

- Transparency** - availability of info about govt. functioning in public domain for public scrutiny
- facilitates accountability
 - mandates predictability/objectivity
 - enables peoples' participation
- basic necessity of good governance

Tools that negate full transparency

- i) Official secrets Act, 1923
- ii) Civil Service Conduct Rules, 1964 → prevents unauthorized communication
- iii) Indian Evidence Act 1872 → govt. privilege in evidence
- iv) Oath of secrecy
- v) Manual of Office Procedure → prohibits disclosure of file notings
- vi) Classification of info as per guidelines in Dept. Manual

The RTI Act 2005

Measures that need be taken under the Act

- i) Building Institutions → Info commissions, Info officers, Appellate authorities
- ii) Info and record keeping → suo motu declaration, public interest disclosure, modernizing record keeping
- iii) Capacity building & awareness generation
- iv) Creation of monitoring mechanism

Issues in implementation

- various structural, procedural, logistical issues and problems

Procedural

- * complicated system of accepting requests
- * insistence on demand drafts
- * difficulties in filing applications by post
- * large no. of PIOs
- * varying rates

Structural

- * lack of inventory of public authorities
- * lack of single window clearance system

Logistical

- * wide geographical dispersion of depts. and agencies
- * frivolous and vexatious requests

Other problems

- * PIOs not appointed at lower tiers of the government
- * record keeping totally neglected in India

10 years of RTI

- 50 lakh application every year
- 1% of the electorate uses RTI every year
- atleast 2% of the India population has used the law
- unleashed a silent citizens' movement

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- poor implementation
- poor record keeping practises
- lack of infra and staff
- crying need for Public Records Act
- 40 ppl killed for seeking info
↳ need for whistleblower Protection Act

notable +ves

- culture of openness
 - authority coupled with accountability
 - more participative governance
- } Fundamental shifts