connection details, as most of the RTI applications are for call details and connection details.

➢ The reimbursement procedures and process of the employee’s claims should be redressed efficiently.

➢ The consumer redressal cell in each department of BSNL should function effectively to redress complainant’s problems at initial stage.

CONCLUSION

After all the study & analysis of all the cases, it is to be concluded that BSNL’s main loop point is the reimbursement claims of their employee. Mostly the appellant complaint about their claims and its reimbursement, which BSNL doesn’t address effectively. The other important section of RTI registration subjects are Call Details & Connection Details. This issue has to be focused as it could be redressed at its initial stages. There is no need of RTI applications and appeals regarding this subject matter, if BSNL’s grievance redressal cell works effectively.

The conclusion drawn from other part of research paper is that most of the RTI’s registered belong to Recruitment & Remuneration. There could be a possible solution to minimize the RTI applications by providing the detailed information related to Recruitment, Appointment & Remuneration on the websites of the concerned Public Authority.
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