

PUNJAB STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION
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(Regd. Post) **Shri Manjinder Singh (M: 98720-15069)** Appellant
2469, Sunny Enclave, Sector 125,
Kharar, District Mohali (140301)
Versus
(Regd. Post) **Public Information Officer**
O/o Secretary, Regional Transport Authority,
Sangrur
First Appellate Authority
(Regd. Post) O/o Secretary, Regional Transport Authority,
Sangrur Respondent
Appeal Case No.: 1831 of 2022
Hearing through CISCO Webex
Present: Appellant: Sh. Manjinder Singh
Respondent: Absent
ORDER:

1. This order may be read with reference to the previous order dated 05.01.2023 and 28.03.2023 vide which show cause notice was issued to the respondent PIO. The matter was adjourned to 3.5.2023.
2. In today's hearing the appellant is present but nobody appears on behalf of the respondent.
3. The appellant states that in spite of show cause notice issued to the respondent PIO on the hearing held on 5.1.2023, he neither gets the information nor any reply from the respondent. He further requests the court to give suitable direction to the respondent so that he may get the information since sufficient time has elapsed in this case.
4. After hearing the appellant and examining the case file, it is observed that appellant filed RTI application on 06.01.2022 but for non furnishing information, he filed First appeal before the First Appellate Authority. Despite of filing first appeal, information was still pending to be supplied. Accordingly, appellant filed second appeal before the Commission on 13.04.2022.
Notice of hearing was issued to the parties on 20.05.2022 by the Commission for hearing on 02.08.2022 but respondent PIO was absent and one opportunity was awarded to the respondent PIO to represent this case in person on the next date of hearing at Commission's office on 11.10.2022.
5. On hearing held on 11.10.2022, respondent PIO was absent and Sh. Rakesh Joshi was appeared and intimated the Commission that record in connection with RTI application is lying with Sh. Jaspreet Singh and a letter was issued in this regard to the concerned official. Matter was adjourned for further hearing on 05.01.2023 with the directions to the respondent PIO to supply the information by the next date of hearing, failing which action would be taken against PIO concerned.

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6. On hearing held on 05.01.2023, Sh. Kuldeep Singh, SA-cum-PIO was appeared and he intimated the Commission that he recently joined the respondent's office and requisite information was supplied to the respondent as per record. Show Cause Notice was issued to the respondent PIO due to causal approach of the PIO and matter was adjourned for further hearing on 28.03.2023 which was not further adjourned to 03.05.2023 i.e. today.
7. From the material on record, it transpires that there has been unnecessary delay in conveying the correct State of affairs to the appellant in respect to his request for information. No explanation for delay has been given by him. Rather, his failure to even respond to the directions issued to him by the Commission reinforces the fact that he has been without any reasonable cause guilty of remissness in the discharge of his duties, therefore, deserves to be penalized.
8. In view of the defying attitude of the concerned respondent PIO, Regional Transport Authority, Sangrur neither attending the court properly nor submitting any explanation for the directions issued to him within the time schedule as prescribed under the RTI Act 2005, the court comes to a logical conclusion that it is a fit case for the **imposition of penalty amounting to Rs. 10000/- (Rupees Ten thousand only) upon the concerned respondent PIO.** However, taking a lenient view, I impose a penalty of Rs. 10,000/- (Rs. Ten thousand only) on the respondent PIO. The Drawing and Disbursing Officer of the office of RTA, Sangrur is directed to deduct the amount of penalty of Rs. 10000/- from the salary of the concerned respondent PIO and be deposited in the State Treasury in the following Head of Account and to report its compliance to the Commission:-
"0070-Other Administrative Services
60 other Services
800-Other Receipts
86-Fee under the RTI Act, 2005
9. A copy of this order be also sent to the respondent PIO, Sh. Kuldeep Singh, Senior Assistant by name through registered post for his ready reference.
10. A copy of this order be sent to the First Appellate Authority to look into the matter and deal this case on priority basis as ample time had already been elapsed after filing RTI application even after filing appeal case in Commission, which is a serious matter; RTI Act, 2005 came into existence to promote transparency and accountability not to harass public.
11. To come up on **05.07.2023 at 11:00 AM for further proceedings in the Commission.** Copy of the order be sent to the parties through **registered post.**

Dated: 03.05.2023

**(Anumit Singh Sodhi)
State Information Commissioner
Punjab**

Sh. Kuldeep Singh (PIO-cum-SA)
(Regd. Post) O/o Secretary, RTA, Sangrur