

Press Information Bureau  
Government of India

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**Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah presides as Chief Guest for the  
14th Annual convention of the Central Information Commission**

**RTI would go a long way in the creation of a welfare state envisaged  
by the makers of our Constitution, and New India as envisioned by  
Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi: Shri Amit Shah**

**Transparency and accountability are the twin pillars of Good  
Governance: Shri Amit Shah**

**Under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the  
government is committed to creating such a transparent system  
where the need to file RTI applications itself is reduced: Shri Amit  
Shah**

**There has been very little misuse of RTI, this shows the maturity of  
our democracy: Shri Amit Shah**

New Delhi, October 12, 2019

Union Minister of Home Affairs Shri Amit Shah presided over the 14th Annual convention of the Central Information Commission as Chief Guest. Also present was Minister of State for Ministry of Development of North East Region (Independent Charge); Minister of State for the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension, Departments of Space and Atomic Energy, Dr. Jitendra Singh.

In his address, Shri Shah expressed pleasure at the functioning of the Right to Information (RTI) Act and said that in the 14 years since its enactment, the purpose and objective of the act has been fulfilled. He added that the main objective of RTI was to increase trust of people in the system of governance, and the act has been successful in instilling and strengthening the faith of the people that the system functions within the boundaries defined by the Constitution. He noted that this trust automatically increases a sense of partnership and ownership of people in governance, and this sense of partnership goes a long way in making the nation progress.



Shri Shah also said that in 1947, India attained freedom from a long era of oppression where the objective of the administration was discriminatory and was to fulfill the wishes of foreign masters, as opposed to looking after the welfare of people. This objective and the steps taken in that direction caused a disconnect between people and the administration. Shri Shah remarked that till 2005, no steps taken to remove this disconnect had been successful, but in the last 14 years, this gap is being fulfilled by the transparency and accountability ushered in through RTI. He called transparency and accountability the twin pillars of good governance and hailed RTI as a major milestone for good governance.

Shri Shah noted that RTI has channelized and transformed civil society into a force that ensures accountability from the government. He said that while till 1990 only 11 nations had some form of RTI, this number increased with information revolution and globalization, and this increase has helped advance the cause of good governance globally. He hailed India as the first nation to have successfully created an accountability system till the last leg of governance. He said that India has nearly 5 lakh information officers working to fulfill the writ of RTI at different levels of government, and such a large number of officers working for the cause of transparency and accountability is unseen anywhere else in the world.

Shri Shah praised RTI as a great step to remove injustice and corruption from the system and increase the efficiency of governance. He said that RTI removes arbitrariness from governance and acts as a major grievance redressal tool. He said that the use of high technology methods like video conference and digitization of RTI files makes the lives of litigants easier.



Shri Shah said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the government is committed to creating a system where there is enough suo moto declaration of information that the need to file RTI applications itself is reduced. He said that the success of a transparent government lies not in an increase in the number of RTI applications but in the fact that RTI applications reduce in spite of the RTI process being completely accessible to people.

Shri Shah expounded upon the dichotomy between RTI and Data Protection laws. He noted the importance of proactive, suo moto declaration of information by the government and said that from Mudra to online registrations of FIR, the use of internet has helped infuse transparency in the system. He said that the job of officers dealing with RTI is to create awareness, and that people should know they do not need RTI for many things for which the government proactively declares information.

Shri Shah noted that there has been very little misuse of RTI and said that this shows the maturity of our democracy. He said that awareness regarding transparency should not be

limited to quasi-judicial proceedings and disposal of cases but govt servants should instead actively reach out to people to make them aware of the proactive steps taken by government to increase transparency, accountability and efficiency in the government.

Shri Shah gave the example of the Kedarnath all weather road as a successful attempt to harness technology to increase transparency in government projects. He also mentioned the GeM (Government e-Marketplace) portal where the smallest vendor can be part of govt tendering. He hailed the portal as a major step forward for small industries and reiterated that the government was committed to creating a system where people would not need to use RTI because information would be proactively disclosed and available in public domain.

Shri Shah advised the officers present that they should increase the sense of responsibility in people, along with awareness about RTI. He said that RTI should not be misused or used for personal enmity or vendetta. He said that the power of RTI brought with it the responsibility to use it carefully. He added that Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was determined to create a system where information was given freely, so that people would not need to resort to RTI. He added that the government would further ease the process of RTI to take justice and accountability to the last mile. He said that RTI would go a long way in the creation of a welfare state envisaged by the makers of our Constitution, and New India as envisioned by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.



Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Jitendra Singh said that under Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the government had further strengthened the cause of transparency and accountability by creating an online portal for RTI, which did not exist previously. He said that the proactive increase in transparency in the last five years has led to a reduction in the need for RTI. He said that in 2019 alone, 12 lakh RTI related grievances had been

redressed successfully. He added that the government had taken several steps to increase awareness about RTI but cautioned that the law should not be misused.

Chief Information Commissioner Shri Sudhir Bhargava remarked that the annual convention offers an opportunity to reflect and introspect on the implementation of RTI Act and the success it has achieved in furthering our shared democratic values.

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