

**PUNJAB STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION
RED CROSS BUILDING, NEAR ROSE GARDEN,
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Shri Lajpat Rai Garg
S/o Shri Harbans Lal
R/o Romana Street, Jaito,
Tehsil Jaito, Distt. Faridkot.

....Appellant

Versus

Public Information Officer

O/o Addl. Chief Secretary,
Local Government-3 Branch, Punjab,
(Local Govt.-3 Branch), Chandigarh.

Public Information Officer,

Chief Vigilance Officer,
O/o Directorate of Local Government,
Punjab, Chandigarh.

First Appellate Authority

O/o Addl. Chief Secretary,
Local Government, Punjab,
Chandigarh.

....Respondents

AC No.2716 of 2022

Present:

- (i) **Shri Lajpat Rai Garg, Appellant- in person.**
- (ii) **Shri Jasbir Singh, Superintendent, Local Govt.-3 Branch O/o Addl. Chief Secretary, Local Govt., Punjab, Chandigarh- in person.**
- (iii) **Shri Rajiv Saggur, Superintendent, and Shri Navdeep Sharma, Vigilance Officer, Vigilance Cell, O/o Director, Local Govt., Punjab- in person.**

ORDER:

1. This order may be read with reference to the order dated 19.10.2022 passed by this Bench on the previous hearing.
2. The case has been heard today. Shri Lajpat Rai Garg, appellant comes present in person before the Bench. He states that he has not been provided any information so far.
3. Shri Jasbir Singh, Superintendent, Local Govt.-3 Branch, O/o Addl. Chief Secretary, Local Government, Punjab, Chandigarh comes present to attend the hearing in person before the Bench. He states that the matter regarding which information has been sought relates to PIO Local Govt.-3 Branch, Establishment Branch & Vigilance Cell of the office of Director, Local Government and to Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Faridkot.
4. Shri Rajiv Saggur, Superintendent O/o Director, Local Government, Punjab states that the RTI application is not available with him and he has also requested PIO-cum-Local Govt.-3 to make available the RTI application vide letter dated 14.10.2022.

5. Although the appellant contends the version of the PIO Shri Jasbir Singh, yet on hearing the version of the PIO/Superintendent, Local Govt.-3 Branch, the Bench observes that the information sought by the appellant involves multiple PIOs and 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 a 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
09.11.2022**

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