

Maharashtra: SCIC Upholds File Notings as Information

To,

Dr. Suresh Joshi,

Chief Information Commissioner Of Maharashtra,

New Administrative building, Mantralaya, Mumbai.

Dear Sir,

I had the privilege of sharing the podium with you in the Seminar on the Right To Information Act held at the Jitendra Chauhan College of Law last evening.

Apart from your erudite explanation of the Act and its purpose, you made two very important announcements, which will go a long way in strengthening the implementation of the RTI act.

On consulting with other members of the NCPRI working committee, we felt that we would like to felicitate and congratulate you for these.

During your speech, you made two important points:

- You very correctly took the position that file notings are permitted information as the Act stands and have declared that you will permit demands for file notings from requisitioners of information.
- You also clearly announced that though there is no time limit specified in the Act for disposal of Second appeals by the Information Commission, you will ensure a norm of disposing second appeals within four weeks.

By these clear announcements you have demonstrated two important characteristics which will have a very far reaching positive impact on the working of the act:

- You have upheld the eminent Constitutional position given to the Commission by unequivocally stating that you will act as per the law, and will not accept fallacious interpretations from anybody;- no matter what their position. This gives us great hope for the future of this Act.
- You have demonstrated your willingness and commitment to set norms and follow them in the spirit of the Act, even where the RTI Act has been silent. This ability to lay down the discipline and publicly announce it, shows a rare willingness for accountability.

On behalf of the National Campaign for People's Right To Information we thank you for espousing the letter and spirit of the Right To Information Act. We also appreciate the fact that you have done justice to the eminent Constitutional position and responsibility thrust on you at a very historic moment of the Right To Information campaign. We are

sure you will consistently maintain this proactive stance to ensure that Right To Information leads to a true participatory democracy for India.

We look forward to working with you,

Best regards,

Yours truly,

Shailesh Gandhi

Working Committee member of
National Campaign for People's Right To Information- NCPRI

Source: Received via email from Shailesh Gandhi, NCPRI, 11 January 2006