

Right to Information Campaign UP
**A Report on the RTI Campaign Camp organized from 11/15/2006 to 11/23/2006
in the city of Kanpur**

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RTI Act 2005 – After Independence, all the laws and regulations that have been enforced by the government so far were made to question the common man. But with mass agitation, the government finally had to pass 2 acts in 2005 which were made **FOR** the common man. One of these acts was the RTI act which empowers the common man to question the government and administration. This act has made the common man realize that he is the actual master of the country. Now citizens can not only ask non-functional government officials to be accountable for their duties and responsibilities, but can also drag these officials to court. This act helps prevent the prevailing corruption in the administration and makes the system / judiciary more transparent. When this act was finally passed on 13 October 2005 and the common man started using it as a weapon, it started endangering corrupt public officials and administrators. Under the pressure of these corrupt officials, the government finally proposed changes to invalidate this act. This decision was publicly condemned by unions, educated masses, social workers, justice seeking and honest people. This compelled the government defer to this mass and the proposal for change had to be annulled.

RTI Campaign Kanpur – The RTI Act 2005 campaign was launched in many states by people's unions. Uttar Pradesh was one of these states. Camps were organized in 22 districts as part of the RTI campaign in UP to introduce the common man to this act as well as to denounce corruption. The daily newspaper, Hindustan, contributed immensely in propagating this campaign, and named it the 'Ghoos ko Ghoonsa' [Punch the Bribe] campaign. During the course of this campaign, approximately 10000 individuals applied to seek information, and a huge crowd took a stance against corruption in the entire state. The city of Kanpur was untouched by this campaign, and the youth / unions of Kanpur were highly aware of this situation. After discussions, it was decided to launch this campaign from the office of the zilla adhikari on 15 November. The Hindustan assumed the responsibility of taking the message of this campaign to the public. A hoard of people came forward to champion this campaign after reading the information published in the Hindustan. Soon enough, not only a strong team emerged but also a lot of people decided to support this campaign. These individuals were those honest, hard-working and justice seeking folks who had made a firm decision to protect the sovereignty and democracy of this country.

RTI Campaign Camp, Kanpur – The RTI campaign camp was organized in the bar association inside the court and outside the office of the lawyers association on the final day. A few organizations viz. Asha Parivar, NAPM, Lok Seva Mandal, Jan Chetna etc. played a prominent role in this campaign. The bar association and local people arranged for the furniture, venue and food. A successful camp was the outcome of these efforts.

Day 1: 15 Nov 2006 – 15 volunteers participated on the first day and provided information on how the RTI Act campaign could be utilized in an appropriate manner. This campaign lasted from 11:00 AM to 4:30 PM during which applications were filed against matters stalled in the government departments in the city of Kanpur. The awareness camp held inside the court was highly endorsed by lawyers who were provided information about this act. This camp was inaugurated by Sandeep Pandey, a Magsaysay award winner, who also enlightened the masses about this campaign. The President of the bar association, Manohar Awasthi, applauded the campaign and provided assurance on their complete involvement in this campaign. More than 5000 pamphlets were distributed, a little over approximately 35 applications were filed, and citizens were provided **praarup samaksha** information about over 60 issues. KDA, the municipal

corporation, Kanpur university, police etc. were some of the government departments in which applications were submitted.

Day 2: 16 Nov 2006 – This camp lasted from 10:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Over 5000 flyers were distributed and more than 20 volunteers participated on this day. Most of the attendees were those who had been harassed over issues by these departments for years. These people were providing information while emphasizing on the importance of this campaign. During the course of the day, over 60 applications were filed and the meaning of these applications was explained to people. This was conveyed verbally and in writing. Public awareness gradually started evolving. This campaign was not only being used by the common man, but also by attorneys. Besides the government gazette, people were provided information about a few departmental PIOs in the city of Kanpur. KDA, municipal corporation, water corporation, police, water committee, KESCO, residential development, zilla adhikari etc. were some of the departments in which applications were filed in the city and suburbs of Kanpur.

Day 3: 17 Nov 2006 – By this day, the campaign had gained a lot of ground. A wave of awareness had gathered momentum in the entire city of Kanpur regarding the anti-bribe campaign. The contribution of the Print Media towards this effort was commendable. Their coverage of this campaign had accelerated the process of taking the message to the public. Public awareness on how to utilize the information received in a correct manner had also improved. People were not only having their applications filed, but were bringing friends and family and filing applications on their behalf as well. A list of information regarding the PIOs of the court, justice department, viz. name, designation, contact information was provided. Also a list of appeal officers was provided. There was also financial support provided by the masses. Approximately 20 volunteers wrote up the applications, and verbally explained to people on how to submit accurate applications.

Day 4: 18 Nov 2006 – This camp was organized outside the lawyers' association. On this day over 6000 pamphlets were distributed and the number of applications filed was maximum. Around 15 volunteers filed applications in their name to seek information from the departments of the zilla adhikari, basic education office, municipal corporation, IIT etc. Apart from understanding their responsibility and the ethical demands of this campaign, people pledged their support and complete participation in the cause.

Approximately 100 applications were filed and detailed explanation was provided on thirty of applications. Verbal explanation was also provided. Later a press conference was organized with Magsaysay award winner, Sandeep Pandey, and the central home minister, Prakash Jaiswal, as participants. Sandeep not only provided information on this campaign, but also but also shared the information on proposed changes to the Act, and applauded the attendees. This conference concluded with the address of the central home minister, Prakash Jaiswal. He commended the people of Kanpur on their struggle. He also urged the educated folks to use this campaign to bring to an end 80% of the rampant corruption, and make a success story out of it. He said that this act was a weapon for the masses, and asked people to use it to the maximum extent possible. The President of the bar association, Manhar Awasthi, reassured the home minister that the lawyers and bar association would still use this act, and would spread awareness among the people even after the campaign was out of the court battles.

Day 5: 22 Nov 2006 [RTO Office] - Today the camp was organized outside the distinctively corrupt RTO office. People started pouring in as soon as the camp started. Citizens wanted to file applications on permit, and license issues. The folks who attended the camp today got their licenses without paying a bribe. 20 applications had been filed in the RTO office by evening. After some struggle, receipts were handed out to people who were submitting applications as soon as they paid the preset RTI fee of ten rupees.

Day 6: 23 Nov 2006 [RTO Office] – As the story of licenses being issued without paying a bribe started spreading via newspapers, people started gathering outside the RTO office. They wanted

to have licenses issued for Rupees 60/- without having to pay a bribe. Auto rickshaw drivers, the aged, the young, women, all were extremely enthusiastic about having licenses issued without having to pay a bribe. The RTO office was functioning in a full-fledged manner. The RTO officer arrived early in the morning, and forms could be availed at preset application fee rates. Everything was being examined minutely, and the entire RTO office was functioning as per regulations. Licenses which used to be issued for a sum of Rupees 350/- were issued at Rupees 50/- today. Approximately 400-500 citizens succeeded in having their work done at the RTO office without having to pay a bribe. These people heartily thanked all the members of the RTI campaign camp, and expressed gratitude for the efforts of these members who had succeeded in controlling the unruffled flow of corruption. The camp ended today. About 45 citizens requested for information via RTI applications in these last 2 days. The last 2 days of this camp were organized by Shankar Bhai and his friends. About Rupees 1000/- was raised in funds in these 2 days.

Future Plans – The masses are further getting mobilized against corruption. The bar and lawyers' associations have assumed the responsibility of assembling an RTI cell. On the other hand, the common masses of Kanpur have taken up the responsibility of arranging RTI camps for various departments viz. RTO, municipal corporation, KDA etc. The mass media, and citizens have now become ready to fight corruption to promote this campaign.

Apart from the dedicated contribution of the younger folks such as Willyam, Abdul, Govind, Rambabu, Mahendra Dwivedi, Rajesh, Deendayal, Alok, Suryakant, Subhash, Zafar, Naushad Alam, Ramu and Liaquat Ali, experienced people like Deepak Malviya, Kuldeep Bhai, R.K. Tiwari, Nirmal Mishra, Sanjeev Dayal, Shankar Bhai and Vishnu Agrawal formed the backbone of this campaign. Senior citizens such as respected Aryaji, Vijaya Didi, Sandeep Bhai, Darapuriji, Raghunath Singhji and Bajpaiji provided their expertise, leadership and blessings to this campaign. Through their effective support, the media crew provided a strong foundation to this campaign. Citizens working outside the city of Kanpur took time off from work to participate in this camp, and take a stand against corruption.

With the lines...this struggle was going on, is going on, will go on...

[Every season prepares to preserve the seed of creation](#)
[With songs for the future on our lips, the struggle today will not accept cessation!](#)

Income-Expense Report for the RTI Campaign camp dated 11/15/2006 to 11/23/2006

Expense Item	Expense Amount
Conveyance	550.00
Stationery/Newspaper	363.00
Photocopy	110.00
Petrol	200.00
Pamphlet Printouts [Done by Asha Parivar]	3,750.00
Lunch	200.00
Banner	100.00
Conveyance	201.00
Photocopy	40.00
Lunch	70.00
Total Expenses	5,585.00

Income Item	Income Amount
Donation in Kind	6 Banners, Tea twice a day, Furniture
Donation in Cash	1,600.00
Local Collection	1,327.00
Local Donation	1,507.00
Loan from Asha Parivar	3,750.00
Total Income	8,184.00

Cash Balance in Donation Box: Rupees 2,600.00
All amounts are in Rupees.

Application Statistics for the RTI Campaign camp dated 11/15/2006 to 11/23/2006

Department	Number of Applications
Zilla Adhikari office	20
KESCO	16
Railways	2
Kanpur Development Authority	52
Residential Development	11
Health	2
Soldier Welfare	2
Bank	12
Passport	22
Municipal Corporation	21
Panaki Power Plant	1
University	3
Social Welfare	3
Police	10
Pension	7
RTO	67
Home Guard	2
Women's Welfare	5
Court	2
Education Department	12
Secretariat	6
Water Authority	17
Business Tax	11
Labor Department	3
Post Office	4
Ordinance	4
Immigrant Development	1
Total	319

As Reported by Willyam, Abdul, Govind & Mahesh
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