



Shri Riya Taram

..... Appellant

-VERSUS-

PIO-Cum-Divisional Forest Officer,
Changlang Div. Changlang District,
Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh

..... Respondent.

Order: 21.05.2026.

JUDGEMENT

This is an appeal filed under sub-section (3) of Section 19 of the RTI 2005. Brief fact of the case is that the Appellant Shri Riya Taram on **04/08/2025** filed an RTI application in Form- 'A' before the PIO-cum-DFO, Changlang Forest Division, Changlang District, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh. Whereby seeking various information as quoted in Form 'A' application. The Appellant being not receiving the information from the PIO filed the First Appeal before the First Appellate Authority (FAA) on **30/09/2025**, and even then, the Appellant not receiving the required information from the PIO, filed the Second Appeal before the Arunachal Pradesh Information Commission (APIC) on **14/01/2026** and the Registry of the Commission (APIC) having receipt of the Appeal registered it as APIC-No. **95/A/2026** (Appeal) and processed the same for its hearing and disposal.

Accordingly, matter came up for hearing before the Commission on **21.05.2026**, wherein both the parties are present during the hearing before the Commission.

After hearing both the parties the Commission (APIC) hereby observes;

1. The present second appeal has been filed by Shri Riya Taram (hereinafter referred to as "the Appellant") under Section 19(3) of the Right to Information Act, 2005 (hereinafter referred to as "the RTI Act") against the First Appellate Authority (FAA) who did not hear the appeal and so, approached the State Information Commission with this Second Appeal.
2. The genesis of this appeal lies in an application filed by the Appellant under Section 6(1) of the RTI Act on seeking information on seventeen distinct points for a period spanning five years. The information sought pertains to various activities and records of the Divisional Forest Office, Changlang Division, under the CAMPA Scheme.
3. The Respondent PIO, declined to provide the information, citing the following reasons:
 - a) The application, specifically Form A, is not specific as required under Section 6 of the RTI Act.
 - b) Furnishing the requested information, which is voluminous and would run into lakhs of pages, would disproportionately divert the resources of the public authority, as stipulated under Section 7(9) of the RTI Act.
 - c) The Government of Arunachal Pradesh does not allocate separate funds for the purpose of furnishing information under the RTI Act.
4. Aggrieved by the decision of the PIO, the Appellant preferred a first appeal before the FAA under Section 19(1) of the RTI Act. The FAA, after hearing the parties, dismissed the appeal and upheld the reasoning of the PIO. Consequently, the Appellant has approached this Commission through the present second appeal.

Submissions of the Parties;

5. The Appellant, in his appeal, has contended that the denial of information by the Respondent is arbitrary and contrary to the spirit of the RTI Act. The Appellant has argued that the information sought is in the public interest and that the grounds for rejection are not tenable in law.
6. The Respondent, in its oral submissions, has reiterated its stand that the information sought is not specific and is exceptionally voluminous. It has been contended that compiling the information for seventeen different queries over a period of five years would require the deployment of a significant portion of the workforce for an extended period, thereby paralyzing the normal functioning of the office. The Respondent has further submitted that the financial constraints due to the non-allocation of separate funds for RTI-related activities make it impracticable to provide such a vast amount of information.

Analysis and Findings;

7. This Commission has carefully considered the submissions of both parties and has perused the record. The pivotal issues that arise for consideration are:
 - a) Whether the information sought by the Appellant is specific as required by Section 6 of the RTI Act.
 - b) Whether the volume of the information sought justifies its denial on the grounds of disproportionate diversion of resources under Section 7(9) of the RTI Act.
 - c) Whether the non-allocation of separate funds by the government can be a valid reason for refusing to provide information under the RTI Act.
8. On the issue of specificity under Section 6: Section 6(1) of the RTI Act requires an applicant to specify the particulars of the information sought. A plain reading of the Appellant's application reveals that information has been sought under seventeen broad heads for a period of five years. While the queries are distinct, they are wide-ranging and lack the necessary precision to enable the PIO to identify and locate the specific records with reasonable effort. An omnibus request for "all information" on a particular subject over a long period can be construed as non-specific. The PIO is not expected to conduct research on behalf of the applicant or to interpret vague and general queries. The Central Information Commission has, in several cases, held that vague or voluminous RTI applications cannot be summarily rejected; however, the PIO must engage with the applicant to narrow the scope.
9. On the issue of disproportionate diversion of resources under Section 7(9): Section 7(9) of the RTI Act states that "an information shall ordinarily be provided in the form in which it is sought unless it would disproportionately divert the resources of the public authority or would be detrimental to the safety or preservation of the record in question." It is pertinent to note that this section does not provide a ground for denial of information but rather for providing it in a form other than that which was requested. The Supreme Court has observed that the nation cannot afford a situation where a majority of the staff of public authorities spends a significant amount of their time collecting and furnishing information at the cost of their regular duties.
10. In the instant case, the Respondent has averred that the information sought would run into lakhs of pages. While the mere volume of information is not a ground for denial, the cumulative effect of providing such extensive information must be weighed against the resources of the public authority. The Central Information Commission, in the case of *Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) v. Aditya Bandhopadhyay*, (2011) 8 SCC 497, has cautioned against the misuse of the RTI Act to clog the functioning of public authorities with mundane applications. The Commission is of the considered view

that compiling seventeen categories of information for a five-year period would indeed lead to a disproportionate diversion of the limited resources of the Divisional Forest Office, Changlang.

11. The Respondent PIO, in such a situation, could have invoked Section 7(9) to offer the Appellant an inspection of the relevant records. This would have balanced the Appellant's right to information with the practical constraints of the public authority. The failure of the PIO to offer inspection is a procedural lapse. However, considering the broad and extensive nature of the information sought, the underlying principle of preventing a disproportionate diversion of resources remains valid.
12. On the issue of non-allocation of funds: The contention that the Government of Arunachal Pradesh does not provide separate funds for furnishing information is not a legally sustainable ground for denying information under the RTI Act. The Act is a central legislation, and its provisions are binding on all public authorities. The public authority is obligated to make budgetary provisions to comply with the mandate of the Act. The lack of specific funding cannot be cited as a reason to frustrate the citizen's fundamental right to information.

Decision;

13. In light of the aforesaid analysis, this Commission finds that while the ground of non-allocation of funds is untenable, the rejection of the Appellant's request on the grounds of the queries being non-specific and voluminous, leading to a disproportionate diversion of resources, is justifiable to a certain extent.
14. The Appellant's request for seventeen different types of information over a five-year period is overly broad and lacks the specificity required for the PIO to furnish the information without an exhaustive and time-consuming search, which would impede the normal functioning of the public authority.
15. However, the Respondent PIO ought to have provided an opportunity to the Appellant to inspect the records as a viable alternative under Section 7(9) of the RTI Act.
16. Therefore, while upholding the core reasoning of the PIO and the FAA regarding the impracticality of furnishing the voluminous information as sought, this Commission deems it appropriate to provide the Appellant with an opportunity to reframe his request.

Order;

17. **The appeal is dismissed.**
18. The Appellant is at liberty to file a fresh application before the PIO, specifying with reasonable particularity the information required. The Appellant may choose to narrow down the scope of the queries and the time period for which the information is sought.
19. Alternatively, the Appellant may request the PIO for an inspection of the relevant records at a mutually convenient date and time, from which he may obtain the specific information he requires.
20. The PIO is directed to provide all reasonable assistance to the Appellant in case a fresh application is filed or an inspection is sought, in accordance with the provisions of the RTI Act, 2005.
21. A copy of this order be sent to both parties.

In view of the above facts and circumstances the Commission dismiss this Appeal. And, accordingly, this Appeal stands dismissed and closed once for all.

Judgment pronounced in the open Court of this Commission today on this 21st day of May' 2026.

Given under my hand and seal of this Commission on this 21st day of May' 2026.

Sd/-

(Vijay Taram)

State Information Commissioner
APIC-Itanagar

Memo.No.APIC-95/A/2026 / 1283 Dated Itanagar, the 26 May, 2026.

Copy to:

1. PIO-Cum-DFO, Changlang Div. Changlang District, Govt of Arunachal Pradesh for information and necessary action please. **Pin Code:792120**
2. Shri Riya Taram, Huto Colony, Jullang, Itanagar, P/Pare District Arunachal Pradesh for information please. **Contact No. 9383103387**
3. The Computer Programmer, APIC for uploading on the Website of APIC please.
4. Office Copy.

P. Rajiv Singh
Registrar/Dy. Registrar
APIC, Itanagar.

Deputy Registrar
Arunachal Pradesh Information Commission
Itanagar