BPAE-141: RIGHT TO INFORMATION

Tutor Marked Assignments

Course Code: BPAE-141
Assignment Code: ASST /TMA / July 2026 & January 2027
Total Marks: 100

Assignment A

Answer the following questions in about 500 words each.

1. Explain the powers and functions of the Central Information Commission. 20
2. Examine the significance of the Right to Information Act for governance. 20

Assignment B

Answer the following questions in about 250 words each.

3. "Media plays an important role in realising the objectives of the RTI Act". Comment. 10
4. What measures have been taken by the Government of India for making the RTI Rules, 2012 more effective? 10
5. Highlight the bottlenecks in ensuring administrative transparency and accountability through the RTI Act, 2005. 10

Assignment C

Answer the following questions in about 100 words each.

6. Enumerate the various stakeholders involved in implementation of the Right to Information Act, 2005. 6
7. What are the major constraints in the implementation of the RTI Act at the district level? 6
8. Explain the significance of Social Audit in ensuring right to information. 6
9. Discuss the major achievements of the Right to Information Act, 2005. 6
10. What are the major challenges before public authorities? 6

1. Explain the powers and functions of the Central Information Commission. 20

Answer

The Central Information Commission (CIC) is the highest statutory appellate and complaint body for access to information held by Central public authorities. It was established under Section 12 of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005. Its purpose is to ensure that citizens can effectively exercise their legal right to ask questions about public administration. The Commission consists of the Chief Information Commissioner and up to ten Information Commissioners. It is an independent adjudicatory body within the framework of the Act, rather than an ordinary government department. Its principal responsibilities are described in Sections 18, 19, 20 and 25.

Receiving and investigating complaints

Section 18 empowers the CIC to receive complaints when an applicant cannot submit an RTI request because a Public Information Officer (PIO) has not been appointed, an application is refused, the prescribed time has passed without a reply, an excessive fee has been demanded, or incomplete, false or misleading information has been given. It may also examine other difficulties in obtaining records. The Commission assesses whether there are reasonable grounds for an inquiry. For example, if a Central government office repeatedly refuses to accept applications, a citizen can approach the CIC even before a normal information appeal becomes possible. A complaint is therefore a distinct remedy against obstruction of the RTI process.

Powers during an inquiry

Under Section 18(3), the Commission has important powers similar to those of a civil court for specified purposes. It can summon persons, require their attendance, take evidence on oath or affidavit, order the discovery and inspection of documents, and call for public records from an office or court. Section 18(4) further authorises it to examine relevant records held by a public authority even when that authority wishes to withhold them from the applicant. These powers make an investigation more meaningful than a simple exchange of letters. They do not, however, turn the CIC into a criminal court or give it unlimited power over every subject.