

Q4) Answer:

Transparency is one of the essential characteristics of Good Governance. It implies openness of the government officials to the citizens of the country. RTI helps in achieving the transparency in the

RTI Act, 2005:

Under the act, any citizen <sup>of India</sup> may request information from a public Authority.

\* Information, in general is provided within 30 days.

\* In matters involving petitioner's life and liberty, information is provided within 48 hours.

Significance of RTI:

- It gives voice to ordinary citizens in the issues of governance.
- It empowers people to audit, review, examine and assess government acts and decisions.
- It ~~act~~ acts as a first step to prevent misgovernance.

- It democratized the information and decentralized the power equally to all the citizens.
- It improves decision making by public authority by removing unnecessary bureaucracy.

### Success Stories:

\* Suvarana Bhagyawant made rounds of the panchayat office for about two years.

\* A resident of Ambhegaon village, she needed her grandfather's death certificate for applying widow certificate to her grandmother.

\* Finally, she got the certificate in 8 days after filing for RTI.

\* In Rajasthan, ~~Revat~~ Revat Ram and his friends used the act to expose black market at their Ration shop.

\* Adarsh Society Scam exposed by RTI activist Simpreet Singh and Yogacharya Anandji culminated in resignation of the then Cm of Maharashtra.

## Challenges:

Though the act has many successful stories, it has the following challenges.

- The RTI activists are attacked and murdered by the aggrieved party.
- Vacancy of seats and delaying the appointment of the Information Commissioners reduces the efficiency.
- Pendency of cases at high rate.
- Dilution of Supplementary laws like the Whistle blowers protection Act.

## Way Forward:

- Strictly enforcing the whistle blowers Protection Act to protect the activists.
- Filling the vacancies promptly.
- Empowering the Information Commissioners by making the body a Constitutional one.

The right to information was made to achieve social justice, transparency and to bring accountability in the government. The challenges it face needs to be addressed to utilize its fullest potential.