

“LEGAL LITERACY CAMP: HOW TO FILE AN APPLICATION UNDER THE R.T.I. ACT”

*(Report on the event conducted in Kansal
Village, Chandigarh on December 15, 2015)*

Abstract: This event was conducted by one para-legal volunteer from Legal Aid Centre, S.L.S.-Noida. Firstly, the participants were informed about their ‘right to file an application under the Act’; later on, they were taught: ‘how they can file such application’, ‘issues about which such applications can be needful for them’, ‘how an appeal can be filed if they don’t receive information’.

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1. Concept Note:

The Para-legal volunteers of the Legal Aid Centre of Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA, conducted an awareness programme disseminating knowledge to the people of villages regarding the filing of an RTI Application under the Right to Information Act, 2005. Under the provisions of the Act, any citizen of India has the right to acquire information regarding the working of any 'public authority'. The reply should come within thirty days. This Act is fairly a recent one, and so it is important to educate the people living in villages of such a right which is available to them.

The programme was conducted on 15th December, 2015 in Kansal village, a village nearby Chandigarh.

2. Objective:

- The first and foremost objective was to teach the people to file an RTI application.
- Educate the people about their rights guaranteed under the Right to Information Act, 2005.
- To empower the citizens of the country (especially people from the rural areas) and promote transparency and accountability in the working of the Government for curbing corruption or biasness towards them.

3. Preliminary Preparations:

Few preparations had to be made before the event was conducted,

- Collection of banners and pamphlets from the Legal Aid Centre, Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA.
- Choosing of the appropriate village, where there would be need to disseminate the knowledge.

4. Conducting the Event

The event was conducted in Kansal village, a small village near Chandigarh. The programme was conducted in the porch of the house of a lady to whom I contacted for help to gather people. Slowly around 9-10 ladies were there. They all were seated and then I started by asking them if they know anything about the RTI Act, 2005. Surprisingly many knew what it is about. Then I

started by explaining them about the Right to Information Act, 2005 and how one should file an application under its provisions. The RTI Application filing was taught by the 4 simple steps as given in the pamphlet. Writing of applications was encouraged.

5. Response of the Target Population

The people were very much curious to know the intricacies of the provisions of the Act. They inquired about the procedure to be followed in case they don't receive a reply within 30 days. They also inquired about the authorities against whom they can seek information, i.e. their concept of 'public authority' was clarified.

Overall it was an interactive crowd, where they were curious to know more details of the Act.

6. Future Plan of Action

This program was conducted earlier as well. This is the perfect way of implementing something. Going there and explaining them to once, would not help us to achieve the goal. This will take a lot of time. Visiting the places time to time will give them an impression that yes we generally are concerned and that they must take this seriously.

7. Suggestions/Feedback:

Various ways in which the program could be better conducted in future are as follows:-

- No. of Volunteers- The number of volunteers for the program should be definitely more than 3, because if there are more helping hands, then the objective could be better served and achieved.
- Association with NGOs- A prior association with NGO functioning in the particular area would help in a great way to execute the program successfully because they could help to accumulate groups and they could also improve the techniques of the execution of the program.
- Information to the Police Department- An association with lot more volunteers and a larger target audience and a proper street display of banners and posters requires prior

information to police department so that operation and program could be conducted without any hindrance to the society.

8. Conclusion/Remarks:

Overall this was the great learning experience as a Para-legal volunteer. It provided me with an opportunity to go out and explore the ground realities which are very needed and useful for every law student. It helped in acclimatizing me to the problems faced by the masses ignorant about their rights and remedies under the law.

ANNEXURES





