

Right to Information/ edited by Asok Kumar Mukhopadhyay. Published by ATI, Kolkata, 2007

The Proceedings of the Seminar on Right to Information, held on January 2007, jointly organized by Administrative Training Institute, Kolkata and West Bengal Political Science Association contains nine papers. The contributors of the papers are experienced personalities including senior Bureaucrats, University teachers and media persons.

All Government information is public in Sweden, unless certain matters are specifically listed in the law as exemptions from the general rules. Swedish people enjoy political right of access to government information. It is there civil and legal right. In India we see the rural people's pressure group "Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangha (MKSS)" agitated for people's right to information during 1990s in Rajasthan. The campaign through 'Jan-Sunai' learnt that it was the fundamental democratic right of the people of India to know about the decisions of the state officials and see the documents related public works.

Sri Asit Ranjan Bandyopadhyay, Retired IAS, former Additional Secretary to the Government of India, former Director, National Library stated the salient features of Right to Information. He said, "free access to information is the norm, denial of information entails a legal obligation upon the authority to defends its act of denial". According to Shri Bandyopadhyay, wider transparency in collateral institutions of state and common man's preparation is necessary for successful implementation of Right to information. Prof. Asok Kumar Mukhopadhyay has discussed in his paper "Right to information as a Civil Right" on evolution of Right to Information Act, its implementation and present scenario of West Bengal Government regarding right to information. The significance of RTI Act under jurisprudential understanding- by Associate Prof. Supriyo Routh of NUJS analyzed the articles 12, 19, 32 of the RTI Act and concluded that this Act will act as a catalyst to enhance the demand of the citizen for more and more information. Sri Gautam Sengupta, Addl. Director, ATI explained, "The RTI Act 2005 can be used as a potential and primary tool for good governance". According to the author the RTI Act 2005 has the promise to be one of the most progressive, most democratic and most pro-citizen information laws so far enacted by any country. Sri Dipankar Sinha, Prof, Calcutta University, Deptt of Political Science is hopeful about RTI Act 2005. According to him people should exercise sound judgment on the conduct of the government and the merits of public policies.

At the end of this publication bare act version of RTI Act 2005 has been included.