

**DoPT's Approach Paper on a Privacy Law for India - Send Your Comments by
25th October, 2010
October 21, 2010**

Dear friends,

The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Government of India, has released an approach paper on the issue of a law to protect privacy in India inviting comments from people. Readers may recollect that the DoPT had conducted a consultation inviting a handful of researchers and a larger group of bureaucrats (and hardly any RTI users or activists) on this subject in July, 2010. This approach paper appears to be a follow-up of the same meeting.

DoPT's approach paper is attached and may also be accessed at: http://persmin.gov.in/WriteReadData/RTI/aproach_paper.pdf This paper has implications for the Right to Information Act, 2005 amongst other things including national security.

The summary of the proceedings of the July workshop is attached and may also be accessed at: <http://persmin.gov.in/WriteReadData/RTI/12AUGUST.pdf>

The approach paper appears to have been uploaded on the DoPT website for public comments on 18th October. They have given the 1.2 billion people of India 'one week' to respond to this paper from this date. The last date for submission of comments is 25th October, 2010 I am almost three days late in alerting you. That leaves us with four days only to read, digest, debate and send comments to the DoPT.

There is no indication as to whom the comments must be sent to. As the letter is signed by the Deputy Secretary (RTI) of DoPT comments may be sent to her at the following address:

Ms. Anuradha Chagti
Deputy Secretary (RTI)
Department of Personnel and Training
Government of India
North Block
New Delhi- 110 001
Tel: +91-11-23092074
Email: osdrti-dopt@nic.in

I had written a longish piece for The Hoot on the issue of privacy law for India subsequent to the DoPT consultation in July. This article is attached and may be accessed at:

<http://www.thehoot.org/web/freetracker/story.php?storyid=149§ionId=62#>

I have not yet read the approach paper in detail. So I am unable to send my comments right now. I will try to circulate some comments by the 24th as I am travelling out of town. But there are several others who may like to send their comments to DoPT and also to one another. I request all readers to circulate this email and their comments as widely as possible. While the DoPT's effort to consult with people on this subject is truly laudable, the time limit for doing so is hopelessly inadequate. I hope they will extend the time limit to at least a month to enable people to send well-informed recommendations.

Please send emails to the Deputy Secretary (RTI) at osdrti-dopt@nic.in seeking extension of the time. A sample email is provided below for your use or adaptation:

"Dear madam,

I/We would like to congratulate you for taking the initiative of circulating an approach paper on the proposed law to protect privacy in India. However the time limit of one week is absolutely inadequate to study the subject and send you well-informed recommendations. Kindly extend the time limit by a month to allow for meaningful consultation on the subject across the country.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,

(Signature, name and address of the sender)"

In order to access the our previous email alerts on this topic please click on:

http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&catid=34%3Aright-to-information&id=656%3Aemail-alerts-&Itemid=84

In order to access the our previous email alerts on RTI please click on:

http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=65&Itemid=84

You will find the links at the top of this web page. If you do not wish to receive email alerts please send an email to this address indicating your refusal to receive email alerts.

Thanks

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