

State of Information Commissions and the Use of RTI Laws in India

Rapid Review 4.0

Based on Annual Reports and Websites of Information Commissions

Research Team

Tahmina Laskar

Neha Rani

John Mascrinaus

Report

Venkatesh Nayak

Editor

Sanjoy Hazarika



Access to Information Programme

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)

#55A, 3rd Floor, Siddharth Chambers-1, Kalu Sarai, New Delhi – 110 016

Tel: 011- 43180201/43180215, Fax: 011-2686 4688

Website: www.humanrightsinitiative.org

Email: venkatesh@humanrightsinitiative.org

tahmina@humanrightsinitiative.org, john@humanrightsinitiative.org

March 2018

Update to Rapid Review 4.0

Within a few days of releasing our Rapid Review 4.0 (earlier called, Rapid Study) on 12th March 2018 when we held a public meeting at New Delhi to mark 25 Years of CHRI's work in India, the Central Information Commission (CIC) released its Annual Report for 2016-17. As we had already printed copies of the Rapid Review, we are enclosing an update on the findings based on the statistics contained in CIC's latest Annual Report and avoiding wastage of paper. The statistical findings contained in the main report stand amended as give below:

IV Availability of Annual Reports on websites

The CIC and the State Information Commission (SIC) of Nagaland are the only Information Commissions that have displayed all Annual Reports on their websites that are due as per the terms of the applicable RTI laws.

VI The number of RTI applications filed across India between 2015-17:

- According to the CIC, 1,965 public authorities under the Central Government, who are registered with it, reported receipt of a total of 9.17 lakh RTI applications in 2016-17. This is 6% lesser than the 9.76 lakh RTI applications reported by 1,903 public authorities in 2015-16. If the RTI statistics reported by the Union Territories (1.07 lakhs) are excluded from these figures the dip is 5% of the total reported in 2015-16.
- Consequently, the total number of RTI applications received during a 12-month period across 16 jurisdictions (Central and 15 State Governments) has gone up to 33.5 lakhs as compared to 24.33 lakhs mentioned at bullet point #1 on page 12 of this report.

VII The number of RTI applications filed across India during the last 12 years:

- When the 9.17 lakh RTI applications are added, the volume of RTI applications received by all reporting jurisdictions between 2005-2017 goes up to 2.23 crores from the figure of 2.14 crores mentioned at bullet point #1 on page 13 of this report.
- When the 9.17 lakh applications received by the Central Government in 2016-17 is included, the volume of RTI applications received by the Central Government between 2005-2017, goes up to 66.60 lakhs as compared to 57.43 lakhs mentioned at bullet point #2 on page 13 of this report.

Data Tables:

- **Table 6:** Statistics for the CIC at Category II (page 43 of this report) stands amended as follows: 9.17 lakh RTI applications reported for the year 2016-17. Consequently, the total number of RTI applications received by the Central Government between 2005-2017 goes up to 66,60,486.
- **Table 7:** Statistics for the Central Government now stands at 66,60486 RTI applications and the total goes up to 2,23,37,608 as compared to the figure of 2,14,20,599 mentioned in this Table.

Contents

Part I

State of Information Commissions	...	4
Introduction	...	4
I Current composition of and vacancies in the Information Commissions	...	5
II Background of Chief Information Commissioners	...	6
III Background of Central and State Information Commissioners	...	7
IV Availability of Annual Reports on websites	...	8
V Pendency Statistics	...	10

Part II

Use of RTI laws in India	...	11
VI The number of RTI applications filed across India between 2015-17	...	12
VII The number of RTI applications filed across India during the last 12 years	...	13
VIII Trends of growth and decline	...	14
Abbreviations	...	25
Data Tables (1-8)	...	26
CHRI's role in promoting RTI across the globe	...	53

About the Research Team

Ms. Tahmina Laskar, John Mascrinaus and Venkatesh Nayak are with CHRI's Access to Information Programme.

Ms. Neha Rani is a 5th year student at the School of Law, University of Petroleum and Energy Studies, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

I

State of Information Commissions

established under

The Right to Information Act, 2005

&

The Jammu and Kashmir Right to Information Act, 2009

Rapid Review 4.0

State of Information Commissions in India

Introduction

Come 12 May, 2018, the *Right to Information Act* (RTI Act) will complete thirteen years of existence.¹ The RTI Bill was adopted by Parliament unanimously on this date in 2005 and it was gazetted after the President's assent on 21st June, 2005. Several provisions such as the appointment of Public Information Officers, First Appellate Authorities and Information Commissions and the requirement of improving records management, preparing for the proactive disclosure of a deal of information [Section 4(1)(b)] and the exemption for security and intelligence organisations (Section 24) became operational immediately. Other provisions detailing the procedures through which people can access information or file appeals and complaints against delays in and denials of access became operational 120 days later in October.

In 2013 at the commencement of the ninth year of implementation of the RTI Act, CHRI published a Rapid Study of the Status of Information Commissions and use of the RTI Act across the country using the facts and figures declared by the Information Commissions themselves.

This year, we present the fourth update of the Rapid Study (now renamed Rapid Review) containing our findings about the state of working of Information Commissions and use of the RTI law by citizens. We have included the State Information Commission of Jammu and Kashmir (JKSIC) in this study even though it is established by a separate law passed by the J&K State Legislature.²

The first part of the current study is based on five parameters relating to the working of the Information Commissions. The second part is based on two parameters relating to the manner of use of RTI over the years. The list of parameters is available on the Contents page for quick reference.

¹ The text of the Central RTI Act is accessible on the RTI portal of the Government of India: <http://righttoinformation.gov.in/rti-act.pdf>, accessed on 19 June, 2015.

² *Jammu and Kashmir Right to Information Act, 2009*, accessible on the website of the J&K General Administration Department at: <http://jkgad.nic.in/common/showOrder.aspx?actCode=N11095>, accessed on 19 June, 2015.

Our main findings

I Current Composition of and Vacancies in the Information Commissions

Sections 12(2) and 15(2) of the Central RTI Act permit the establishment of Information Commissions comprising of one Chief Information Commissioner and a maximum of ten Information Commissioners at the Central and State level, respectively. The J&K RTI Act however permits the establishment of a three-member J&K State Information Commission (J&KSIC).³ A total of 52 posts were created in 27 Information Commissions established in 2005-06. Our findings on the composition of Information Commissions as in March 2018 are as follows:

Main findings: (See Tables 1 and 8)

- **By 2018 a total of 153 posts of Information Commissioners** (including the Chief Information Commissioners) had been created across the country (including the JKSIC). In July 2015 when we published our Rapid Study Report 3.0, there were 142 posts. **At the time of writing this report there are 146 posts of Chief Information Commissioners and Information Commissioners created across the country of which more than 25% of the posts (Chief ICs and ICs) are lying vacant.**⁴ In July 2015, the vacancy figure was much lower at 20%. In March 2018, the total number of Information Commissioners serving across the country is 109 - down from 111 in 2015. In 2014 when we published the Rapid Study Report 2.0 there were 120 ICs serving across the country. **Yet fewer ICs are serving across the country in 2018 despite the creation of more posts.**
- **After Telangana was carved out of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh, the SIC originally constituted for the whole State functioned for a few months.** While a new SIC was constituted for Telangana with three members in 2017, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has only given an assurance to the Hyderabad High Court that an SIC will be constituted afresh for the State.
- **Haryana has the full complement of ICs (1+10) followed by Karnataka, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh (9 each) with the Central Information Commission, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu (7 each) taking third place. Together, these seven Information Commissions account for almost half the number (47%) of serving Information Commissioners across the country. Six of these Information Commissions are saddled with 72% of the total number of pending appeals and complaints (1.39 lakhs out of 1.93 lakhs) across the country** (from jurisdictions where such data is available, see Section V and Table 8).⁵

³ Section 12(1), J&K RTI Act, 2009.

⁴ The posts of the SCIC and eight ICs created after the RTI Act was operationalised in the undivided State of Andhra Pradesh have lapsed now. The SIC of the new State of Andhra Pradesh is yet to be constituted. So for the purpose of this study we are treating the SIC of the new State of Andhra Pradesh as non-existent.

⁵ Our repeated attempts to obtain pendency data from Tamil Nadu failed as the SIC staff who according to Secretary of the Commission has the information was unreachable.

- The SICs of Kerala, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Sikkim, Tripura have one member each.
- **Maharashtra has an acting State Chief Information Commissioner (SCIC) since mid-2017. A regular SCIC has not been appointed despite more than eight months having passed since the retirement of the previous incumbent. Gujarat SIC does not have an SCIC since mid-January, 2018.**

II Background of Chief Information Commissioners

Sections 12(5) and 15(5) of the Central RTI Act contain a list of fields of experience and expertise from which candidates – men and women – may be chosen for filling up the posts of the Chief Information Commissioners and Information Commissioners at the Central and State level, respectively. Section 12(5) of the J&K RTI Act also contains a similar list for the guidance of the J&K State Government. The fields of expertise mentioned in both laws are- law, science and technology, social service, management, journalism, mass media and administration and governance. The main findings of the current study about the background of Chief Information Commissioners are given below in comparison with our findings in 2015:

Main findings: (See Tables 2 & 3)

- Almost **90%** of the Information Commissions (**25 of 28**)⁶ are headed by retired civil servants. **More than half (53.6%) of the Chief Information Commissioners are retired IAS officers.** In 2015, 3/4ths of these posts were held by retired IAS officers. Currently **three Chief Information Commissioners are retired IPS officers while one is from the State Civil Services and another is from an engineering background.** The newly appointed State Chief Information Commissioner in Telangana was the Secretary of the State Legislature earlier.
- **Only one Information Commission namely, that of Tamil Nadu is headed by a woman SCIC.** All other Information Commissions are currently headed by men. There was no woman SCIC in 2015 anywhere across India when we published our Rapid Study 3.0.
- **The SCICs of Madhya Pradesh and Goa have a law background.** While the former retired as Principal Law Secretary to the Government, the latter was President of an administrative tribunal earlier.
- **The SCIC of Karnataka is reported to have a background in journalism and is also an educationist.**

⁶ While Gujarat SIC does not have any Commissioner, the SIC of Andhra Pradesh remains to be constituted.

It appears that the Governments' trend of preferring retired civil servants to head Information Commissions has only strengthened over the years. However, the number of retired IAS officers appointed to these posts has not come down despite the Supreme Court advising the Governments to look beyond this catchment area of candidates in 2013⁷. **No retired High Court judge or persons with specialisation in science and technology or management are currently serving as Chief Information Commissioners anywhere across India.**

III Background of Central and State Information Commissioners

The twin RTI laws in India do not specify a different set of qualifications for the Information Commissioners. They are similar to those prescribed for Chief Information Commissioners. Additionally, these laws prescribe criteria for disqualification of a candidate. Candidates who are members of any political party or those who are pursuing any business or profession may not be appointed to the Information Commissions.⁸ The main findings of the background of other members of the Information Commissioners are given below in comparison with our 2015 findings.

Main findings: (See Tables 2 and 4)

- **Only 10% (8 out of 79) of the Information Commissioners serving across the country are women. Three of these women ICs are retired IAS officers while two are advocates and two have a background in social service and education. One woman IC in Punjab is said to have a background in medicine (dietician and professor).**⁹ In 2015 there were 9 Women ICs (see Rapid Study Report 3.0).
- **Interestingly, almost 19% (15 of 79) of the serving Information Commissioners are retired IAS officers. However more than 43% (34 of 79) of the Information Commissioners serving across the country are retired civil servants.** This proportion has come down a notch from 42.5% (see Rapid Study Report). None of the Information Commissioners in UP (except the SCIC) are retired civil servants- a distinction that has continued since 2015.¹⁰
- **More than 26.5% (21 of 79) of the ICs across the country are either retired judges or advocates. Three of them are retired judges including one who served as a Chief Metropolitan Magistrate.** In 2014 this proportion was almost 23%.

⁷ *Union of India vs Namit Sharma*, AIR 2014 SC122.

⁸ Sections 12(6) in the Central RTI Act and the J&K RTI Act respectively.

⁹ See news report published in the *Hindustan Times* dated 26/08/2016, accessible at: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/punjab/profs-with-political-links-to-add-woman-power-to-punjab-info-panel/story-uWluyOXuCheuwfJdCwJYOP.html>, accessed on 06 March, 2018

¹⁰ As indicated above, only the SCIC is a retired IAS officer.

- **About 16.457% (13 of 79) of the ICs across the country have a specialisation in journalism or the mass media.** This proportion has remained the same since 2015.
- **The number of ICs with a specialisation in social service or social work has also remained roughly the same (6 of 79) as compared to the trend we reported in 2015.**
- **One doctor and one engineer continue to serve in the SICs of Karnataka and Punjab respectively. One IC in Karnataka is from management background having served as a senior manager of a Regional Rural Bank.**
- **Three Information Commissioners – two in Punjab and one in Tamil Nadu are reported to be former members of political parties (Shiromani Akali Dal¹¹ and AIADMK respectively). Another IC in Punjab was reportedly an RSS functionary before appointment.¹²**
- **The State Information Commissions of Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Jammu and Kashmir have only retired civil servants serving as Information Commissioners.**
- **Some ICs have multiple specialisations.**

IV Availability of Annual Reports on websites¹³

Under Section 25 of the Central RTI Act, all public authorities under the Central and State Governments are required to submit to their Ministries and Departments annual reports about the status of implementation of the law within their jurisdiction. The Ministries and Departments are required to compile these reports and submit them to the respective Information Commissions. The Information Commissions forward these status reports along with a report of the performance of their own obligations under the law which is then tabled in Parliament or the respective State Legislatures. Section 21 of the J&K RTI Act requires the J&K State Information Commission to submit a similar Annual Report to the State Legislature through the State Government. Several Information Commissions have set up online-systems for receiving

¹¹ See news reports at: <http://www.yespunjab.com/punjab/news/item/54893-ajit-singh-chanduraian-appointed-state-information-commissioner> and <http://www.yespunjab.com/punjab/news/item/66508-sad-leader-nidharak-singh-brar-appointed-as-state-information-commissioner>, accessed on 06 March, 2018.

¹² See news report published in *The Tribune* dated 19/02/2016, accessible at: <http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/punjab/community/rss-man-to-be-info-commissioner/198715.html>, accessed on 06 March, 2018.

¹³ Where an annual report is not available on the dedicated website of the Information Commission, no assumption is made about their availability in printed form. They may or may not be available in hard copy at the office of the concerned Information Commission. This study only examines the periodicity of reports and their availability on the dedicated websites of the ICs from the years 2005-2017.

implementation reports from public authorities every quarter directly. The Information Commissions also display their Annual Reports on their website after they are tabled before the concerned legislature. However compliance with these statutory requirements has been poor, year after year.

Main findings: (See Table 5)

- **The SICs of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh do not have websites which can be traced on any Internet browser.** The Bihar SIC is reportedly working on migrating from their old website to a new one. Madhya Pradesh SIC's website became dysfunctional within a couple of years of its activation; now it is not detectable at all.
- **The lone example of perfect statutory compliance among the ICs reviewed here- Nagaland SIC has displayed on its website all Annual Reports that are due as per the RTI Act.** As the Telangana SIC was constituted only in 2017, no annual report is due from that State yet.¹⁴
- **The SICs of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have not published any Annual Report on their website since their establishment. Manipur and Tripura SICs have begun publishing their Annual Reports on their websites, including those which were due in earlier years.**¹⁵
- **Eight SICs** namely those in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Punjab, Sikkim and Tamil Nadu **publish their annual reports according to the calendar year** while **fifteen others follow the financial year cycle of reporting.** Assam **switched** over to financial year cycle in 2010 while **Goa switched** to the calendar year cycle in 2014. **Arunachal Pradesh switched** to the calendar year reporting in 2009.
- **Jharkhand and Kerala SICs each have six pending annual reports. Punjab has five pending while Andhra Pradesh has four which are pending.**¹⁶
- **The SICs of Goa, Jammu and Kashmir, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttarakhand have three pending annual reports each.**
- **The SICs of Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Meghalaya and West Bengal each have two pending annual reports.**

¹⁴ However, the State Government has an obligation to publish annual reports of action taken to implement the RTI Act from June 2014 onwards when it was carved out of the erstwhile undivided Andhra Pradesh.

¹⁵ In 2015 we reported that these two SICs had not published any Annual Report on their website.

¹⁶ Includes annual reports pending from the time of the undivided Andhra Pradesh SIC.

- The Central Information Commission and the SICs of Assam, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Sikkim, Gujarat, Manipur and Rajasthan each have one pending annual report.

V Pendency Statistics

Nothing in the RTI Act or the Rules notified by the Central or State Governments require the Information Commissions to display statistics about the receipt, disposal and pendency of appeals and complaints in their jurisdiction. Several Information Commissions have adopted this practice in response to the vocal demand of some serving and ex-Information Commissioners, RTI users and activists over the years. However, our experience shows that this information is difficult to find in many Information Commissions which have not yet adopted this practice. In some cases our team had to make several phone calls and send multiple emails to obtain this information. The SICs of Madhya Pradesh and Sikkim were unreachable on their contact numbers. **Unlike in 2015 when we could find pendency data for only 14 Information Commissions, this time round we could access data from 19 Commissions either from their website or published annual reports or from their staff.**

Main findings: (See Table 8)

- **The Central Information Commission and nine SICs** namely, those in Gujarat, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Maharashtra, Nagaland, Odisha, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh **display updated case pendency data on their websites.**
- **A total of 1,96,268 second appeals and complaints were pending across 19 Information Commissions, according to data accessed either on the websites or obtained from the staff of the Information Commissions.** In 2015 when we published our Rapid Study 3.0, as many as 14 Information Commissions reported a pendency of 1,10,117 cases.
- **With 41,537 second appeal and complaint cases pending at the beginning of the year 2018, Maharashtra tops the list with Uttar Pradesh following closely with 40,248 cases (as on 31 January, 2018). Karnataka with 29,291 pending cases (as on 23 February, 2018) occupies third position followed by the Central Information Commission at fourth place (23,989 cases) and Kerala at fifth place had 14,253 cases pending at the beginning of the year 2018. Taken together, these five jurisdictions account for more than 77% (1,49,318 appeals and complaints) of the pendency across Information Commissions for which data is available.**
- The SICs of Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura did not have any pending cases at all.
- **In fact the SIC of Mizoram has reported that it received only one appeal during the year 2016-17.**¹⁷

¹⁷ See Annual Report of the SIC of Mizoram accessible on its website at: <https://mic.mizoram.gov.in/uploads/files/eleveth-annual-report-2016-2017-.pdf>, accessed on 06 March, 2018.



Use of RTI laws in India

Rapid Review 4.0

VI The number of RTI applications filed across India between 2015-17

Although the Central RTI Act is in its 13th year of implementation, to the best of our knowledge, there is no report in the public domain about the total number of people who have used the RTI Act for seeking information across the country in any given year nor is any data available on the total number of RTI applications received by public authorities nation-wide. Annual reports of Information Commissions contain data about RTI applications received and disposed only with respect to public authorities under their jurisdiction. Neither the Department of Personnel and Training under the Central Government, nor any other government institution has made the effort to compile this information.

Since October 2013, when we published our first Rapid Study Report, we have compiled statistics about RTI applications filed as recorded in the latest Annual Reports of Information Commissions wherever such reports are available for dissemination. In the present report we have taken RTI statistics from the most recent year for which an Annual Report is available in any jurisdiction between the period 2015-17.

Main findings: (See Tables 6 and 7)

RTI application statistics

- **Data culled out from the Annual Reports of 15 Information Commissions indicates that a total of 24.33 lakh (2.43 million) applications were filed in those jurisdictions in a given year between 2015-17.** In 2015 the total number of RTI applications that we reported was 24.77 lakhs (2.47 million) based on data available for the years 2012-14 (where data was taken for the latest year for which an annual report was available). The figure for 2015-17 appears to be a little lesser than the previous period. But this might be due to the absence of figures from several jurisdictions where RTI is used more prolifically.
- **By extrapolating this data, it can be conservatively estimated that about 45-50 lakh (4.5 to 5.0 million) RTI applications might have been filed in various jurisdictions across the country during a 12-month period between 2015-17.** The actual figure may be closer to the higher end of this estimate because several States where RTI is being used very prolifically, such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala have not reported their RTI applications statistics for the period under scrutiny in this report. The data for Maharashtra is two years old (2015). **Latest data for 2016-17 is not available for the Central Government either.** If the latest figures are made available the total number of RTI applications might be much higher.
- **On a national scale, the proportion of RTI users during a 12-month period between 2015-17 amount to about 0.4% - 0.5% of the population (of 127 crores/1.27 billion). As a proportion of the electorate (aged 18 years and above), between 0.5% - 0.6% of them may have used the RTI laws. Despite the Central RTI Act being in existence for more than 12 years and the J&K RTI Act being in existence for more than eight, the proportion of RTI users has not risen to even 0.5% of the population or even 1% of the electorate.**

VII The number of RTI applications filed across India during the last 12 years

Since 2016, CHRI has been compiling data about the total number of RTI applications received across all 30 jurisdictions across the country based on annual reports of Information Commissions. Till date there are no consolidated figures published by any official source about the number of RTI applications filed across the country since 12 October, 2005 when the Central RTI Act came was fully operationalised. Given below is a snapshot view of the trend observed in the number of information requests received across various jurisdiction year after year.¹⁸

Main findings: (See Tables 7 and 8)

- According to data published in the Annual Reports of Information Commissions accessible on their websites, a total of **2.14 crore RTI applications (2,14,20,599) have been filed across the country since October, 2005.**
- Despite a pending Annual Report for the year 2016-17, public authorities under the **Central Government received the most number of RTI applications – 57.43 lakhs during this period.** This number will go up if the pending annual report is published and there is 100% compliance of reporting from all public authorities under the Central Government.
- **Maharashtra with 54.95 lakh** RTI applications takes second place followed by **Karnataka with 20.73 lakh** information requests occupying third place. These figures will be much higher if these SICs were to publish its pending annual reports.
- **Manipur recorded the lowest figure of 1,425** RTI applications between 2005-17. An annual report is pending in Manipur since 2016.
- Among the smaller sized States, **Nagaland recorded the highest number of RTI applications at 24,896- more than Goa (20,892)** which was the first State along with Tamil Nadu to enact its own RTI law in 1997.
- Interestingly, **Rajasthan recorded fewer RTI applications (8.55 lakhs) than neighbouring Gujarat (9.86 lakhs)** despite being the State where the demand for an RTI law emerged from the grass roots level.
- **Interestingly, Kerala with 100% literacy rate has recorded only 5.73 lakhs RTI applications - much lesser than Chhattisgarh's 6.02 lakh information requests during the same period** despite its lower levels of literacy and higher proportion of rural and tribal communities in the population.
- **Despite being much smaller sized States, Himachal Pradesh (4.24 lakhs), Punjab (3.60 lakhs) and Haryana (3.32 lakhs) registered more RTI applications than the geographically bigger State of Odisha (2.85 lakhs).**

¹⁸ This data is accurate to the extent of accuracy of the RTI application figures published in the Annual Reports of the Information Commissions. As several ICs have a backlog of unpublished reports for several years, the findings above do not portray the complete picture of the use of RTI laws across the country.

VIII Trends of growth and decline

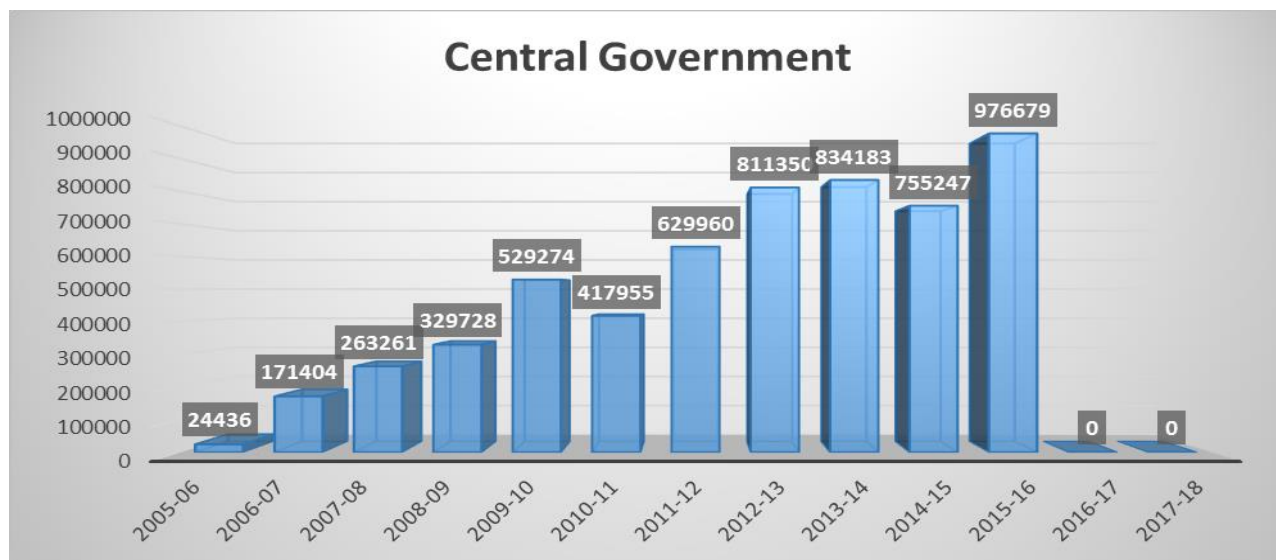
As RTI statistics for multiple years are available, in this report we have included a new parameter to identify the trends across jurisdictions pertaining to the number of RTI applications filed – where the number of information requests is increasing year after year and where it has declined. Our findings are subject to the following caveats:

- These trends identified below are realistic to the extent of accurate reporting by the Information Commissions;
- The trends could alter if there is 100% reporting from all public authorities in every jurisdiction; and
- No other source of information (media etc.) was used for the purpose of this review.

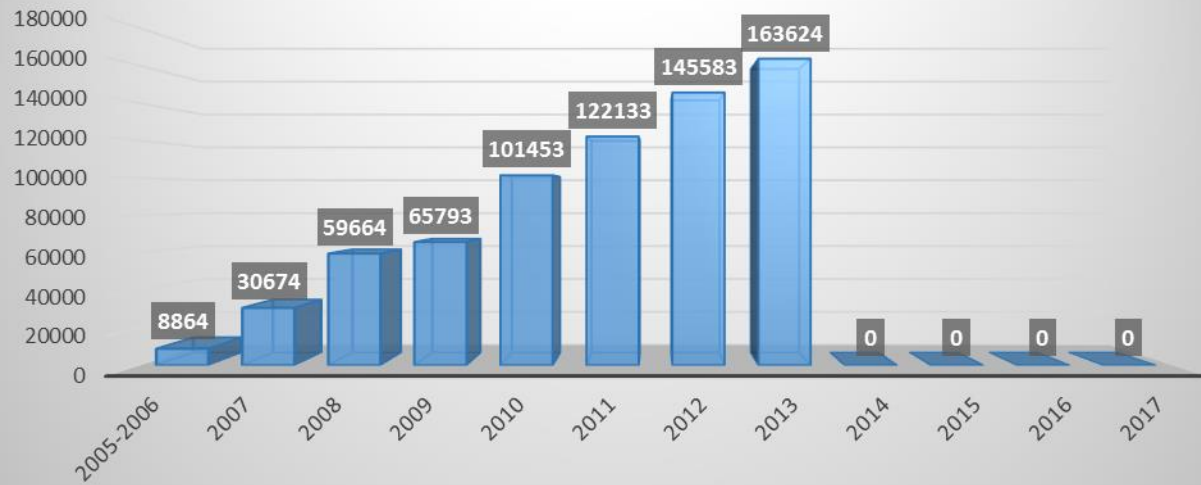
Main findings:

A. Rising trend

Seven jurisdictions have reported an uninterrupted rising trend in the number of RTI applications received, year after year. These include, the **Central Government, undivided Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Goa, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala and Uttarakhand**. The States of **Bihar, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya and Rajasthan** have reported an upward rising trend in all years except for a dip in one year each. This could be due to poor reporting compliance in that year in those jurisdictions. The graphs indicating the year-wise trend are given below (where a value in the graph is indicated “0” it means, the statistics for that year are not available because the Annual Report has not been published or is not due yet).



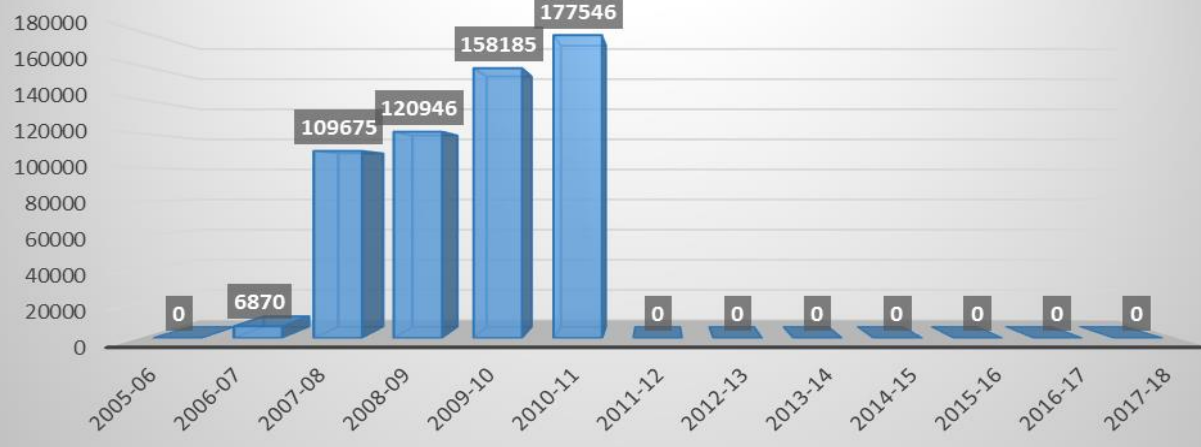
Andhra Pradesh (undivided)

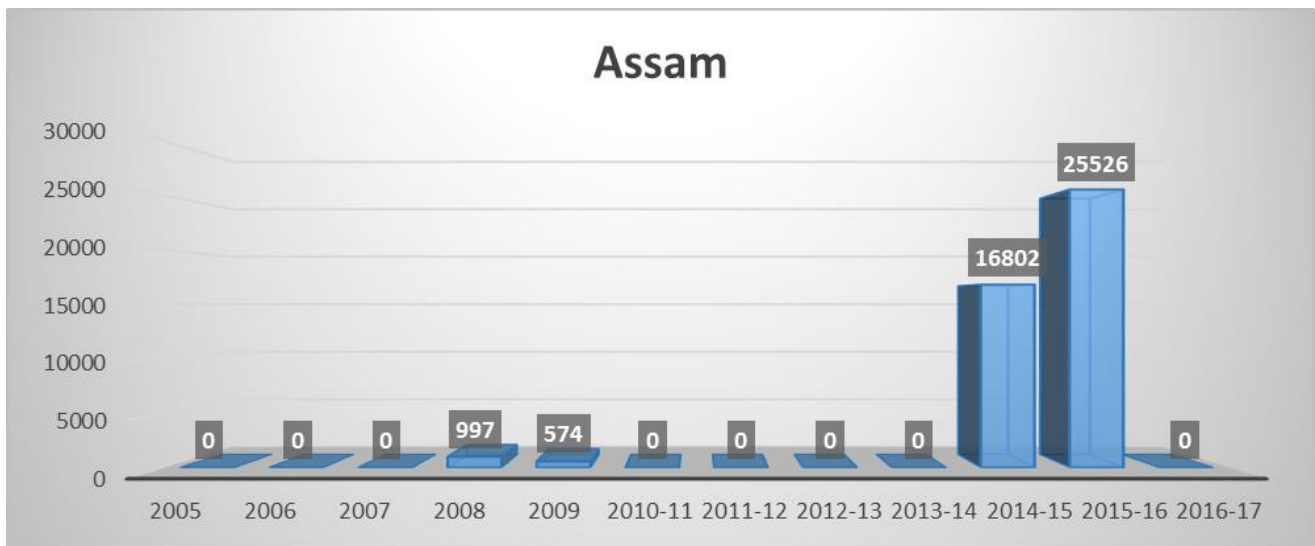
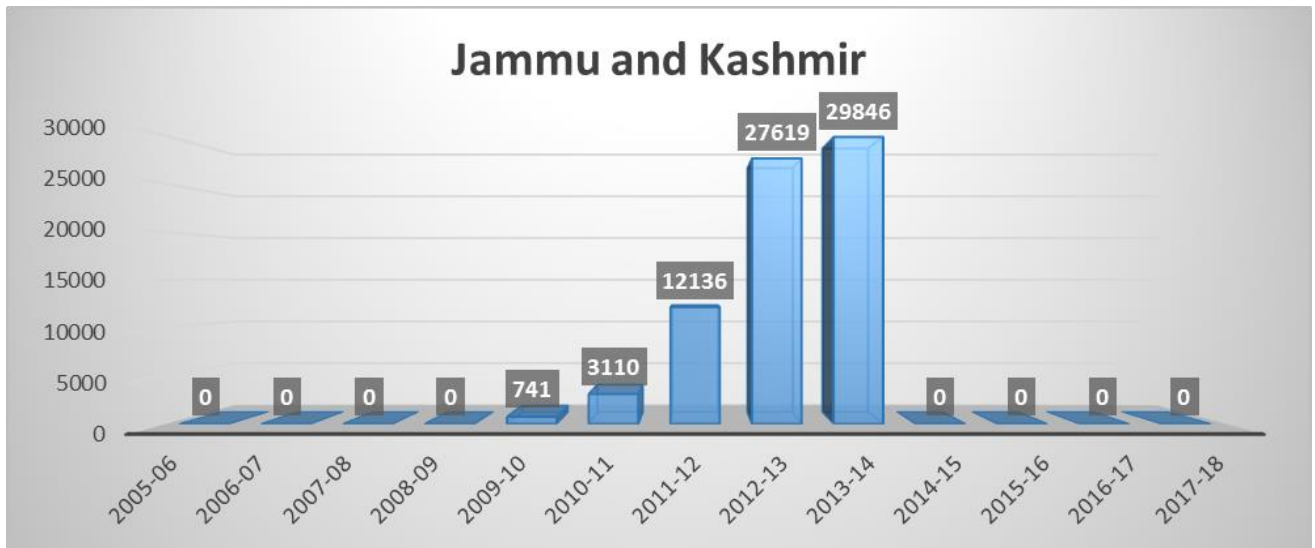
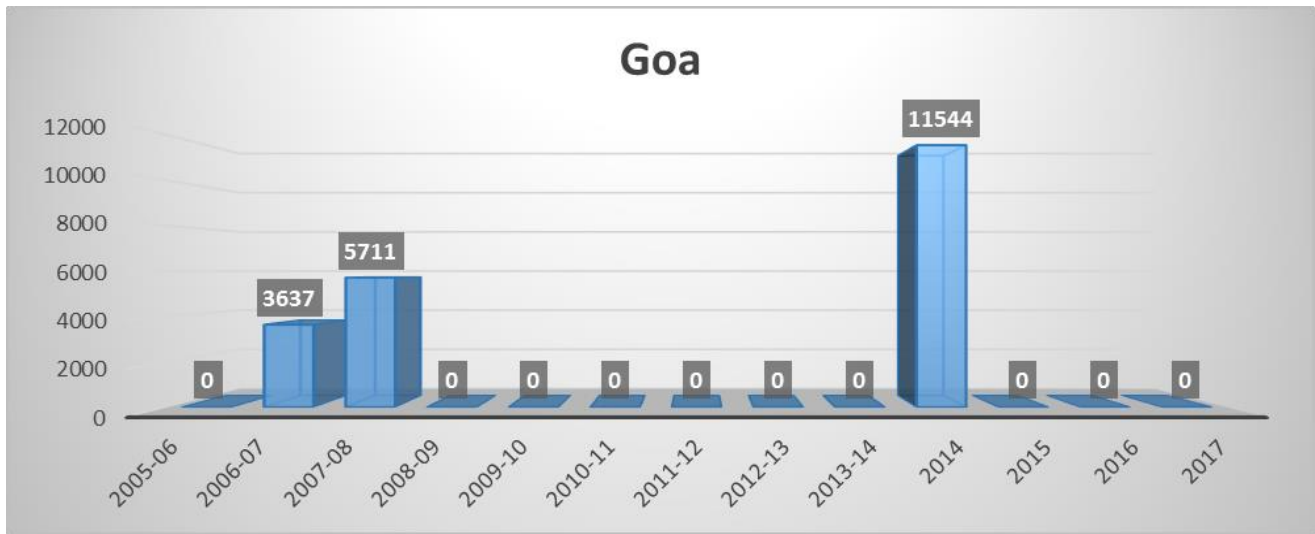


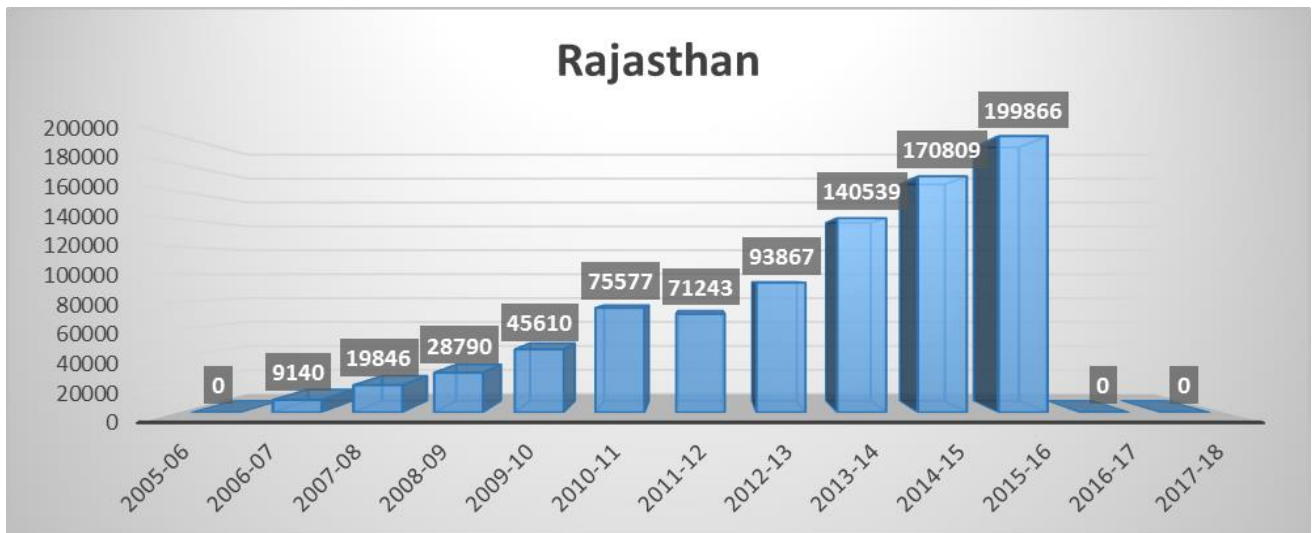
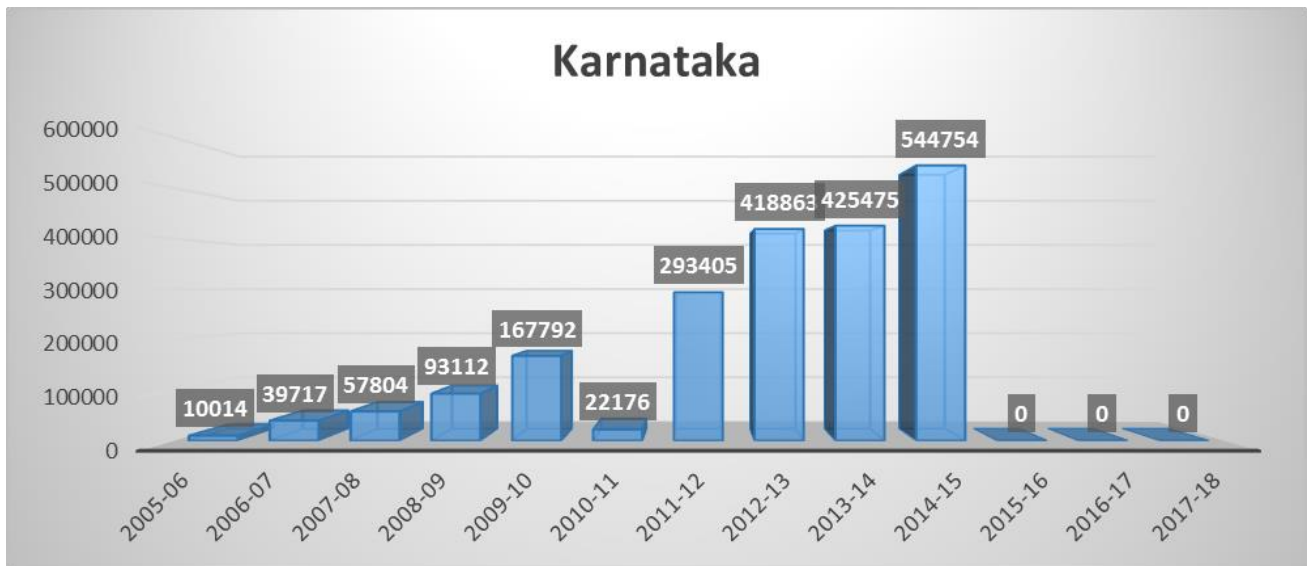
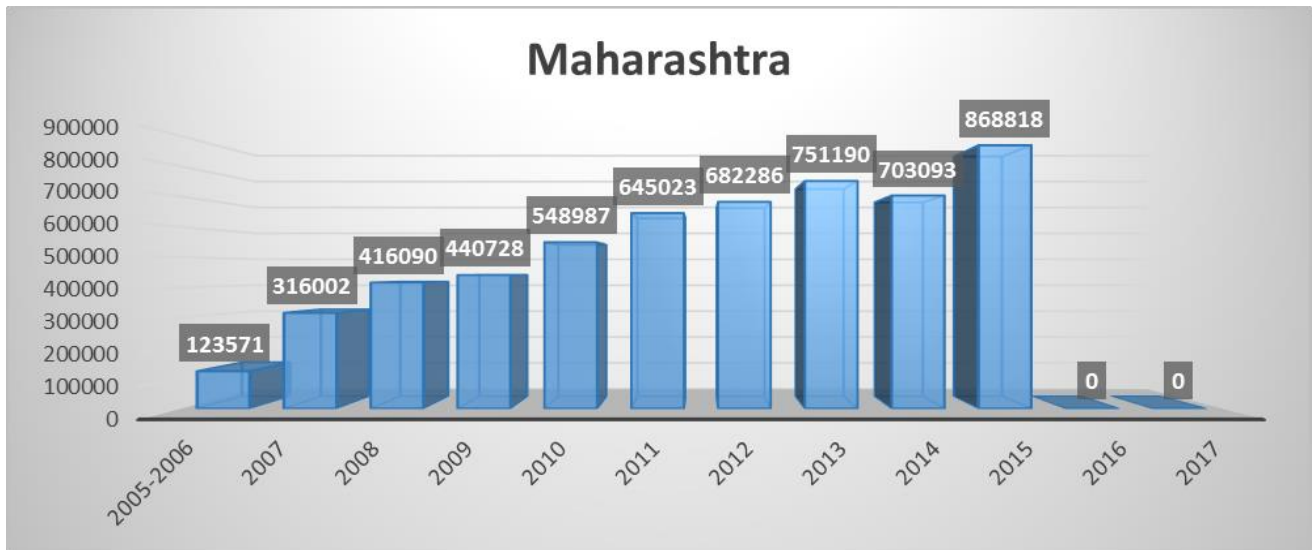
Uttarakhand

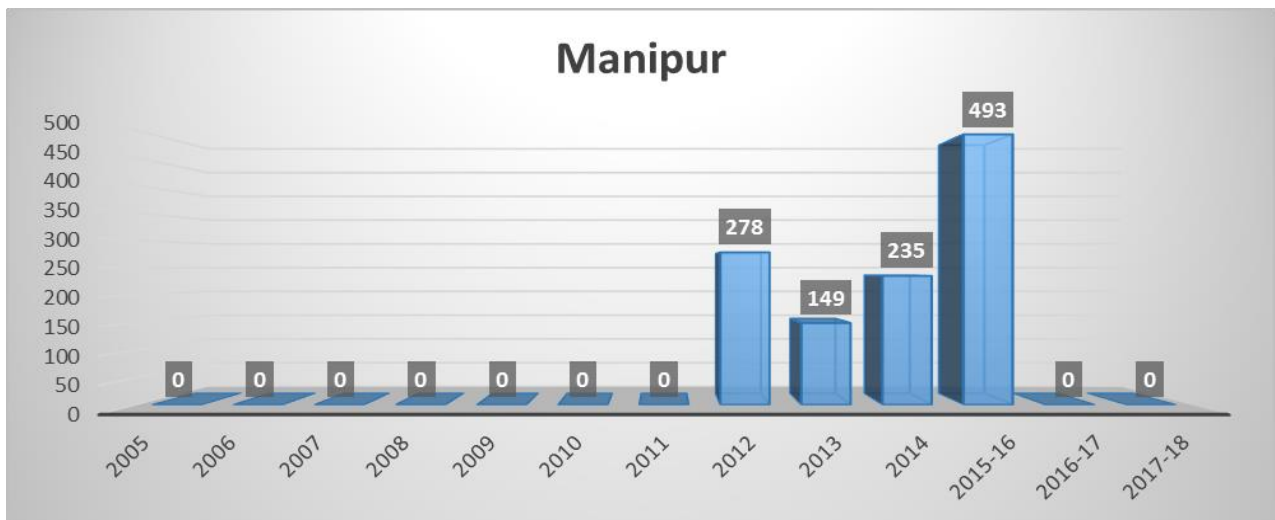
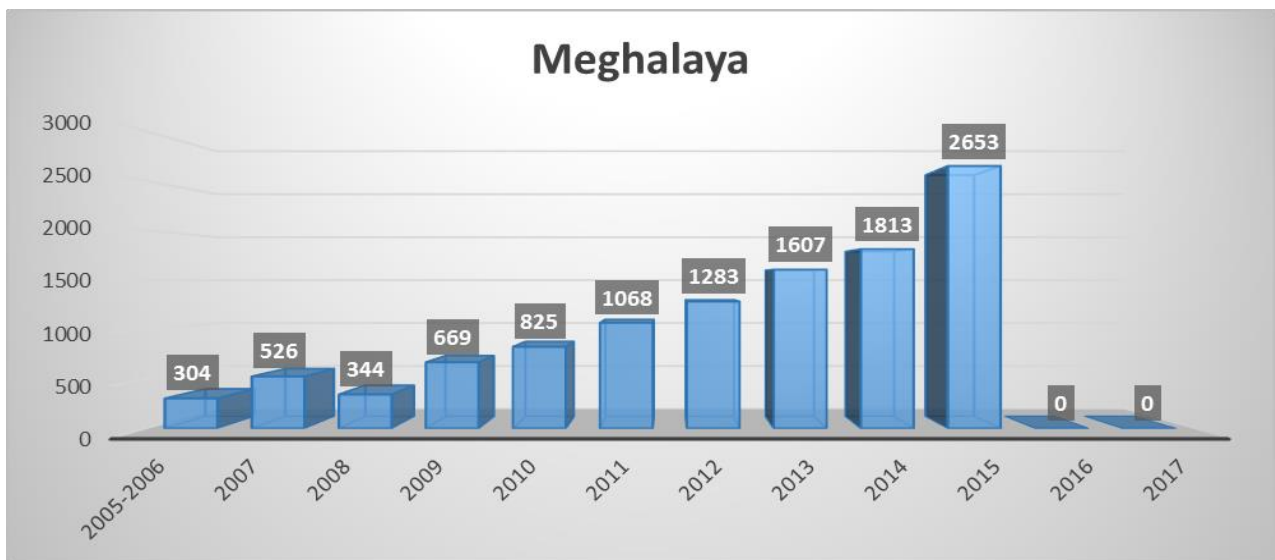
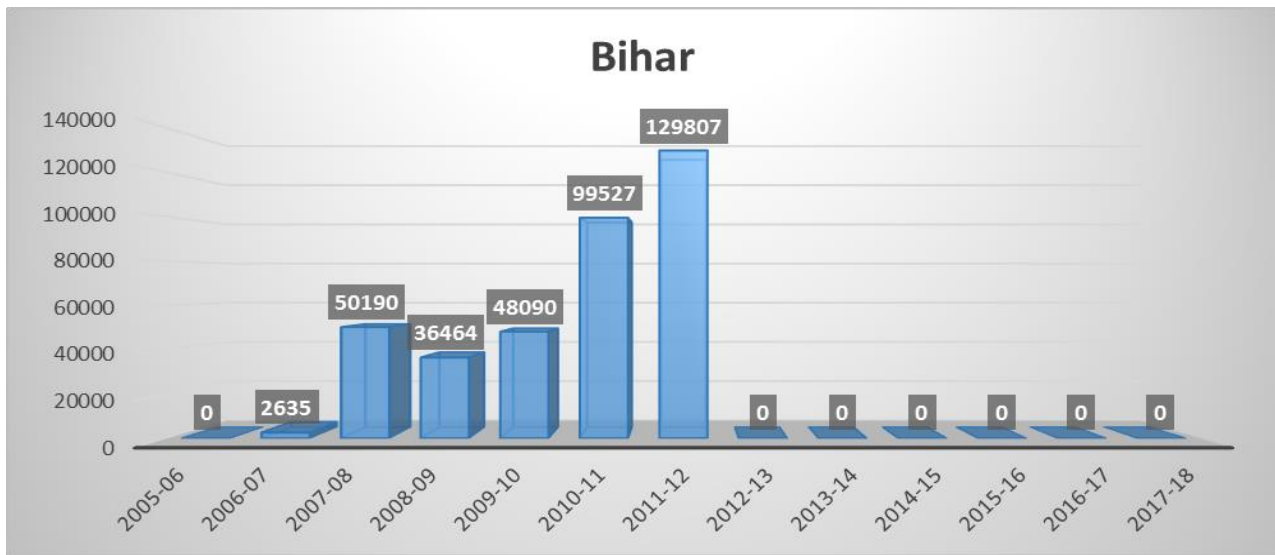


Kerala



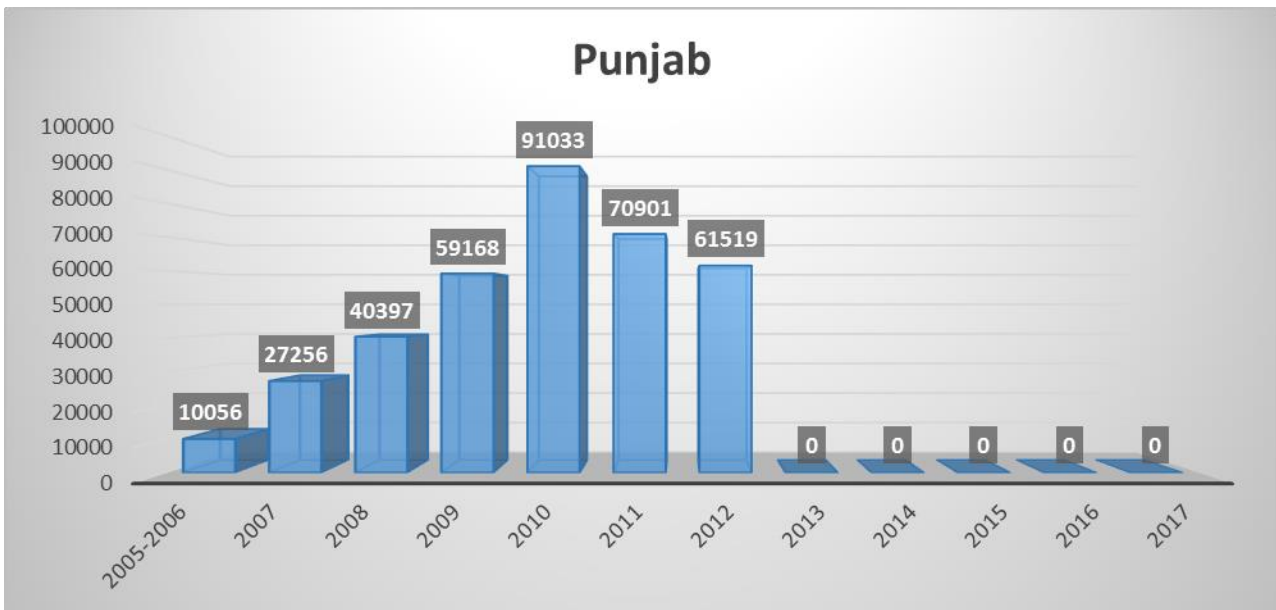
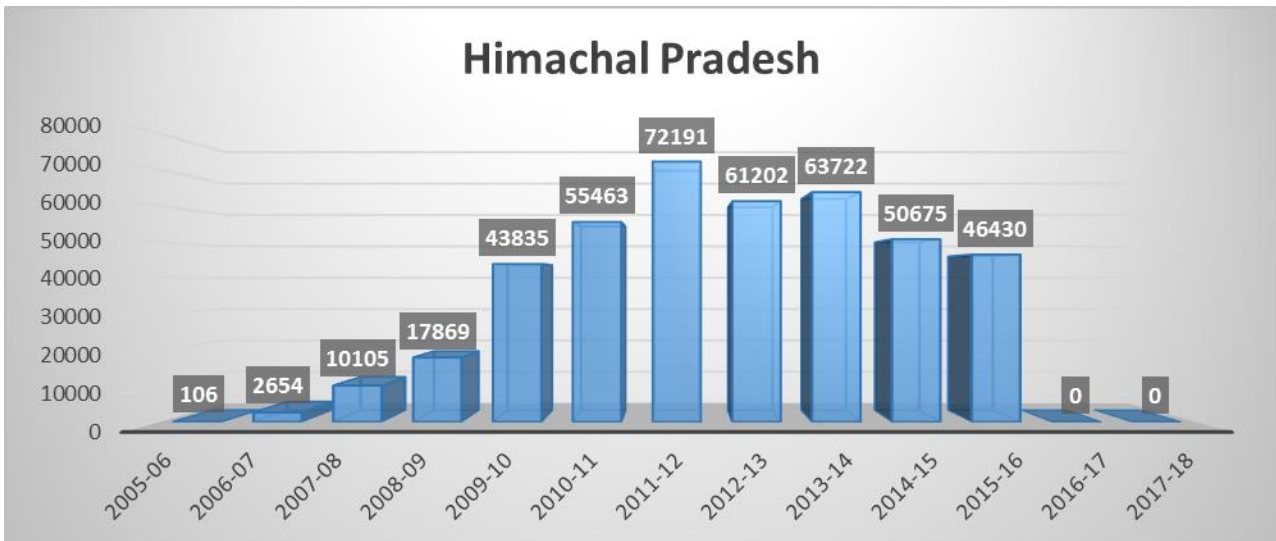


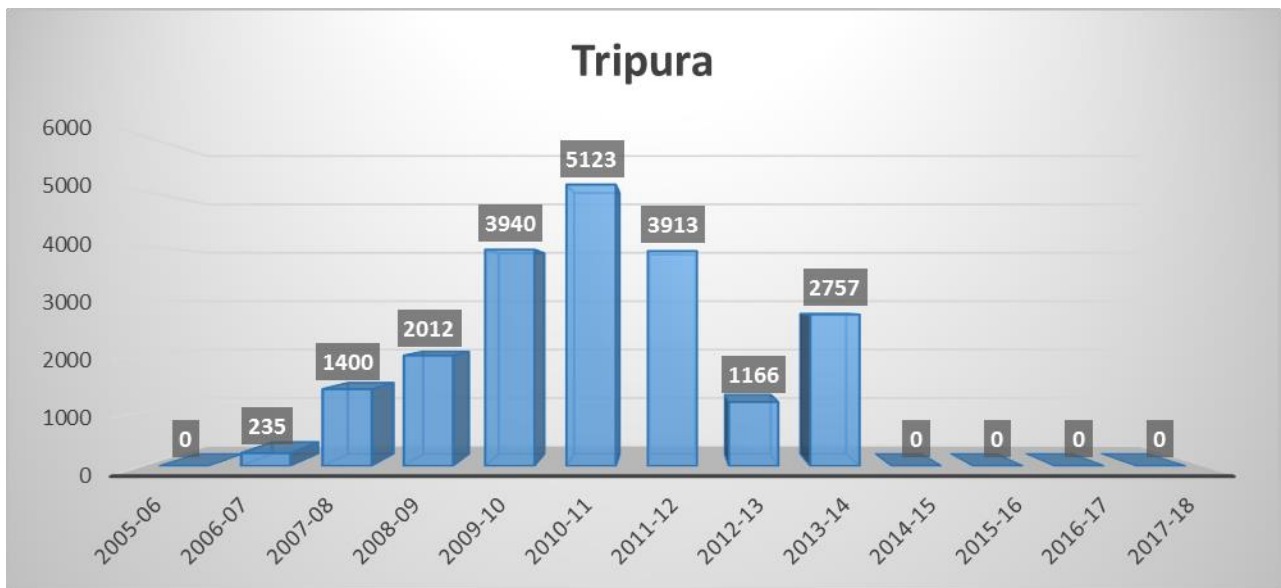
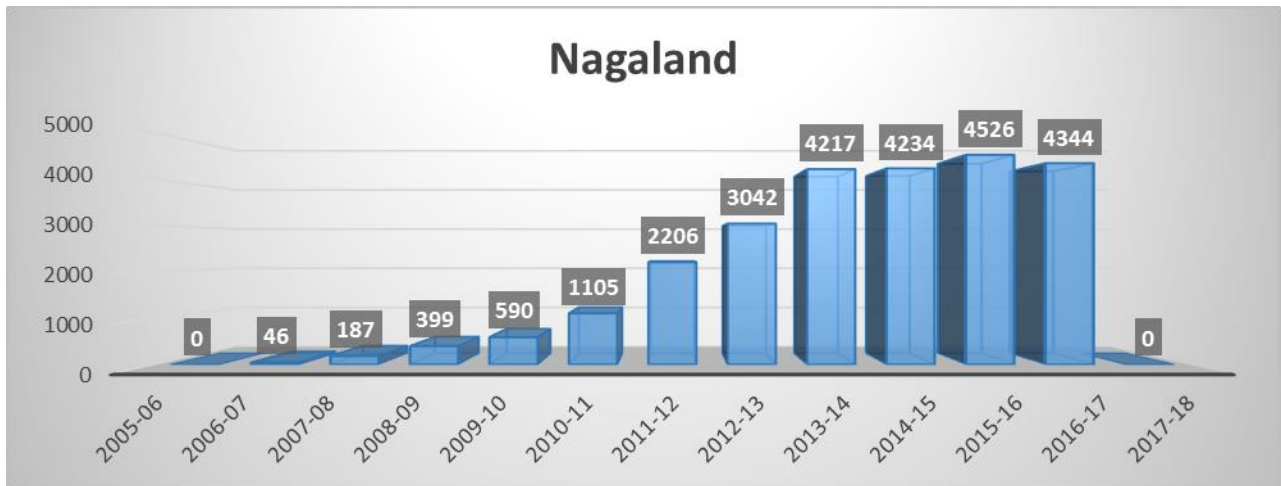




B. Declining trend

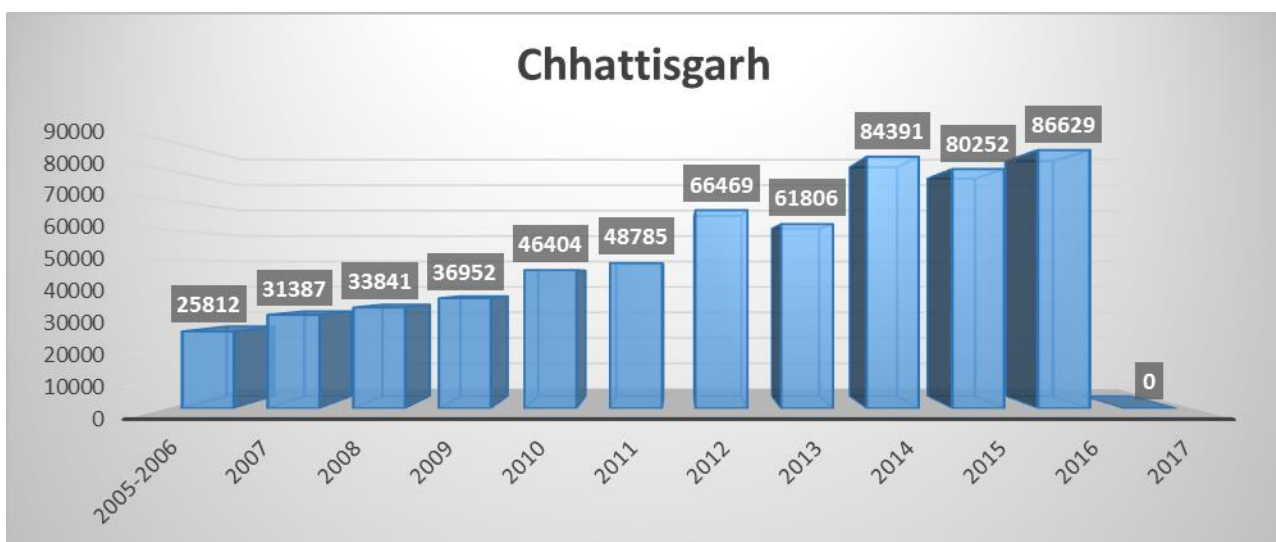
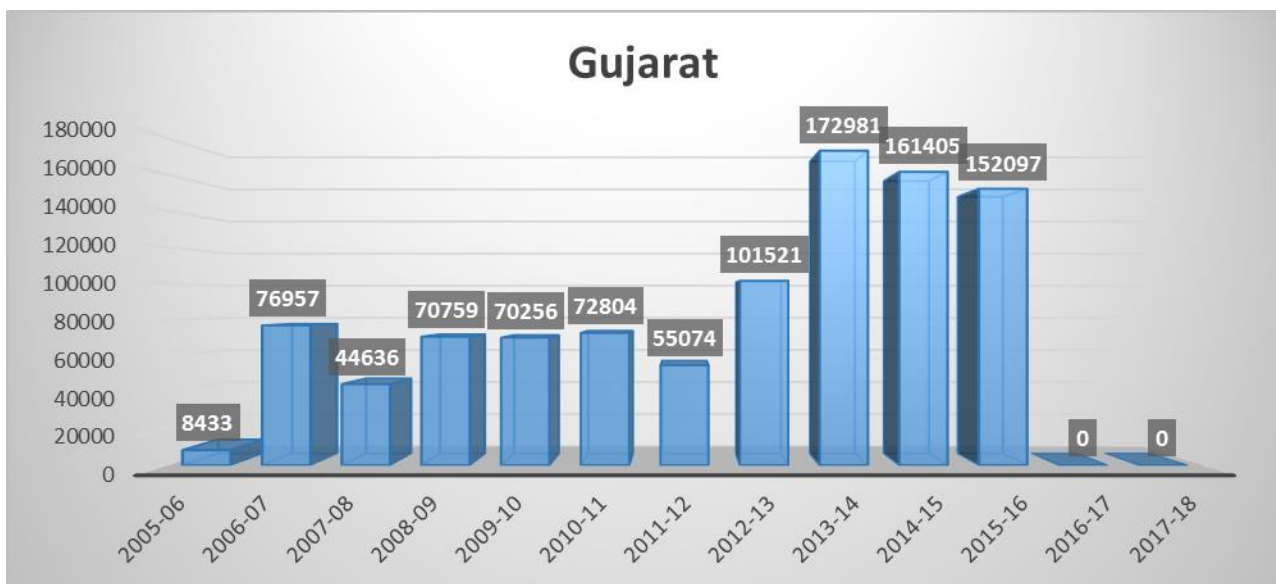
Five States, namely, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Sikkim, Nagaland and Tripura have reported a declining trend in the number of RTI applications filed by citizens in recent years. Himachal Pradesh has reported a steady decline in the number of RTI applications filed since 2012-13 except for a spike in 2013-14. In 2015-16 the figures had declined by more than 35% as compared to the peak reached in 2011-12. Punjab has reported a declining trend since 2011. Nagaland has reported a decline in 2016-17. Tripura has reported a sharp reduction of more than 46% in 2014 from the peak reached in 2011. Sikkim has also reported a steep reduction of almost 55% in 2016 from the peak scaled in 2014. This decline in the use of RTI might be due to lack of 100% reporting compliance or due to lack of interest for RTI in the citizenry. The underlying factors for the decline require urgent probing.

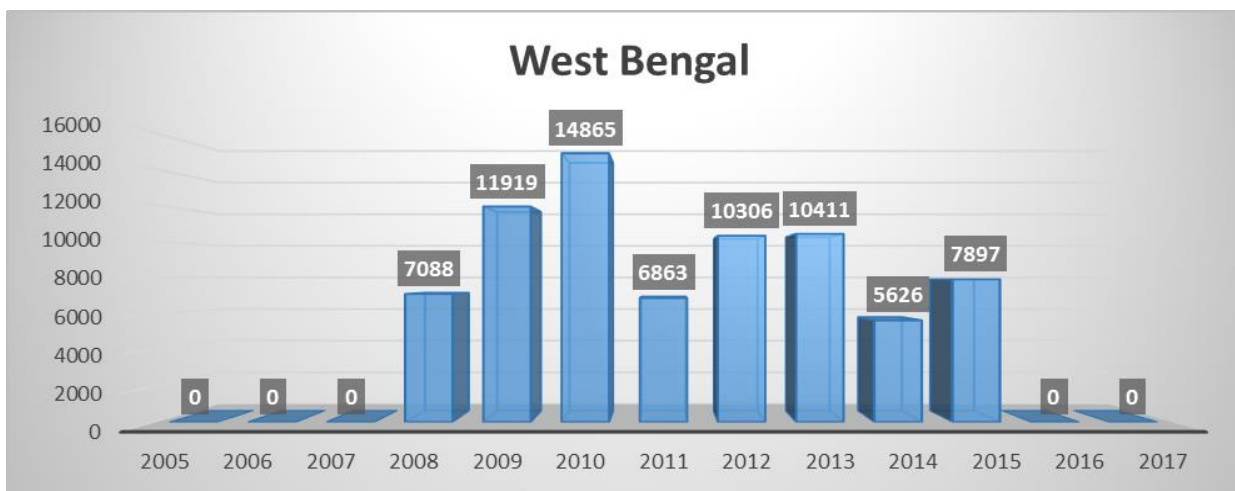
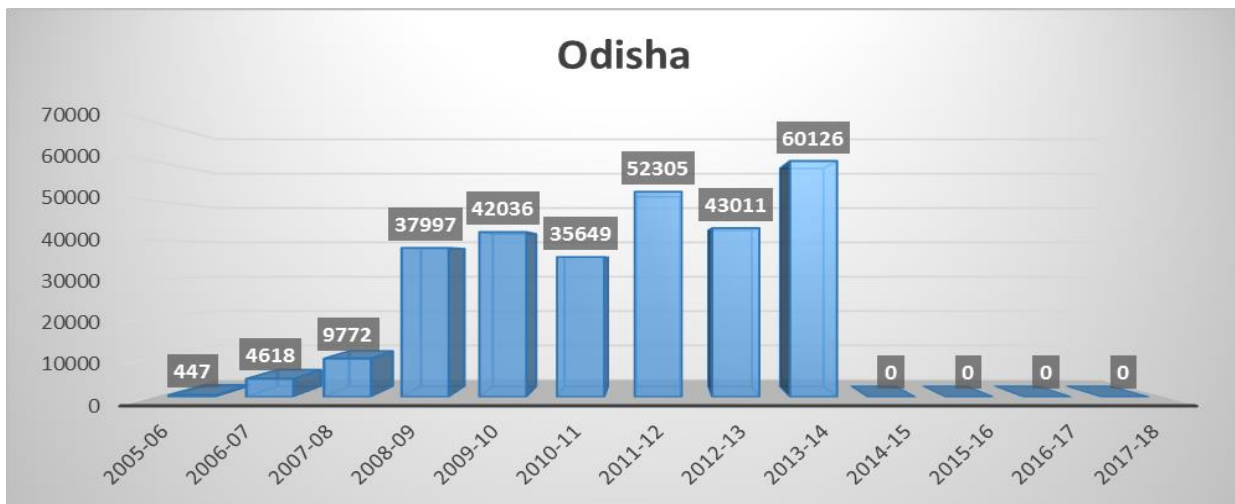
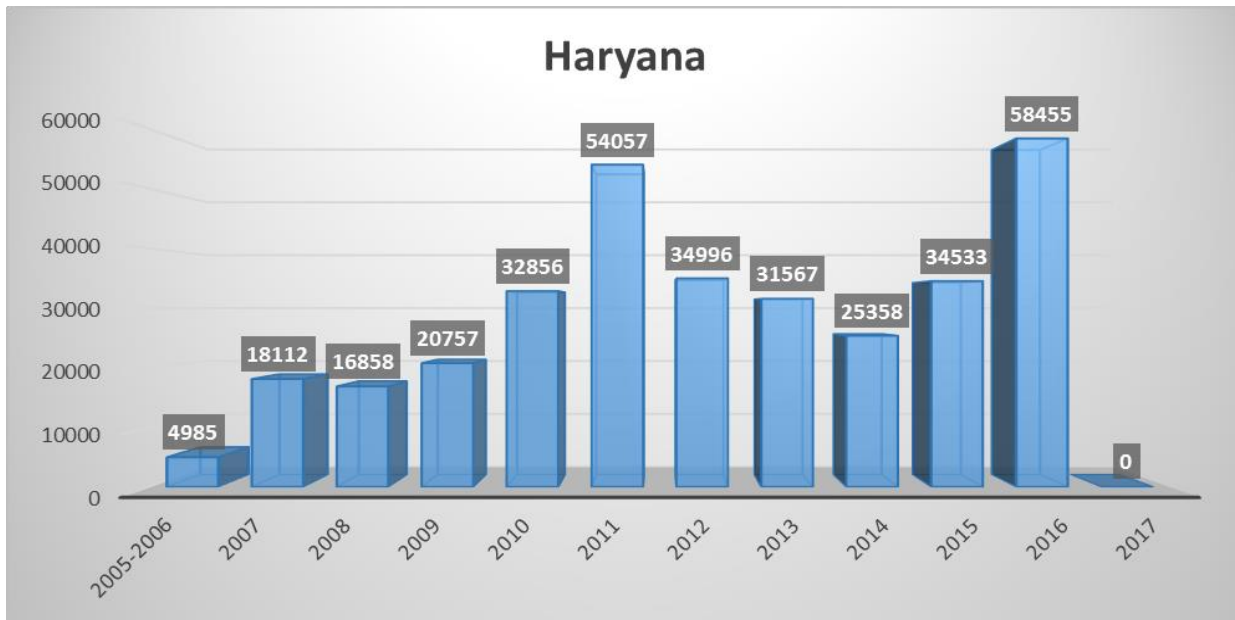


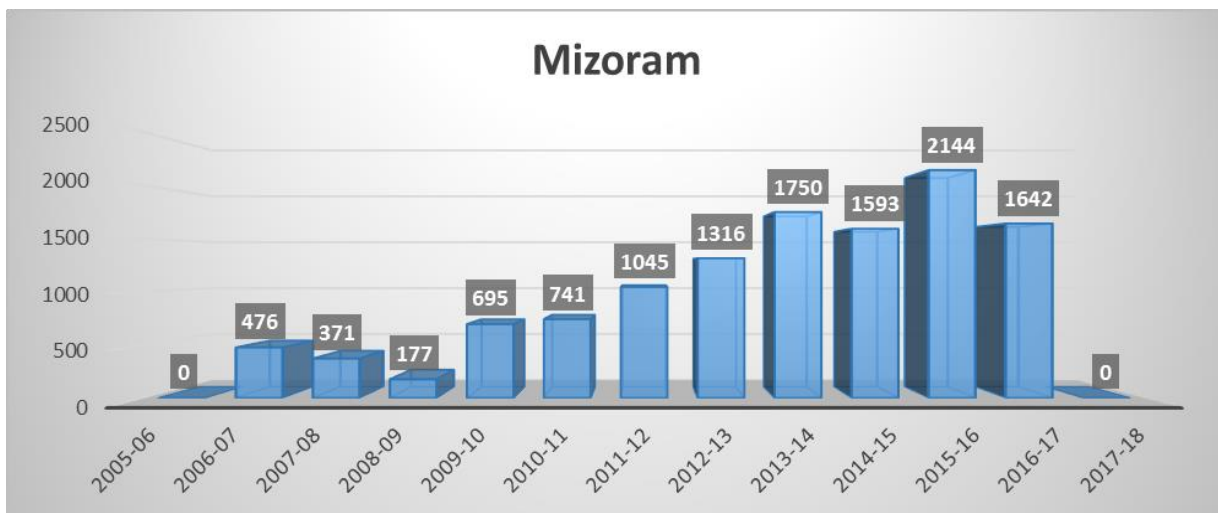
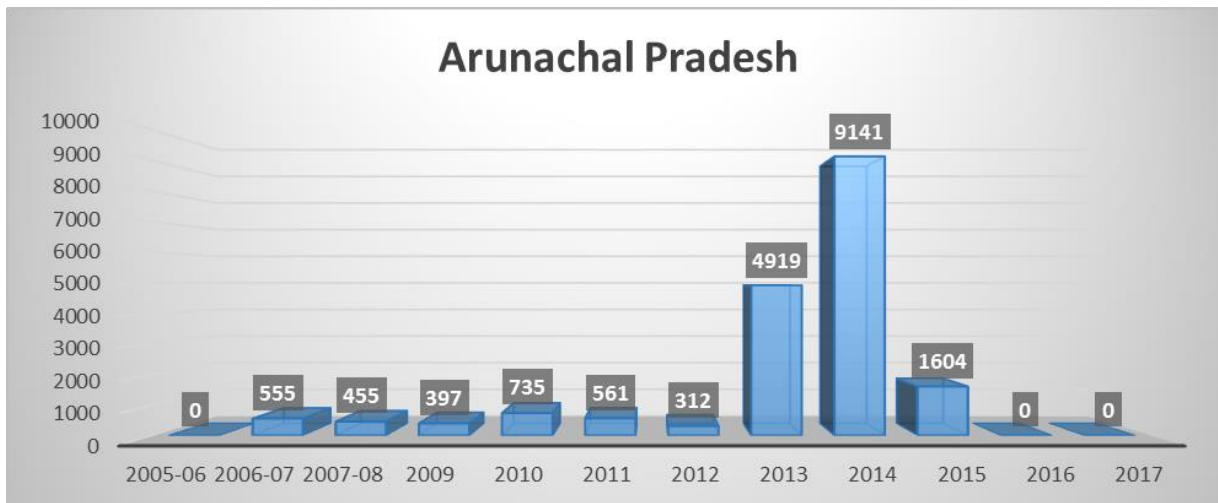


C. Mixed trend

Seven States have reported a mixed trend in the number of RTI applications filed over the years. This trend is observable in Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Gujarat, Mizoram, Odisha and West Bengal. In Gujarat, sharp dips are reported in the years 2007-08 and 2011-12 while a sharp spike reported in the year 2012-13. Since 2013-14 a declining trend has been reported. Chhattisgarh reported dips in 2013 and 2015 but the numbers have gone up in succeeding years. Haryana reported a new peak in 2016 after showing a major declining trend from the peak scaled in 2011. Odisha's figures have also seesawed to reach a new peak in 2013-14. West Bengal's figures rose and dipped to less than 62% of the peak reached in 2010 but a rising trend has been reported in 2015. After seesawing in the initial years, Arunachal Pradesh has reported a more than 82% decline in the number of RTI applications received in 2015 against the peak reached in 2014. Mizoram's figures also show a declining trend of 23% in 2016-17 after the peak scaled during the previous year.







D. Indeterminate

It is difficult to identify a trend in Jharkhand as only one Annual Report has been published so far.



*
*
*
*

Abbreviations

Acad.	=	Academic
Admin. & Gov.	=	Administration and Governance
AIADMK	=	All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
IAS	=	Indian Administrative Service
IFS	=	Indian Foreign Service
IFoS	=	Indian Forest Service
IPS	=	Indian Police Service
IRS	=	Indian Revenue Service
Mgmt.	=	Management
N	=	No
Pub. Ad.	=	Public Administration
Rtd.	=	Retired
SAD	=	Shiromani Akali Dal
SCIC	=	State Chief Information Commissioner
Science & Tech.	=	Science and Technology
Soc. Serv.	=	Social Service
State CS	=	State Civil Services
Y	=	Yes
?	=	Status cannot be ascertained

Data Tables

Table 1: Vacancies in the Information Commissions

#	Information Commission	As originally constituted	Later expanded to	Current Strength (As on March 1, 2018)	Vacancies in March 2018
1.	Central Information Commission	5	11	7	4
2.	Andhra Pradesh	1	9	<p style="text-align: center;">?</p> <p>After Telangana was carved out, the APSIC functioned for a few months but is now waiting to be reconstituted as per assurance given by the AP Govt. to the Hyderabad High Court</p>	
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	4	5	4	1
4.	Assam	2	3	3	0
5.	Bihar	3	3	2	1
6.	Chhattisgarh	1	4	4	0
7.	Goa	1	3	3	0
8.	Gujarat	1	5	3	2
9.	Haryana	1	11	11	0
10.	Himachal Pradesh	1	2	2	0
11.	Jharkhand	7	7	2	5
12.	Karnataka	3	9	9	0
13.	Kerala	1	6	1	5
14.	Madhya Pradesh	1	8	3	5
15.	Maharashtra	1	8	7	1
16.	Manipur	1	1	1	0
17.	Meghalaya	1	1	1	0
18.	Mizoram	1	3	1	2
19.	Nagaland	1	3	3	0

#	Information Commission	As originally constituted	Later expanded to	Current Strength (As on March 1, 2018)	Vacancies in March 2018
20.	Odisha	2	3	3	0
21.	Punjab	1	10	9	1
22.	Rajasthan	1	4	3	1
23.	Sikkim	1	1	1	0
24.	Tamil Nadu	1	7	7	0
25.	Telangana	2 (as constituted in 2017)		2	0
26.	Tripura	3	3	1	2
27.	Uttarakhand	1	6	3	3
28.	Uttar Pradesh	1	11	9	2
29.	West Bengal	1	3	2	1
30.	Jammu & Kashmir	1	3	2	1
Total		52	153/146¹⁹	109²⁰	37²¹

¹⁹ In July 2015 when CHRI released its Rapid Study Report 3.0 the number of posts created across ICs was 139. With the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh in 2014 the SIC of the undivided State functioned for some time until all the ICs completed their term. So for the purpose of this study in 2018 there are only 144 posts of Chief Information Commissioners and Information Commissioners created across the country.

²⁰ In July 2015 when CHRI released its Rapid Study Report 3.0 the number of serving Commissioners was 111. In 2014 when CHRI released its Rapid Study 2.0, the number was at an all-time high of 120 Commissioners.

²¹ In July 2015 when CHRI released its Rapid Study Report 3.0 the vacancies were only 29.

Table 2: No. of Women ICs and their Background

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Status as in 2014	Status as in 2015	Status as in 2018	Background of the Women ICs in 2018
1.	Central Information Commission	1	1	0	
2.	Andhra Pradesh	2	2	0	-
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	1	1	Social service
4.	Assam	0	0	1	Administration (Retd. IAS officer)
5.	Goa	1	0	1	Law (Advocate)
6.	Gujarat	1	0	0	-
7.	Haryana	1	2	1	Social activist & educationist
8.	Maharashtra	1	1	1	Administration (Retd. IAS officer)
9.	Nagaland	0	1	0	-
10.	Odisha	-	1	1	Social service
11.	Punjab	1	0	2	1) Law (Advocate) 2) Medicine (Dietician)
12.	Tamil Nadu	1	1	1	SCIC – Administration (Retd. IAS officer)
13.	Tripura	1	0	0	-
14.	Uttar Pradesh	1	1	0	-
	Total	12²²	11²³	9²⁴	-

²² In 2014 when CHRI released its Rapid Study Report 2.0, 12 Information Commission had at least one woman IC.

²³ In 2015 when CHRI released its Rapid Study Report 3.0, nine Information Commissions had a total of 11 women ICs.

²⁴ In 2018, there are no women ICs in the CIC and the SICs of Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Nagaland, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh which had women appointees earlier.

Table 3: Background of Serving Chief Information Commissioners

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Law	Science & Technology	Social Service	Management	Journalism & Mass Media	Administration & Governance
1.	Central Information Commission	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
2.	Andhra Pradesh (Vacant. SIC has not been constituted after bifurcation of the State)	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (State CS)
4.	Assam	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
5.	Bihar	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
6.	Chhattisgarh	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
7.	Goa	✓ (Advocate & former President of Administrative Tribunal)	-	-	-	-	-
8.	Gujarat (Vacant)	-	-	-	-	-	-
9.	Haryana	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IPS)
10.	Himachal Pradesh	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
11.	Jharkhand	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
12.	Karnataka	-	-	-	-	✓ (also an educationist)	-

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Law	Science & Technology	Social Service	Management	Journalism & Mass Media	Administration & Governance
13.	Kerala	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IPS)
14.	Madhya Pradesh	✓ (retd. Principal Law Secretary)	-	-	-	-	-
15.	Maharashtra (acting SCIC)	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
16.	Manipur	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IFS)
17.	Meghalaya	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
18.	Mizoram	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IFS)
19.	Nagaland	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (State CS, retd. Chief Engineer)
20.	Odisha	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IRS)
21.	Punjab	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
22.	Rajasthan	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IPS)
22.	Sikkim	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
24.	Tamil Nadu	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
25.	Telangana	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (retd. State Legislature Secretary)
26.	Tripura	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
27.	Uttarakhand	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
28.	Uttar Pradesh	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
29.	West Bengal	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Law	Science & Technology	Social Service	Management	Journalism & Mass Media	Administration & Governance
30.	Jammu and Kashmir	-	-	-	-	-	✓ (IAS)
	Total	2	0	0	0	1	25

Table 4: Background of Serving Information Commissioners

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Law	Science & Technology	Social Service	Management	Journalism & Mass Media	Administration & Governance	Others	Total
1.	Central Information Commission	1	-	-	-	-	5 ²⁵ (IAS-4; IPS-1)	-	6
2.	Andhra Pradesh	SIC remains to be constituted after bifurcation of the State							
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	3
4.	Assam	-	-	-	-	-	2 (IAS-1; IA&AS-1)	-	2
5.	Bihar	1 (retired Judge)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
6.	Chhattisgarh	1 (Advocate & Notary)	-	-	-	-	1 (IFS)	-	2
7.	Goa	2 (Advocates)	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
8.	Gujarat	-	-	-	-	-	3 (IAS-2; State CS-1)	-	3
9.	Haryana	2 (Advocates)	-	-	-	3	4 (IAS-3; State CS-1)	1 (Educationist and Sportsperson)	10

²⁵ One IC has a specialisation in law.

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Law	Science & Technology	Social Service	Management	Journalism & Mass Media	Administration & Governance	Others	Total
10.	Himachal Pradesh	-	-	-	-	-	1 (IFS)	-	1
11.	Jharkhand	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
12.	Karnataka	1	1 (doctor)	1	1 (Retd. Sr. Manager of Regional Rural Bank)	-	4 (IRS-1; State CS-3)	-	8
13.	Kerala	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
14.	Madhya Pradesh	-	-	-	-	1	1 (IPS-1)	-	2
15.	Maharashtra	-	-	-	-	-	5 (IAS-1; IPS-1 State CS-3)	-	5
16.	Manipur	No State Information Commissioner appointed to existing vacancy							
17.	Meghalaya	Post of State Information Commissioner not created yet							
18.	Mizoram	No State Information Commissioner appointed to existing vacancy							
19.	Nagaland	1 (Retd. Principal District & Sessions Judge)	-	-	-	-	1 (State CS - retd. Chief Engineer)	-	2

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Law	Science & Technology	Social Service	Management	Journalism & Mass Media	Administration & Governance	Others	Total
20.	Odisha	1	-	1 (human rights activist)	-	-	-	-	2
21.	Punjab	2	1 (Engineer)	-	-	1	2 (IAS-1; State CS-1) ²⁶	2 (ex-Members SAD)	8
22.	Rajasthan	1 (Advocate)	-	-	-	-	1 (IAS)	-	2
23.	Sikkim	Post of State Information Commissioner not created yet							
24.	Tamil Nadu	5 (CMM-1; Advocates-4) ²⁷	-	-	-	-	1 (IPS-1)	-	6
25.	Telangana	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
26.	Tripura	No State Information Commissioner appointed to existing vacancies							
27.	Uttarakhand	1 (Advocate)	-	-	-	-	1 (IAS)	-	2
28.	Uttar Pradesh	1	-	1	-	6	-	-	8
29.	West Bengal	-	-	-	-	-	1 (IPS)	-	1

²⁶ One of the ICs is reported to have been an RSS functionary and retired as Controller of Examinations.

²⁷ One of the Advocates is said to be a functionary of the AIADMK's SC/ST Wing, see news report published in The Hindu at: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/chennai/state-information-commissioners-appointed/article7520450.ece>, accessed on 06 March, 2018.

30.	Jammu and Kashmir	-	-	-	-	-	1 (IAS)	-	1
	Total	21	2	5	1	13	34	3	79

Table 5: Availability of Annual Reports of Information Commissions

Category I: Information Commissions reporting according to calendar year (January to December)

#	Information Commission	Year													Pending reports
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Y (Oct 2005 to Dec 2006)		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	4 reports pending since 2014
2.	Chhattisgarh	Y (Nov 2005 to Dec 2006)		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	1 report pending for 2017
3.	Haryana	Y (Nov 2005 to Oct 2006)		Y (Nov 2006 to Oct 2007)	Y (Consolidated report presented for Nov 2007- Dec 2008 & Jan 09- Dec09)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	1 report pending for 2017
4.	Maharashtra	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	2 reports pending since 2016
5.	Meghalaya	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	2 reports pending since 2016
6.	Punjab	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	5 reports pending since 2013
7.	Sikkim	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	1 report pending for 2017 apart from backlog for 2005-2013
8.	Tamil Nadu	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	3 reports pending since 2015

Category II: Information Commissions reporting according to financial year (April to March)

#	Information Commission	Year												Pending reports
		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
9.	Central Information Commission	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	1 report pending for 2016-17
10.	Bihar	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	5 reports pending since 2012-13. Website is not accessible on any browser in February 2018		
11.	Gujarat	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	1 report pending for 2016-17
12.	Himachal Pradesh	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	1 report pending for 2016-17
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	The J&K RTI Act was enacted in 2009 after which the SIC was established				Y (Consolidated report presented for 2009-2012)	Y (Consolidated report presented for 2009-2012)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	3 reports pending since 2014-15
14.	Jharkhand	N	N	Y (Consolidated report presented for the years 2007-2011 in 2011) ²⁸			6 reports pending till date “No record present” on the dedicated website under the Annual Reports link. Even the lone Annual Report published in 2011 is not available on the website in 2018							
15.	Karnataka	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	2 reports pending since 2015-16
16.	Kerala	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	6 reports pending since 2011-12 apart

²⁸ CHRI had downloaded the Annual Report in 2014 while putting together its publication- [Information Commissions and the Use of RTI Laws in India: Rapid Study 2.0](#).

														from backlog of 2005-06
17.	Mizoram	N	Y	Y	N (The link to AR for 2008-09 opens the AR for 2007-08)	N (The link to AR for 2009-10 opens the AR for 2007-08)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	3 backlog reports pending for the years 2005-06 and 2008-10
18.	Nagaland	SIC was constituted only in March 2006	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	No pending reports
19.	Odisha	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	3 reports pending since 2014-15
20.	Rajasthan	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	1 report pending for the year 2016-17
21.	Tripura ²⁹	N	Y	Y ³⁰	Y	Y ³¹	Y	Y	Y ³²	Y	N	N	N	3 reports

²⁹ Until October, 2016, the Tripura SIC had not published any Annual Report on its website. However, now the Annual Reports are available up to the year 2013-14.

³⁰ The Annual Report for 2007-08 mentions a figure of 1,088 RTI applications. However the Annual Report for 2011-12 puts this figure at 1,400, perhaps due to calibration on the basis of the statistics collected after the publication of the previous Annual Report. So, we have taken the higher figure for the purpose of calculation.

³¹ The Annual Report of the Tripura SIC for 2011-12 states that 2,699 RTI applications were received in 2009-10 while providing a comparative picture. However, we have taken the higher figure as it was published in the contemporaneous Annual Report.

³² The Annual Report contains RTI application figures only for six departments, namely, Health and Family Welfare, Urban Development, Forests, Education, Panchayati Raj and Revenue. However, application and additional fees collected from 45 public authorities across the State during the year is provided without details of the total number of RTI applications accompanying them.

														pending since 2015-16 apart from backlog of 2005-06
22.	Uttarakhand	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	3 reports pending since 2015-16 apart from backlog of 2005-06

Category III: Information Commissions with fluctuating reporting periods

#	Information Commission	Year												Pending reports
		2005	2006	2007	11.9.2008 to 31.12.2008	2009	2010-2011	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	
23.	Assam	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	1 report pending for 2016-17 apart from the backlog for the years 2010-2014

#	Information Commission	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015-16	2016-17	Pending reports
24.	Manipur	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y (Consolidated report presented for the years 2013-14)	Y (Consolidated report presented for the years 2013-14)	Y	N	1 report pending for 2016-17 apart from backlog for the years 2005-2011

#	Information Commission	Year													Pending reports	
		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014	2015	2016	2017		
25.	Goa	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	3 reports pending since 2015 apart from backlog for the years 2005-06 & 2008-2013

#	Information Commission	2005-06	13.10.2006 to 31.12.2007 ³³	2007 & 2008 ³⁴	2009 ³⁵	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Pending reports
26.	Arunachal Pradesh	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	2 reports pending since 2016 apart from backlog for the years 2005-06

#	Information Commission	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Pending reports
27.	West Bengal	N	Consolidated Annual Report submitted for the years 2006-09			Y	Y	Consolidated Annual Report submitted for the years 2011-12		Consolidated Annual Report submitted for the years 2013-14		Y	N	N	2 reports pending apart from the backlog for 2005

³³ The RTI application figures for this period were published in the Annual Report of the Arunachal Pradesh SIC when we first checked their website for this data in October 2016. However this document is no longer available on the Commission's website.

³⁴ The RTI application figures published in the Annual Report of the Arunachal Pradesh SIC for the years 2006-12 are combined for the years 2007-08. So there seems to be an overlap for the two reporting periods, namely October 2006 – December 2007 and 2007-08.

³⁵ The RTI applications figures for the years 2009-2015 are published in the two combined Annual Reports of the Arunachal Pradesh SIC for the periods 2006-12 and 2013-15.

Category IV: Information Commissions that have not published any Annual Report on their website

#	Information Commission	Observations
28.	Madhya Pradesh	The website is not accessible through Google Search on any browser
29.	Telangana	The State Information Commission was established on 13/09/2017. So, no Annual Report has been published yet.
30.	Uttar Pradesh	No annual report is available on the SIC's website

Table 6: Volume of RTI applications reported by Information Commissions

Category I: Information Commissions reporting according to calendar year (January to December)

#	Information Commission	Year													Total
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
1.	Andhra Pradesh	8864 (Oct 2005 to Dec 2006)	30674	59664	65793	101453	122133	145583	163624	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	697788	
2.	Chhattisgarh	25812 (Nov 2005 to Dec 2006)	31387	33841	36952	46404	48785	66469	61806	84391	80252	86629	Report not published on the website	602728	
3.	Haryana	4985 (Nov 2005 to Oct 2006)	18112 (Nov 2006 to Oct 2007)	16858 (Nov 2007 to Dec 2008)	20757	32856	54057	34996	31567	25358	34533	58455	Report not published on the website	332534	
4.	Maharashtra	Report not published on the website	123571	316002	416090	440728	548987	645023	682286	751190	703093	868818	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	5495788
5.	Meghalaya	Report not published on the website	304	526	344	669	825	1068	1283	1607	1813	2653	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	11092
6.	Punjab	Report not published on	10056	27256	40397	59168	91033	70901	61519	Report not publish-	Report not publish-	Report not publish-	Report not publish-	Report not publish-	360330

		the website									ed on the website	ed on the website	ed on the website	ed on the website	ed on the website		
7.	Sikkim	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Not mentioned in the report	1600	1490	722	Report not published on the website	3812	
8.	Tamil Nadu	Report not published on the website	12269	63912	114721	179441	237517	250042	333010	360995	371481	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website		1923388	
																Total	9427460

Category II: Information Commissions reporting according to financial year (April to March)

#	Information Commission	Year													Total
		2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	
9.	Central Information Commission	24436	171404	263261	329728	529274	417955	629960	811350	834183	755247	976679	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	5743477
10.	Bihar	Report not published on the website	2635	50190	36464	48090	99527	129807	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Website is not accessible on any browser in February 2018			366713

11.	Gujarat	8433 ³⁶	76957	44636	70759	70256	72804	55074	101521	172981	161405	152097	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	986923
12.	Himachal Pradesh	106	2654	10105	17869	43835	55463	72191	61202	63722	50675	46430	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	424252
13.	Jammu and Kashmir	The J&K RTI Act was enacted in 2009 after which the SIC was established				741	3110	12136	27619	29846	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	73452
14.	Jharkhand	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	2611 (Consolidated report presented for the years 2007-2011 in 2011) ³⁷			"No record present" on the dedicated website under the Annual Reports link. Even the lone Annual Report published in 2011 is not available on the website in 2018.							2611	
15.	Karnataka	10014	39717	57804	93112	167792	22176	293405	418863	425475	544754	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	2073112
16.	Kerala	Report not published on the website	6870	109675	120946	158185	177546	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	573222

³⁶ In the original report, the stated figure was 7879 but it was revised in the 2006 report.

³⁷ CHRI had downloaded the Annual Report in 2014 while putting together its publication- [Information Commissions and the Use of RTI Laws in India: Rapid Study 2.0](#).

17.	Mizoram	Report not published on the website	476	371	177 ³⁸	695 ³⁹	741	1045	1316	1750	1593	2144	1642	Report is not due yet	11950	
18.	Nagaland	SIC was constituted only in March 2006	46	187	399	590	1105	2206	3042	4217	4234	4526	4344	Report is not due yet	24896	
19.	Odisha⁴⁰		447	4618	9772	37997	42036	35649	52305	43011	60126	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	285961
20.	Rajasthan	Report not published on the website	9140	19846	28790	45610	75577	71243	93867	140539	170809	199866	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	855287	
21.	Tripura⁴¹	Not	235	1400 ⁴²	2012	3940 ⁴³	5123	3913	1166 ⁴⁴	2757	Report	Report	Report	Report is	20546	

³⁸ Mizoram State Information Commission: Data is sourced from the Annual Report for 2015-16. The weblink to the Annual Report for 2008-09 displays the Annual Report for 2007-08: accessed on 06 March, 2018.

³⁹ Mizoram State Information Commission: Data is sourced from the Annual Report for 2015-16. The weblink to the Annual Report for 2009-10 displays the Annual Report for 2007-08: accessed on 06 March, 2018.

⁴⁰ For Odisha the figures specified in the table are picked up from the Annual Report for 2009-10. The individual annual reports contain different figures for these years such as: 2006-07: 4547; 2007-08: 7772; and 2008-09: 25733. We have selected the higher number under the assumption that the State Information Commission may have calibrated these figures based on subsequent inputs.

⁴¹ Until October, 2016, the Tripura SIC had not published any Annual Report on its website. However, now the Annual Reports are available up to the year 2013-14.

⁴² The Annual Report for 2007-08 mentions a figure of 1,088 RTI applications. However the Annual Report for 2011-12 puts this figure at 1,400, perhaps due to calibration on the basis of the statistics collected after the publication of the previous Annual Report. So, we have taken the higher figure for the purpose of calculation.

		mentioned in the Annual Report									not published on the website	not published on the website	not published on the website	not due yet		
22.	Uttarakhand	Not mentioned in the Annual Report	12442	15640	27148	27311	37976	67184	87691	114790	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	390182	
															Total	11832584

Category III: Information Commissions with fluctuating reporting periods

#	Information Commission	Year													Total
		2005	2006	2007	11.9.2008 to 31.12.2008	2009	2010-2011	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2016-17	
23.	Assam	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	997	574	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	16802	25526	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	43899

⁴³ The Annual Report of the Tripura SIC for 2011-12 states that 2,699 RTI applications were received in 2009-10 while providing a comparative picture. However, we have taken the higher figure as it was published in the contemporaneous Annual Report.

⁴⁴ The Annual Report contains RTI application figures only for six departments, namely, Health and Family Welfare, Urban Development, Forests, Education, Panchayati Raj and Revenue. However, application and additional fees collected from 45 public authorities across the State during the year is provided without details of the total number of RTI applications accompanying them.

#	Information Commission	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Total
24.	Manipur	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	278	419 (Consolidated report presented for the years 2013-14)	235 (Consolidated report presented for the years 2013-14)	493	Report not published on the website	Report is not due yet	1425

#	Information Commission	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
25.	Goa	Report not published on the website	3637	5711	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	11544	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	20892

#	Information Commission	2005-06	13.10.2006 to 31.12.2007 ⁴⁵	2007 & 2008 ⁴⁶	2009 ⁴⁷	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Total
26.	Arunachal Pradesh	Report not published on the website	555	455	397	735	561	312	4919	9141	1604	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	18174 ⁴⁸

#	Information Commission	Year													Total
		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	
27.	West Bengal	Report not published on the website	Not mentioned in the Annual Report for the years 2006-09	Not mentioned in the Annual Report for the years 2006-09	7088 ⁴⁹ (from the Annual Report for the years 2006-09)	11919	14865	6863 (from the Annual Report for 2011-12)	10306 (from the Annual Report for 2011-12)	10411 (from the Annual Report for 2013-14)	5626 (from the Annual Report for 2013-14)	7897	Report not published on the website	Report not published on the website	76165 ⁵⁰

⁴⁵ The RTI application figures for this period were published in the Annual Report of the Arunachal Pradesh SIC when we first checked their website for this data in October 2016. However this document is no longer available on the Commission's website.

⁴⁶ The RTI application figures published in the Annual Report of the Arunachal Pradesh SIC for the years 2006-12 are combined for the years 2007-08. So there seems to be an overlap for the two reporting periods, namely October 2006 – December 2007 and 2007-08.

⁴⁷ The RTI applications figures for the years 2009-2015 are published in the two combined Annual Reports of the Arunachal Pradesh SIC for the periods 2006-12 and 2013-15.

⁴⁸ On account of the overlap of reporting periods pointed out at *f.n. #8* above, only the average figure of 505 RTI applications is taken for the period – October 2006 – December 2008. So this artificial figure is subject to calibration as and when the Arunachal Pradesh SIC puts out the actual figures for these years without overlap.

⁴⁹ This figure is inflated because the West Bengal SIC includes RTI applications pending from the previous year while reporting the total number of RTI applications in all Annual Reports where this data is available. So the absolute number of RTI applications received may be smaller than this total.

⁵⁰ This figure is slightly inflated because of the explanation provided at *f.n. #10* above. ⁵⁰

Category IV: Information Commissions that have not published any Annual Report on their website

#	Information Commission	Remarks
28.	Madhya Pradesh	SIC's website cannot be located through Google Search on any web browser
29.	Telangana	The State Information Commission was established on 13/09/2017. So, no Annual Report has been published yet.
30.	Uttar Pradesh	No Annual Reports have been published so far on the SIC's website.

Table 7: Volume of RTI applications across the country (2005-2017)

Rank	Jurisdiction	Total number of RTI applications received
1.	Central Government	57,43,477
2.	Maharashtra	54,95,788
3.	Karnataka	20,73,112
4.	Tamil Nadu	19,23,388
5.	Gujarat	9,86,923
6.	Rajasthan	8,55,287
7.	Andhra Pradesh	6,97,788
8.	Chhattisgarh	6,02,728
9.	Kerala	5,73,222
10.	Himachal Pradesh	4,24,252
11.	Uttarakhand	3,90,182
12.	Bihar	3,66,713
13.	Punjab	3,60,330
14.	Haryana	3,32,534
15.	Odisha	2,85,961
16.	West Bengal	76,165
17.	Jammu and Kashmir	73,452
18.	Assam	43,899
19.	Nagaland	24,896
20.	Goa	20,892
21.	Tripura	20,546
22.	Arunachal Pradesh	18,174
23.	Mizoram	11,950
24.	Meghalaya	11,092
25.	Sikkim	3,812
26.	Jharkhand	2,611
27.	Manipur	1,425
	Total	2,14,20,599

Table 8: Pendency of Appeals and Complaints

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Pendency
1.	Central Information Commission	23,989 cases pending as on 06 March, 2018 (21,114 appeals and 2875 complaints)
2.	Andhra Pradesh	SIC has to be reconstituted
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	45 appeals and complaints pending as of 1 st January 2018 (breakups not available)
4.	Assam	1,916 cases pending as on 28 February, 2018 (1,837 appeals and 79 complaints) ⁵¹
5.	Bihar	3,074 appeals and complaints pending as of March 2018. SIC does not have an operational website.
6.	Chhattisgarh	6,246 cases pending as on November 2017 (breakups and latest data not available)
7.	Goa	385 appeals and complaints pending as of 1 st January 2018 (breakups not available)
8.	Gujarat	4,065 cases pending as on 01 January, 2018 (breakups not available)
9.	Haryana	1,980 cases pending as on 01 January, 2018 (1,736 appeals and 244 complaints)
10.	Himachal Pradesh	442 cases pending as on 31 March, 2017. (Latest data and breakups will be available only on 31 March, 2018 according to SIC staff)
11.	Jharkhand	7,859 (7,781 appeals and 78 complaints)
12.	Karnataka	29,291 cases pending as on 23 February, 2018 (27,820 appeals and 1,471 complaints)
13.	Kerala	14,253 cases pending as on 01 January, 2018 (10,132 appeals and 4,121 complaints pending)
14.	Madhya Pradesh	SIC does not have an operational website. Telephone numbers from old website do not work
15.	Maharashtra	41,537 cases pending as on 01 January, 2018 (39,121 appeals and 2,416 complaints)
16.	Manipur	SIC staff could not provide pendency figures despite telephonic requests.
17.	Meghalaya	No pending cases
18.	Mizoram	No pending cases
19.	Nagaland	46 cases pending as on 01 January, 2018 (38 appeals and 8 complaints)
20.	Odisha	10,422 cases pending as on 01 January, 2018 (8,869 appeals and 1,553 complaints)

⁵¹ 1,353 appeals are said to have been filed by one appellant (information obtained telephonically from the SIC).

Sl. No.	Information Commission	Pendency
21.	Punjab	2,300 cases pending as in February 2018 (breakups and latest data not available despite making formal requests on telephone)
22.	Rajasthan	4,200 cases pending as on 01 January, 2018 (3,965 appeals and 235 complaints)
23.	Sikkim	SIC office telephone number is not reachable. No information on the website
25.	Tamil Nadu	SIC staff informed telephonically that pendency data is being calculated and will be disclosed in future
26.	Tripura	No pending cases
27.	Uttarakhand	1,189 cases pending as on 01 March, 2018 (1,021 appeals and 168 complaints)
28.	Uttar Pradesh	40,248 pending cases as on 31 January, 2018 (35,113 appeals and 5,135 complaints) SIC staff did not pick up the phone despite several attempts to contact them
29.	West Bengal	SIC staff could not be reached on the telephone numbers advertised on the website
30.	Jammu and Kashmir	185 appeal cases pending as on 31 December 2017. Details of complaint cases not uploaded on the website
	Total	1,96,268 appeals and complaints pending.

CHRI's role in promoting RTI across the globe

CHRI was closely associated with the drafting of the two RTI laws in India at various stages. Within a fortnight of Parliament approving the Central RTI Bill, CHRI organised the first ever national conference to discuss its implementation. Senior representatives of Central and State Governments, civil society, academia and the mass media discussed the ways and means of implementing the RTI Act with experts and Information Commissioners from Mexico, the United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa and Jamaica. The outcome document of the conference served as the basis for several States to strategise their implementation efforts. Later within a span of a few months CHRI resourced State-level implementation conferences in Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tamil Nadu. During the initial years of implementation CHRI worked with officer training institutes at the Central and State level to design and conduct training programmes for public information officers and appellate authorities designated under the Central RTI Act. CHRI has conducted or resourced several workshops all over the country to train representatives of big and small civil society organisations and networks and the mass media to use the Indian RTI laws in public interest. CHRI has worked closely with civil society actors, academia, lawmakers and the State Government of Jammu and Kashmir for the enactment, implementation and use of the J&K RTI Act.

In recent years CHRI has worked with Information Commissions and partner organisations to develop and implement proactive disclosure templates for making development-related information accessible to people through gram panchayats, particularly in the State of Gujarat. CHRI was part of the Government-appointed Task Force that drew up guidelines for implementing the proactive disclosure provisions of the Central RTI Act. The Central Government has issued these guidelines in 2013 and 2016.

Internationally, CHRI works with governments and civil society for the adoption of RTI laws in Commonwealth countries. CHRI shared its technical knowledge and experience of advocacy with civil society partners in Bangladesh who successfully moved Government and Parliament to enact their own RTI law. Since then CHRI has worked with partners to build civil society capacity to spread awareness about the value and use of RTI at the community level in South Asia and Africa. CHRI has provided technical inputs for strengthening draft RTI legislation in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bahamas, Barbados, Bhutan, Cook Islands, Fiji, Ghana, Guyana, Kenya, Malawi, Malta, Malaysia (provincial RTI Bills), Pakistan (national and provincial RTI Bills) the Maldives, Malta, Pakistan (national and provincial RTI Bills), Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia. CHRI provided technical assistance to the process of implementing RTI laws in Bangladesh, the Cayman Islands, Kenya, Liberia, Tanzania and Sri Lanka. CHRI also facilitates learning programmes in India for visiting government and civil society representatives from South Asia and Africa to acquire first-hand knowledge about the efforts being made to embed the regime of transparency in India.

For more information about CHRI's work in India and the Commonwealth please visit: www.humanrightsinitiative.org.