

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

*(Report on the event conducted in Faizabad,  
Uttar Pradesh on 9th June, 2015)*

**Abstract:** This event was conducted by a para-legal volunteer from Legal Aid Centre, S.L.S.-Noida. Firstly, the participants from a slum-village in Kolkotta 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’.

**Conducted by:**  
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## **I. Concept Note**

The Legal Aid Centre at Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA had conducted an awareness program as a part of its initial task. This program involved spreading of awareness regarding the procedure to file the RTI application under the Act. I para-legal volunteers conducted this programme in a village in Faizabad on 9<sup>th</sup> June.

Ignorance is probably the biggest reason behind the exploitation of people by government agencies. To remedy this situation, providing transparency in information held by government would be the biggest asset of people. The object of this drive is to reach as many people as possible and educate them about how to use this tool effectively. The essential tool for this initiative was a literacy camp, which gave out pamphlets mentioning important information about filing RTI. This essentially focused on rural population. Also there were activities where volunteers had demonstrated how to write an application.

## **II. Objectives**

This is a Legal Advocacy initiative which aims at educating rural people about their Right to Information. RTI aims at timely response to citizen requests for government information. The basic object of the Right to Information Act is to empower the citizens, promote transparency and accountability in the working of the Government. Informed citizen is better equipped to keep necessary vigil on the instruments of governance and make the government more accountable to the governed. This event was aimed at taking forward this initiative by making RTI more accessible to rural population.

- To educate as many as possible people about RTI
- Teach how to write an RTI application

## **III. Preliminary Preparations**

As I was executing this program alone at my hometown, Faizabad. All preparations from getting the banner made to getting pamphlets printed was done by me. The next big task was to select

the target area, my grandfather assisted in selection of it. Moreover, apart from preparing material and tools for the event, I also spent some time researching on RTI to gather more information about it and decided on the means to convey this information in the easiest most comprehensible manner.

#### **IV. Conducting the Event**

The village where this program was conducted is where one of our domestic help resides hence we got assistance from him in gathering people and persuading them to listen to me.

This was not very difficult. I was given a proper open space for conducting the program, while the villagers- a small group of children, women and men sat patiently to listen. They seemed keen to listen and understand and offered no resistance. I started with explaining them what RTI stands for, how can they be benefited by it. What government agency they should approach for assistance. Then I answered their queries about fee charged and time taken to get response from the authorities.

Overall the event was conducted smoothly.

#### **V. Response of the Target Population**

The people seemed interested in knowing about the RTI. They asked a lot of questions about how they can avail this mechanism. They had previously heard about it but were not aware about its benefits and means of using it.

#### **VI. Future Plan of Action**

One session about RTI would not create desired impact on people therefore in addition to providing the basic knowledge about such a vast topic to everyone, we should target the educated youth in such areas and explain it to them in great detail and equip them to use this mechanism so that they can assist others when they need to file an RTI.



## **VII. Suggestions/Feedback**

The suggestions for future programs are as follows:

1. **Assistance from NGO, Village panchayat:** As law students we are not properly quipped to conduct these programs, assistance from any local authority or NGO could exponentially improve the impact of the program as the people would be more comfortable in listening and interacting with them. We would also get an opportunity to learn from them.
2. **A large group of volunteers:** would definitely be more beneficial in preparation and conducting of the event in future.

## **VIII. Concluding Remarks**

Organizing such a program single handedly was indeed a great experience, there is still a long way to go. Better preparedness in future should be expected. Overall it was a great experience to reach out and offer help to those who need.



























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