

**PUNJAB STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION
RED CROSS BUILDING, NEAR ROSE GARDEN,
SECTOR 16, CHANDIGARH.**

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Shri Gulshan Kumar
#854, Dayal Nagar,
Ghumar Mandi,
Ludhiana-141001

.....Appellant

Versus

Public Information Officer

O/o Commissioner,
Municipal Corporation,
Ludhiana.

First Appellate Authority

O/o Commissioner,
Municipal Corporation,
Ludhiana.

....Respondents

AC No.190/2023

Present: (i) Appellant- absent
(ii) Shri Gurjit Singh Jr. Draftsman, Zone-A & B, Ms. Kashish Garg, Building Inspector, Zone-C and Shri Kirandeep Singh Building Inspector, Zone-D, Municipal Corporation, Ludhiana, on behalf of PIO/Respondent-in person.

ORDER:

1. The RTI application is dated 31.08.2022 vide which the appellant has sought information as enumerated in his RTI application. First appeal was filed with the First Appellate Authority (hereinafter FAA) on 01.11.2022 and the second appeal was filed in the Commission on 02.01.2023 under Section 19 of the Right to Information Act, 2005 (hereinafter RTI Act).

2. The notice of hearing was issued to the parties for 27.02.2023. Accordingly, the case has been heard today. Shri Gulshan Kumar, appellant has not come present to attend the hearing either in person before the Bench or through cisco webex. He has, however, informed through a telephonic message that as his mother has to undergo surgery/operation today, he may not be able to attend the hearing and has requested for another date of hearing.

3. Shri Gurjit Singh Jr. Draftsman, comes present in person before the Bench to attend the hearing on behalf of Zone-A and states that the information has been supplied to the appellant vide letter dated 24.02.2023 and the same has also been supplied by PIO, Zone-B vide letter dated 24.02.2023. Ms. Kashish Garg, Building Inspector comes present in person before the Bench to attend the hearing on behalf of PIO, Zone-C and states that the reply has been given to the appellant vide letters dated 04.11.2022, 15.12.2022 and 08.02.2023. Shri Kirandeep Singh Building Inspector, comes present in person before the Bench to attend the hearing on behalf of PIO, Zone-D, and states that the information has been supplied to the appellant vide letter dated 21.09.2022 & 13.12.2022.

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4. Post deliberations with the respondents and perusal of the RTI application as also the version of the respondents as recorded above, the Bench observes that adequate information stands supplied to the appellant. However, at the same time, the Bench observes that the information sought by the appellant relates to a number of PIOs i.e. Zone, A, B, C and D of Municipal Corporation, Ludhiana. The Bench also observes from the version of the representatives of PIO that the information sought by the appellant relates to different issues and it entails collection, collating and compilation of information from a number of PIOs.

5. The Bench, as per observations made above, is of the view that the appellant cannot seek information in single RTI application from multiple public authorities. A Full Bench of State Information Commission, Punjab has in Complaint Case No.2903 of 2011 decided on 13.01.2012, ruled as under:-

“We hold that under Section (3) of the Act ibid, the legal obligation of a PIO who receives a request for information under Section 6(1) of the Act is limited to transfer this request to only one public authority that hold the information. This obligation does not extend to transfer the request to multiple authorities.

6. The Bench further observes that the information asked for by the appellant has to be collected, collated and compiled, thereby resulting in wastage of time of multiple PIOs involved. The Hon'ble Supreme Court in matter of CBSE vs. Aditya Bandopadhyay, (2011) 8 SCC 497, held as under:-

“67. Indiscriminate and impractical demands or directions under the RTI Act for disclosure of all and sundry information (unrelated to transparency and accountability in the functioning of public authorities and eradication of corruption) would be counterproductive as it will adversely affect the efficiency of the administration and result in the executive getting bogged down with the non-productive work of collecting and furnishing information. The Act should not be allowed to be misused or abused, to become a tool to obstruct the national development and integration, or to destroy the peace, tranquility and harmony among its citizens. Nor should it be converted into a tool of oppression or intimidation of honest officials striving to do their duty. The nation does not want a scenario where 75% of the staff of public authorities spends 75% of their time in collecting and furnishing information to applicants instead of discharging their regular duties. The threat of penalties under the RTI Act and the pressure of the authorities under the RTI Act should not lead to employees of public authorities prioritizing “information furnishing”, at the cost of their normal and regular duties.

7. In view of the above, it does not seem to be appropriate for the appellant to seek information which may entail engaging 75% of the employees of a public authority to collect and compile the information for furnishing the same to the appellant. The Bench advises the appellant to go for seeking information by filing separate RTI application before a specific public authority who has its separate PIO.

8. In view of the aforesaid observations, **the instant appeal case is disposed off and closed.**
Copy of the order be sent to the parties.

Chandigarh
27.02.2023

Sd/-
(Lt Gen Ajae Kumar Sharma(Retd))
State Information Commissioner, Punjab