



The State Information Commission, Kerala
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AP.No.463/2007/SIC
(File No.6175/G3/2007)

Shri.Elias John,
Director, NTV,
Convent Road,
Trivandrum-695 001.

Vs

Public Information Officer,
General Admn(Accts) Department,
Secretariat.

}
Appellant

}
Respondent

ORDER

The requester/appellant in this case is Shri.Elias John, Director, NTV. He has preferred a request under Section 6 of the RTI Act before the Public Information Officer of the General Administration Department seeking the following information:

1. How many times Mr.K.Sudhakaran, the former Minister of Forest traveled outside Kerala during his tenure from 16.8.2001 to 29.8.2004?
2. Give dates, destinations, purpose, mode of transport, cost of traveling etc.,

Copy of the request dated 14.4.2007 was marked as Ext A1. The Public Information Officer has readily replied the requester. Ext A2 was the detailed reply. The number of journeys, date, destinations *etc.*, were furnished. It seems that there were 28 flights during the above said period. The appellant was not satisfied with the reply because the purpose of the journeys was not made available to him. Therefore, an appeal was preferred. The Appellate Authority had also disposed off the same stating that the purpose could not be ascertained and that lead to the second appeal before the Commission.

The question that arises for consideration is whether the information furnished by the Public Information Officer was complete in all respects?

Today when the case was taken up, the Public Information Officer and Additional Secretary, Smt.Raichel Chacko was present. The appellant, however, was conspicuously absent. In the detailed affidavit preferred by the Public Information Officer, it was stated that Mr.K.Sudhakaran was the former Minister of Forest. All the journeys were certified to have been official. No further details were available in the Office of the Minister. In the sworn affidavit, it was averred that usually, the TA bills were presented by the Private Secretaries of the Ministers with the original air tickets and TAs were claimed only in respect of official journeys and the purpose of journeys were noted as 'official'. No further enquiries were made into the details of the "official journeys" thus performed by Hon.Ministers. Even then, in view of the request under the RTI Act, a letter was sent to the former Minister Mr.K.Sudhakran, at his residential address on 27.4.2007 requesting to make clear the purpose of the journeys performed by him and he was again reminded on 10.5.2007. In spite of these attempts, the Public Information Officer was not in a position to collect the meticulous details of the purpose of each journey performed by the former Minister for which TA were claimed. As per existing practice, all the journeys performed, for which claims were put up, were taken as official journeys and bills cleared. The matter ended there.

Commission accept the position of the Public Authority and, since the information sought as averred in the appeal, were not available with the Public Authority and, the same could not be obtained in spite of best efforts, no further intervention is called for. This, at best can be taken only as a system failure. Appeal is dismissed.

Dated this the 22nd day of November, 2007.

Authenticated copy

Secretary to Commission