



DATE: 17 FEBRUARY 2026

1 Right to Information Act, 2005 (Source: *The Hindu*)

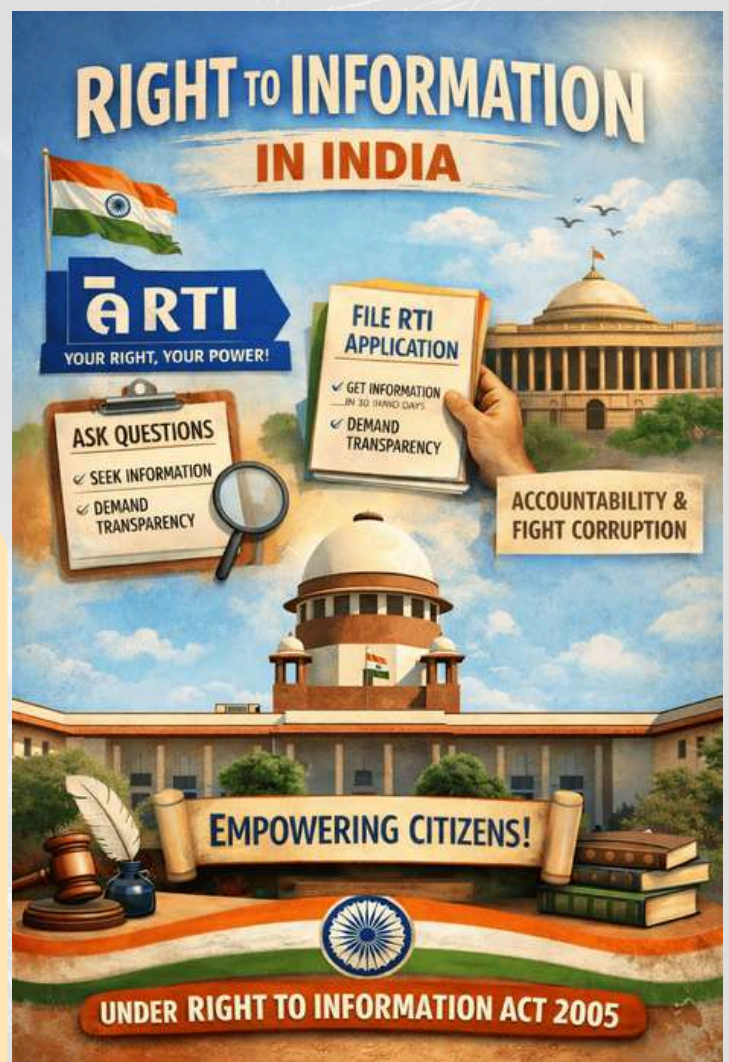
To secure access to information to citizens under the control of public authorities government introduced the Right to Information Act, 2005.

Why was it introduced?

- It will ensure greater transparency for the functioning of the government.
- Common man can get to know what the government does and seek information from the authorities without fear.
- It will convert the working of the government from a culture of secrecy into a culture of openness and transparency.

Key Provisions

- Any citizen can request for information by making an application in writing or through electronic means.
- Every public Authority will designate Central Assistant Public Information Officer (CAPIO) at various levels, and necessary number of Central Public Information Officers (CPIO) in all the offices who will arrange for providing necessary information to the public as permitted under the Act.
- As per sections 8 & 9 of the Act, 2005 certain categories of information are exempt from disclosure to the citizens.
- The act calls for the constitution of a Central Information Commission and State Information Commission.
- The information seeker has to pay a fees of rupees 10 for RTI application. BPL category person is not required to pay any fees.



Recent Issues

- The recent amendment associated with new data protection law has again brought the RTI act into news.

2 Circular Economy in Agriculture (Source: *PIB*)

The circular economy is a system where materials never become waste and nature is regenerated. It focuses on repair, reuse, and recycling rather than on use and throw policy. In agriculture it focuses on using everything generated in the fields and minimising wasting away such resources.

Key Points

- It focuses on reducing global food wastage of 1.05 billion tonnes in 2022.
- India has generated nearly 350 million tonnes of agricultural waste annually, comprising crop residues, husk, straw, and by-products from food processing activities. Proper circular economy practices will help re-utilise these and make them productive.
- These residues can be used to produce nutrient-rich organic fertilisers which will help to enhance soil health and reduce dependence on chemical inputs in agriculture.
- Will help in the management of municipal solid waste and reducing the release of methane and other greenhouse gases due to decomposition of waste.

Government Schemes Focusing on the Circular Economy in Agriculture

- Crop Residue Management (CRM)
- Galvanising Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBARdhan)
- Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF)
- Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF)
- Water Management for Sustainable Agriculture: Initiatives under Jal Shakti Mission.

Differentiate Between Biomass and Biochar

- **Biomass:** Biomass refers to organic material derived from living or recently living plants and animals that can be used as a source of energy, materials, or nutrients.
- **Biochar:** Biochar is a carbon-rich material made by heating biomass (such as crop residues or wood waste) in low-oxygen conditions.





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3 Ex Post Facto Law (Source: *The Hindu*)

Law is a system of binding rules, statutes, and principles enforced by governmental or social institutions to regulate behaviour, maintain order, and ensure justice within a society.

A rule is an official instruction, regulation, or principle guiding behaviour, methods, or procedures in games, society, and organizations.

What is ex post facto?

- A person can only be convicted for a crime which is punishable under a law that is valid at the time the crime is committed.
- Article 20 prohibits the imposition of enhanced penalty or punishment. But it does not bar any reduction in the punishment.
- Validity of the law is not challenged here, but only conviction under the law.

Fact You Need To Know?

- The said article seeks to safeguard and protect the rights of those persons who are accused of any crime and includes citizens, non-citizens as well as corporations.
- Cannot be suspended even during an emergency declared under article 359.





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4 Great Nicobar Project (Source: *The Hindu*)

The Great Nicobar project envisions to develop the remote location considering its strategic location.

- The island is positioned strategically at the mouth of the Malacca Strait which is one of the world's busiest maritime chokepoints.

Issues raised against the project

- Protection of coral reef colonies
- Nesting sites of leatherback turtles
- Located in ecologically protected zones.
- The rights of the Nicobarese and the Shompen communities can be affected.



What are you need to know

- Project is headed by NITI Aayog and implemented by the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Development Corporation.
- It envisions in transforming the remote outpost into a major transshipment and defence hub.
- It consists of an integrated city-state designed to serve both commercial and military purposes.
- The project envisions an international Container Transshipment Terminal in Galathea Bay.
- A new greenfield airport serving both civilian and military needs is planned for 24/7 operations
- A new township to accommodate more than 3.5 lakh people who are expected to live here after the project starts. The township will be powered by a new 450-MVA gas- and solar-based power plant.



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5 Bharat - VISTAAR (Source: PIB)

A multi-layered digital platform designed to provide end-to-end support to the Indian agricultural community. It is proposed in budget 2026-27.

- Will help farmers to enhance farm productivity, improve decision making and reduce risk through customized advisory support



How it will help agriculture

- Solving the challenge of siloed agricultural data across multiple platforms and departments.
- Bridging the digital divide in rural areas to ensure every farmer gets equal opportunities.
- Making information accessible in local dialects for seamless understanding and adoption.
- Creating a unified ecosystem for credit, market access, and technical support.

Working mechanism

- Farmers and extension workers access services through web, mobile, assisted centres, and voice-based systems in local languages.
- A federated Digital Public Infrastructure containing a Central Node and State Nodes, facilitating secure data exchange and AI-driven insights through open protocols.
- Seamless integration with ICAR Research, IMD Weather, AgrMarknet Prices and various State-level Agriculture portals.