

**MANIDHANAHEYAM FREE IAS ACADEMY – TNPSC GROUP II & IIA****UNIT - III****RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT****1. Write a note on RTI Act 2005.(6 Marks)**

- 1) **The Right to Information Act**, simply known as RTI, is a revolutionary Act that aims to promote transparency in government institutions in India. RTI Act has been made by legislation of Parliament of India on 15 June 2005. The Act came into effect on 12 October 2005 and has been implemented ever since to provide information to crores of Indian citizens. All the constitutional authorities come under this Act, making it one of the most powerful laws of the country.
- 2) It is termed revolutionary because it opens government organisations up for scrutiny. Equipped with knowledge about RTI, a common man can demand any government agency to furnish information. The organisation is bound to provide the information, that too within 30 days, failing which the officer concerned is imposed with a monetary fine.

**2. How powerful is RTI Act and how is RTI any different from other anti-corruption laws?**

- 1) When it comes to RTI, there are watchdogs on multiple levels to ensure the Act is followed in letter and spirit. The Act has employed a 'perform or perish' approach, besides setting up a mechanism to dispense information.
- 2) Every government organization is needed to appoint one employee as a public information officer (PIO). Once a department gets an RTI request, it is the responsibility of the PIO to furnish the information to the applicant within 30 days. Failing to do so means, a monetary fine can be imposed on the PIO. The longer a PIO makes an applicant wait, the more the penalty levied on him/her. There have been instances where PIOs have been asked to cough up amount in thousands of rupees as fine.
- 3) Every state has an Information Commission, comprising a Chief Information Commissioner and a few information commissioners. Former judges, IAS, IPS officers of impeccable record are appointed to these positions by the government. Above them in the hierarchy is the Central Information Commission and below them are first and second appellate authorities to see to it that an applicant does get the RTI information he/she has requested.

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**3. List out the objectives of RTI Act – 2005. What kind of information can be accessed through RTI Act? (12 Marks)**

The RTI Act was implemented with the following objectives:

- 1) Allow the citizens of the country to question the working government.
- 2) Promote transparency and answerability of the working government.
- 3) Check corruption prevailing in the government to serve the citizens better.
- 4) Make citizens well-informed about the functioning of the government system.

**Right to Information: Kinds of Information that can be accessed through RTI Act,**

- 1) Any sort of information that the government can disclose in the parliament is allowed to be questioned by the citizens. In other words, the citizens of India have the right to any information. They can question the government authorities at any time through the RTI Act.
- 2) However, there are some limitations to the type of information that can be accessed. Information that can hamper the sovereignty and integrity of our country is exempted from the scope of the Right to Information Act. Sensitive information related to our country's internal security or information related to India's association with other countries vital for maintaining healthy relations with each other, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), and any cabinet discussions is free from the RTI Act 2005.

**4. State the importance of Right to Information Act. (15 Marks)**

- 1) The Right to Information is a fundamental right of the citizens. As a responsible citizen, one must be aware of the RTI Act 2005. In this section, a few points emphasizing its importance are discussed:
- 2) The Right to Information Act allows citizens to be empowered to question the confidentiality and ill-practices prevailing in the state of government in power.
- 3) Authorities at the central and state levels help citizens to fetch the information using the RTI Act.

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- 4) The information subject to RTI is treated as public property as the information coming under the scope of the RTI Act is subjected to the interests of Indian citizens. Such information is also fundamental for the transparency of democracy and successful administration.
- 5) The information subject to the RTI Act is crucial for the accountability of the government in power. It is also useful for other reasons, which cater to the interests of the society for a better future.
- 6) RTI enables the common citizens of our country to question even the highest and most powerful authority.
- 7) The RTI Act allows people to fetch information that governments and officials would otherwise not reveal.
- 8) The RTI Act helps in exposing corruption prevailing in the government systems, bringing the focus on any violation of human rights, and highlighting malpractices of government authorities at union or state levels.
- 9) Through the RTI Act, citizens gain access to information on decision-making, policies, and activities of the government that have direct impacts on the citizens.
- 10) The Supreme Court has declared RTI as a fundamental right referring to Articles 19 and 21 of the Indian Constitution, which ensures that citizens have the freedom of speech and expression and freedom to live.