

PUNJAB STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION

Red Cross Building, Near Rose Garden,
Sector 16, Chandigarh.

Ph: 0172-2864116, Email: - psic26@punjabmail.gov.in

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Helpline No. 0172-2864100 (10:00 AM to 04.00 PM on working days)



Shri Amrit Singh,
Kothi No.1459, Ground Floor,
Sector-59, Phase-V,
S.A.S. Nagar (Mohali).

..... Complainant

Versus

Public Information Officer,
O/o Greater Mohali Area Development
Authority (GMADA), S.A.S.Nagar(Mohali).

Remanded Back

First Appellate Authority,
O/o Estate Officer (Policy)
Greater Mohali Area Development
Authority (GMADA), S.A.S.Nagar(Mohali).

.....Respondent

CC No.855 of 2022

Present: (i) **Shri Amrit Singh, Complainant-in person.**
(ii) **Shri Gurwinder Singh, AEO/PIO O/o GMADA, Mohali- cisco webex.**

ORDER

1. The RTI application is dated 11.08.2022 vide which the Complainant has sought information as enumerated in his RTI application. Complaint was filed in the Commission on 02.12.2022 under Section 18 of the Right to Information Act, 2005 (hereinafter RTI Act).

2. The notice of hearing was issued to the parties for 06.02.2023. The case has been heard today. The complainant Shri Amrit Singh comes present to attend the hearing in person before the Bench. He states that no information has been provided to him so far.

3. Shri Gurwinder Singh, AEO/PIO O/o GMADA, Mohali comes present to attend the hearing through cisco webex. He states that the information sought by the complainant is not clear and specific. However, the Bench apprises him that the request of the complainant is genuine and the information sought must be provided to him on priority. He is also apprised that instant case is being remanded to the First Appellate Authority and that he should ensure that inputs are provided to the complainant immediately.

4. The Bench observes that the complainant has directly approached the Commission by preferring complaint in the Commission. The Bench further observes that the complainant has not availed the provision of Section 19(1) of the RTI Act by filing an appeal with the First Appellate Authority (FAA). As such, the FAA has not been able to address the grievances of the complainant.

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5. The attention of the Complainant is drawn to the decision of the judgment of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India rendered on 12.12.2011 in Information Commissioner and another Versus State of Manipur and another in para 31 whereof, it has been held that while entertaining a complaint case under Section 18 of the RTI Act, 2005, the Commissioners have no jurisdiction to pass an order providing for an access to the information which is as under:-

31. We uphold the said contention and do not find any error in the impugned judgment of the Hon'ble High Court whereby it has been held that the Commissioner while entertaining a complaint under Section 18 of the said Act has no jurisdiction to pass an order providing for access to the information."

As such, since the complainant has approached the Commission under the provisions of Section 18 of the RTI, 2005, no directions for providing further information can be given by the Commission.

6. Since there is an alternative and efficacious remedy of First Appeal available to the Complainant under Section 19(1) of the RTI Act, 2005 which has not been availed in the instant complaint case and the First Appellate Authority has not had the occasion to review the decision of PIO, as envisaged under the RTI Act by passing a detailed well reasoned speaking order.

7. The instant matter is remanded back to the **First Appellate Authority i.e. Smt. Sukhwinder Kumari, Estate Officer (Policy), GMADA, Mohali**. The Commission hereby directs the FAA to treat the copy of the Complaint (enclosed herewith) as the First Appeal and decide the matter in accordance with the provisions of the RTI Act after giving all concerned parties an opportunity to be heard. She is directed to hear the complainant within ten days and decide the matter.

8. In case, the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the First Appellate Authority (FAA), he is at liberty to file second appeal before Punjab State Information Commission Section 19(3) of the RTI Act, 2005.

9. In view of the above, **the case is disposed off and closed**. Copy of the order be sent to the parties.

**Chandigarh
06.02.2023**

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

Copy to (By Regd. Post):

**First Appellate Authority/Smt. Sukhwinder Kumari, Estate Officer (Policy),
GMADA, Mohali.**