

## **ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS COMMISSION SUBMITS FIRST REPORT ON RIGHT TO INFORMATION TO PRIME MINISTER**

*Press Information Bureau  
Government of India*

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The second Administrative Reforms Commission Chairperson, Shri Veerappa Moily today submitted the first report on 'Right to Information - Master key to good governance' to the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. The following are the key recommendations of the Commission on the subject:

- The Official Secrets Act, 1923(OSA) in its current form is incongruous with the regime of transparency in a democratic society. OSA should be repealed, and suitable safeguards to protect security of State should be incorporated in the National Security Act.
- At least half the members of the Information Commissions should be drawn from non-Civil Service background, so that members represent the rich variety and varied experience in society.
- Complete reorganization of public records is a precondition for effective implementation of RTI. A public Records Office should be established in each State as a repository of expertise, to monitor, supervise, control and inspect all public records. 1% of the funds of all flagship programmes of GoI should be earmarked for five years for updating all records and building necessary infrastructure.
- The Information Commission should be entrusted with the authority and responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the RTI Act in all public authorities.
- Clear and unambiguous guidelines need to be evolved to determine which non-governmental organizations would come under the purview of RTI Act.
- Most requests for information are usually to use it as a tool for grievance redressal. States may be advised to establish independent public grievance redressal authorities to deal with complaints of delay, harassment and corruption. These authorities should work in close coordination with the Information Commission.
- Certain safeguards should be introduced to discourage frivolous and vexatious requests so that the system is not overloaded, and discipline and harmony are not jeopardized.
- A roadmap should be charted out for effective implementation of RTI Act in the Legislature and Judiciary at all levels.
- The Commission made specific recommendations, and suggested a roadmap to implement each of them. Detailed recommendations pertain to a variety of issues - including a civil service conduct rules and office procedures, record keeping, capacity building and awareness generation, and the exercise of power to remove difficulties.