**Right to Information: A Tool for Transparency and Accountability**

**Right to Information and Good Governance**

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**Abstract**

*Right to Information is a basic human right of every human being. The renowned French philosopher Michel Foucault once opined, power is derived from knowledge and information is the basic component of knowledge. The transmogrification from mere governance to good governance is possible only if the citizens of the country have right and access to information of and participation in the governance. Besides, apart from ensuring greater transparency it also acts as a deterrent against the arbitrary actions, policies and decisions of public authorities. The governance is, therefore, undoubtedly strengthened by the Right to Information. Parliament enacted the Freedom of Information Act, 2002. This is followed by the present Act that came into force on 12 October 2005. The legislative intent was to empower the citizen to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority, reduce the gap between the information provider and the information seeker, enhance efficiency in administration of public authorities, mitigate corruption and promote good governance. In particular, the RTI Act has had a much higher impact on the quality of life of the poor and marginalized section of the society. The institution of Information Commission has also assumed a pivotal position in implementing the law. There is a need for a sustained mass awareness campaign, need for greater voluntary disclosure of information held with public Authorities, need to rid ourselves of the old mindset regarding secrecy of government processes and transactions and the need for person demanding information under the RTI to be emboldened and secure. Currently, the Right to Information Act, 2005 in India is passing through a decisive phase, much more needs to be done to facilitate its growth and development. This paper tries to highlight the basic guidelines of RTI Act, the relationship between Right to Information Act and good governance and the issues relating to RTI Act. In concluding part, the paper provides some core recommendations for successful functioning of RTI Act.*

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