

The transparency and Citizen-Centricity became the hallmark of the Governance Mode

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Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh said that RTI is fully functional in Jammu and Kashmir and there is a pressing need to create public awareness about the functioning of the RTI Act. After a meeting with senior most Information Commissioner Shri D.P.Sinha, who is officiating as CIC, the Union Minister has urged the Civil Society to come forward in a big way in this noble mission, so that the Central Information Commission is not overloaded with frivolous and non-essential queries. He suggested that the Information Authorities should ponder not to entertain the avoidable RTIs and stressed that almost all information is available in public domain today.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that it goes to the credit of the Commission and its functionaries that in the midst of the pandemic on 15th May this year, the Central Information Commission started entertaining, hearing and disposing of RTIs from the newly created Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, through virtual means. The Minister also informed that any citizen of India can now file RTI pertaining to matters related to J&K and Ladakh, which was reserved to only Citizens of erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, before the Reorganisation Act of 2019. It is pertinent to mention here that consequent to the passing of J&K Reorganisation Act 2019, the J&K Right to Information Act 2009 and the Rules there under were repealed and Right to Information Act 2005 and the Rules there under were enforced from 31.10.2019. This measure was widely hailed by people of Jammu and Kashmir and the Administration of the UT.

Dr. Jitendra Singh said that ever since Modi Government came into power in 2014, Transparency and Citizen-Centricity became the hallmark of the Governance Model. He said that in the last six years, every conscious decision was taken to strengthen the Independence and Resources of the Information

Commissions and all vacancies were filled as fast as possible.

Shri Sinha pointed out that various steps taken to facilitate the CIC hearing during the lockdown and partial lockdown included video conferencing, audio conferencing, facilitation of return submission, uploading of the contact details of Deputy Registrars on the website, issue of notices by e-post wherever required, online registration and scrutiny of fresh cases etc. He also informed the Minister that the Commission had effectively continued its interactive and outreach activities including video conference with civil society representatives and with members of National Federation of Information Commissions in India.

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