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1. INTRODUCTION

“Democracy requires an informed citizenry and transparency of information which are vital to its functioning and also to contain corruption and to hold Governments and their instrumentalities accountable to the governed.”

The Right to Information Act, 2005, enacted on 15th June 2005, is a landmark in India’s administrative history. It confers upon citizens the statutory right to access information under the control of public authorities, thereby enabling greater transparency and accountability in governance. The RTI Act is widely regarded as one of the most transformative, reformative, and participatory laws ever introduced in the Indian democratic framework.

The RTI framework operates through two core dimensions:

- **Demand Side:** This refers to the active filing of RTI applications by citizens seeking information. It includes the right to file First and Second Appeals in case the requested information is not furnished satisfactorily or within the stipulated time. This component is well-utilized and widely recognized across all sectors of governance.
- **Supply Side:** Equally important, this dimension involves suo motu (voluntary) disclosure of information by public authorities without waiting for specific requests. Section 4 of the RTI Act mandates such disclosures, particularly through electronic means, with official websites serving as primary platforms. This proactive dissemination is intended to minimize the need for RTI applications by making key information readily accessible.

Section 4 of the RTI Act elaborately outlines the obligations of public authorities under the supply side of information management. It prescribes the disclosure of organizational details, decision-making procedures, financial allocations, staff directories, and more. These disclosures are intended to:

- Enable citizens to access important information without filing individual RTI requests; and
- Promote transparency, accountability, and participatory governance across public institutions.

In recognition of the need to strengthen this supply side, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Government of India, issued an Office Memorandum dated 15th April 2013, directing all public authorities to undertake regular third-party audits of their mandatory disclosures under Section 4 of the RTI Act.

The objective of such audits is twofold:

- To assess the extent, quality, and regularity of voluntary disclosures made by departments; and
- To identify gaps and recommend improvements in transparency practices for enhanced citizen engagement.

In compliance with these directives, the Manipur Information Commission, under the guidance of the Central Information Commission, has directed all State Departments to institutionalize the process of proactive disclosure and to undertake third-party audits of the information published on their respective official websites.

Accordingly, the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Manipur, undertook the present Third-Party Audit of Proactive Disclosure under Section 4 of the Right to Information Act, 2005. PHED is a key department of the Government of Manipur responsible for planning, investigation, execution, operation and maintenance of urban and rural water supply schemes, water quality monitoring and surveillance, sanitation and sewerage management, and implementation of flagship programmes/

schemes such as the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) [SBM(G)], AMRUT and Integrated Sewerage System.

The audit was conducted after carefully examining the Department's official website, <https://www.phedmanipur.gov.in>, the latest Suo Motu Disclosure published under Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act, Annual Administrative Reports, departmental records, and other supporting documents furnished by the Department. The audit aimed to assess the completeness, accuracy, accessibility, timeliness, and user-friendliness of information proactively disclosed by the Department.

Particular emphasis was given to compliance with the requirements prescribed under Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act, the DoPT Guidelines on Proactive Disclosure, and recent directions issued by the Central Information Commission and the Hon'ble Supreme Court regarding strengthening transparency and public access to information.

This report presents the findings of the Third-Party Audit conducted from **23rd June to 24th June, 2026** and seeks to serve as a constructive mechanism for improving proactive disclosure practices, enhancing transparency, strengthening accountability, and promoting citizen-centric governance within the Public Health Engineering Department, Manipur.

2. EXTRACTS OF SECTION 4 OF THE RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT, 2005

Section 4 of the Right to Information Act, 2005 lays down the statutory obligations of every public authority to ensure proactive and suo motu disclosure of information to the public. This section forms the cornerstone of supply-side transparency, wherein information is disseminated voluntarily, without requiring citizens to file specific RTI applications.

The key provisions of Section 4 are outlined below:

4(1)(a): Maintenance and Cataloguing of Records

Every public authority shall:

- ❖ Maintain all its records duly catalogued and indexed;
- ❖ Ensure that such records are computerised within a reasonable time and linked through networks across the country to facilitate easy access.

This provision establishes the responsibility of digitising records and structuring them in a manner conducive to public access.

4(1)(b): Mandatory Suo Motu Disclosures

Public authorities are required to publish within 120 days from the enactment of the Act, and update annually, the following categories of information:

- 1) Particulars of the organisation, functions and duties
- 2) Powers and duties of officers and employees
- 3) Decision-making procedures, including supervisory channels
- 4) Norms for discharge of functions
- 5) Rules, regulations, manuals and records used in discharging functions
- 6) Categories of documents held under its control
- 7) Arrangements for consultation with or representation by the public in policy formulation or implementation
- 8) Details of boards, councils or committees formed for advice, including public access to minutes
- 9) Directory of officers and employees
- 10) Monthly remuneration of officers and employees and system of compensation
- 11) Budget allocation and disbursement plans of each agency under it
- 12) Execution of subsidy programmes, including allocations and beneficiaries
- 13) Recipients of concessions, permits or authorisations
- 14) Information available in electronic form
- 15) Facilities available for obtaining information, including working hours of reading rooms/libraries
- 16) Names and contact details of Public Information Officers (PIOs)
- 17) Any other information as may be prescribed

These 17 points form the backbone of proactive transparency obligations and provide a comprehensive framework to structure information on public platforms, especially departmental websites.

4(1)(c): Publication of Relevant Facts

Public authorities must publish all relevant facts while formulating important policies or announcing decisions affecting the public.

4(1)(d): Reasons for Decisions

It is mandatory to provide reasons for administrative and quasi-judicial decisions to those affected, thereby ensuring fairness and accountability in governance.

4(2): Constant Endeavour for Suo Motu Disclosure

Public authorities shall make constant efforts to proactively disseminate information at regular intervals through various means of communication, including the internet, to reduce the need for individual RTI applications.

4(3): Wide and Accessible Dissemination

All information must be widely disseminated in formats that are easily accessible to the general public, enabling effective communication and public awareness.

4(4): Cost-Effective and Localised Access

Information dissemination must take into account:

- ❖ Cost-effectiveness
- ❖ Local language accessibility
- ❖ Most effective means of communication for the local area
- ❖ Where feasible, information should be provided in electronic form, available free or at a nominal cost.

Explanation

For sub-sections (3) and (4), the term “disseminated” includes sharing information through:

- ❖ Notice boards
- ❖ Newspapers
- ❖ Public announcements
- ❖ Media broadcasts
- ❖ The internet
- ❖ Inspection of office records or any other suitable means

Implication for PHED

Section 4 imposes a statutory obligation on the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Manipur, to proactively disclose institutional, administrative, financial, technical and programme-related information through its official website and other public communication platforms. This includes information relating to water supply, sanitation and sewerage services, departmental administration, budget and expenditure, public grievances, water quality monitoring, and implementation of flagship programmes such as Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) [SBM(G)], Integrated Sewerage Projects and other State and Central Government initiatives.

The Department is expected to ensure that information remains accurate, comprehensive, regularly updated, easily accessible and citizen-friendly. Timely updating of disclosures, digital availability of

records, publication of key decisions and reports, and facilitation of public access to information are essential for fulfilling both the letter and spirit of Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 and for strengthening transparency, accountability and public trust in governance.

3. LIST OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES OF PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (PHED), MANIPUR

Sl. No.	Designation	Designated Authority
1)	Secretary (PHE), Govt. of Manipur	FIRST APPELLATE AUTHORITY (FAA)
2)	Additional Chief Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department	Nodal Officer, Suo-Motu disclosure under Section 4 of RTI Act, 2005
3)	Engineer Officer, To Chief Engineer, PHED, Manipur	STATE PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (SPIO)
4)	1) Additional Chief Engineer 2) Superintending Engineer, Rural Circle-I 3) Superintending Engineer, Rural Circle-II 4) Superintending Engineer, Rural Circle-III 5) Superintending Engineer, Planning and Monitoring 6) Superintending Engineer, Urban 7) Executive Engineer, Water Supply Maintenance Division No.I 8) Executive Engineer, Water Supply Maintenance Division No.II 9) Executive Engineer, Water Supply Project Construction Division 10) Executive Engineer, Tamenglong 11) Executive Engineer, Ukhrul 12) Executive Engineer, Senapati 13) Executive Engineer, Churachandpur 14) Executive Engineer, Thoubal 15) Executive Engineer, Store 16) Executive Engineer, Mechanical & Electrical 17) Executive Engineer, Monitoring & Evaluation 18) Executive Engineer, Imphal West 19) Executive Engineer, Imphal East 20) Executive Engineer, Drainage & Sewerage 21) Executive Engineer, Investigation, Planning and Design No.I 22) Executive Engineer, Chandel 23) Executive Engineer, Jiribam 24) Executive Engineer, Bishnupur 25) Executive Engineer, Kangpokpi 26) Executive Engineer, Pherzawl 27) Executive Engineer, Noney 28) Executive Engineer, Tamenglong 29) Executive Engineer, Kamjong 30) Executive Engineer, Kakching	STATE ASSISTANT PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (SAPIOS)
4)	Communication and Capacity Development Unit	Third Party Audit

The Department has established a comprehensive RTI implementation mechanism comprising the First Appellate Authority, State Public Information Officer, State Assistant Public Information Officers at various administrative and field levels, and a designated Nodal Officer for monitoring suo-motu disclosures.

4. SELF APPRAISAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (PHED), MANIPUR UNDER RTI ACT, 2005

Sl. No.	Parameter	Information disclosed
1.	Organisation and Function	The Department has uploaded comprehensive information regarding its organisational structure, functions and duties under Section 4(1)(b). Details of the Secretary, Chief Engineer, Additional Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers, Executive Engineers and field offices are available. Information relating to departmental objectives, jurisdiction, decision-making processes, supervisory channels, duties and responsibilities of officers and employees are disclosed through the Suo-Motu Disclosure section and Annual Administrative Reports.
2.	Budget and Programmes	PHED has disclosed budget estimates and revised estimates for the financial year 2025–26 under various heads of account including salaries, wages, office expenses, fuel and lubricants, maintenance works and laboratory expenditure. Information relating to implementation of major programmes such as Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), AMRUT and Integrated Sewerage System activities is also available through departmental publications.
3.	Publicity and Public Interface	The Department regularly uploads notices, recruitment-related information, tenders, public grievances information and RTI disclosures on its website. Contact details of officers, Public Information Officers, First Appellate Authority and Nodal Officer for proactive disclosure are available. Citizens may submit RTI applications physically or through postal communication during notified office hours. Grievance redressal is facilitated through CPGRAMS and other departmental mechanisms.
4.	E-Governance	PHED has adopted digital platforms for dissemination of information and public communication. Information relating to RTI, recruitment, tenders, public grievances and water billing is made available through the departmental website. Electronic records are maintained for several categories of documents including RTI matters, court cases, vigilance matters, tenders and administrative records. The Department continues to strengthen digital governance and online accessibility of public information.
5.	Information as may be prescribed	Information prescribed under Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act, 2005 has largely been disclosed. This includes particulars of the organisation, powers and duties of officers, norms for discharge of functions, rules and regulations, categories of documents held, directory of officers, remuneration structure, budget allocation, information available in electronic form, facilities available for obtaining information and details of RTI authorities.
6.	Information disclosed on own initiative	The Department has proactively disclosed substantial information under Section 4 of the RTI Act. Suo-motu disclosures include organisational details, departmental functions, office directories, budget information, categories of records maintained, RTI statistics, grievance redressal mechanisms, domestic tour details of senior officers, information relating to public authorities under RTI, and annual administrative reports. The Department has demonstrated continued commitment towards transparency and voluntary disclosure of information in the public domain.

5. METHODOLOGY OF AUDIT

The methodology adopted for conducting the Third-Party Audit of Proactive Disclosure under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 of the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Manipur was based on the principles and evaluation framework prescribed in the report titled “*Transparency Audit: Towards an Open and Accountable Government.*” The audit assessed the extent, quality and accessibility of information proactively disclosed by the Department through its official website and related documents.

The following methodology was adopted:

i) Design and Use of a Comprehensive Evaluation Format

A structured evaluation format covering the disclosure requirements under Section 4 of the RTI Act, 2005 was utilized. The assessment was carried out under the following thematic areas:

- ❖ Organisation and Functions
- ❖ Budget and Programmes
- ❖ Publicity and Public Interface
- ❖ E-Governance and Digitisation
- ❖ Information Prescribed under Section 4(1)(b)
- ❖ Information Disclosed on Own Initiative

ii) Assessment of Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosure

The audit examined both the extent and quality of information disclosed. The Department's official website, Suo-Motu Disclosure under Section 4(1)(b), Annual Administrative Reports and other supporting documents furnished by PHED were reviewed for the purpose of assessment.

iii) Parameter-Based Scoring and Grading

The disclosures were evaluated against predefined parameters and weightages. Scores were awarded based on the level of compliance, completeness, accessibility and regular updating of information. The cumulative score formed the basis for overall grading of the Department.

iv) Identification of Gaps and Areas for Improvement

The audit identified instances where information was incomplete, outdated, not readily accessible or required further strengthening to improve proactive disclosure and public accessibility.

v) Recommendations for Enhancing Proactive Disclosure

Based on the observations made during the audit, recommendations have been provided to strengthen transparency, improve website content management, and ensure regular updating of information in accordance with the RTI Act, 2005 and DoPT guidelines.

vi) Period of Audit

The Third-Party Audit was conducted from **23rd June to 24th June, 2026** through detailed examination of the Department's official website, Suo-Motu Disclosure, Annual Administrative Reports, RTI-related disclosures and other relevant records made available by the Public Health Engineering Department, Manipur.

6. THIRD PARTY AUDIT REPORT

Details	Information
Name of Public Authority being Audited	PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT (PHED), MANIPUR
Website	https://www.phedmanipur.gov.in
Nodal Officer, Suo-Motu Disclosure under Section 4 of RTI Act,2005	Dorendra Rajkumar, Additional Chief Engineer, Public Health Engineering Department
Third Party Auditor	Communication and Capacity Development, Manipur

Audit Table

Sl. No.	Parameter	Information disclosed	Remarks by Auditor	Weightage Value	Point Score
1	Organisation and Function	Detailed organisational structure, functions and duties, vision and mission, powers and duties of officers, decision-making process, norms for discharge of functions, office directories and jurisdiction of field offices disclosed through the Suo-Motu Disclosure and departmental reports.	Almost fully complied. Comprehensive disclosure of organisational information with minor scope for improving accessibility and Periodic updates.	10	9
2	Budget and Programme	Budget Estimates and Revised Estimates for FY 2025-26, are disclosed. However, project-wise expenditure details, procurement outcomes and implementation progress reports are not comprehensively available online.	Almost complied. Budget disclosures have improved significantly; however, project-level financial transparency and procurement disclosures require further strengthening.	30	25
3	Publicity and Public Interface	Departmental notices, recruitment information, grievance redressal mechanisms, RTI authorities, officer directories and scheme information are available on the website.	Almost complied. Public information is regularly updated and accessible, though website navigation and citizen-oriented presentation may be further improved.	25	22
4	E-Governance	Website provides RTI disclosures, notices, grievance facilities and access to selected public	Partially complied. E-governance	20	14

Sl. No.	Parameter	Information disclosed	Remarks by Auditor	Weightage Value	Point Score
		information. Electronic record management has been initiated in several branches of the Department.	initiatives are visible; however, expansion of online citizen services, downloadable forms and digital service delivery platforms is desirable.		
5	Information as may be prescribed	Most information prescribed under Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act, 2005 including directory of officers, remuneration details, budget information, categories of documents, RTI authorities and facilities for obtaining information has been disclosed.	Almost complied. Minor gaps remain in periodic updating of certain supporting documents and statutory disclosures.	10	7
6	Information disclosed on own initiatives	Annual Administrative Reports, RTI statistics, departmental contact information, grievance mechanisms and scheme-related information have been proactively disclosed.	Almost complied. The Department has taken significant steps towards voluntary disclosure of information; however, greater dissemination through citizen-centric content, public FAQs, awareness materials and interactive information tools would further strengthen proactive transparency.	5	4

Total Score (81) and Grade (Very Good)

7. OBSERVATIONS

The assessment of the proactive disclosure made by the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Manipur indicates that substantial progress has been achieved in complying with the disclosure requirements prescribed under Section 4 of the Right to Information Act, 2005. The Department has uploaded a comprehensive Suo-Motu Disclosure covering most of the mandatory items under Section 4(1)(b). However, certain areas require further strengthening to achieve higher levels of transparency and public accessibility. The key observations are as follows:

➤ **Public Consultation and Stakeholder Participation**

The Department has indicated that no formal arrangements presently exist for public consultation or representation in policy formulation under Section 4(1)(b)(vii). Considering the public nature of water supply and sanitation services, greater stakeholder engagement through consultations, public feedback mechanisms and awareness programmes may enhance transparency and citizen participation.

➤ **Tender and Procurement Transparency**

While tender notices are uploaded on the website, detailed information regarding bid evaluation, award of contracts, names of successful bidders, contract values and status of implementation is not consistently available in the public domain. Publication of procurement outcomes would strengthen transparency and accountability in public expenditure.

➤ **Expansion of E-Governance Services**

The Department has made progress in digitisation and online dissemination of information. However, citizen-centric online services such as online applications, downloadable service forms, service tracking systems and integrated digital service delivery platforms may be further strengthened to improve accessibility and efficiency.

➤ **Periodic Updating of Information**

Although most disclosures required under Section 4(1)(b) are available, some information requires periodic review and updating to ensure continued accuracy. Regular updating of officer directories, budget information, programme progress and departmental records would improve the reliability of information available in the public domain.

➤ **Citizen-Friendly Information Dissemination**

The Department has proactively disclosed substantial information through its website. However, greater use of citizen-friendly formats such as FAQs, infographics, awareness materials, downloadable datasets and scheme-specific information dashboards would further improve public understanding and access to information.

➤ **Multilingual Accessibility**

Most information on the website is presently available in English. To improve accessibility and outreach, particularly in rural areas, important public information, citizen advisories and key disclosures may also be made available in Manipuri and other local languages wherever feasible.

8. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the observations made during the audit, the following suggestions are offered to further strengthen proactive disclosure and improve compliance with Section 4 of the Right to Information Act, 2005 by the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Manipur:

➤ **Strengthening Procurement Transparency**

A dedicated section may be created for publishing tender outcomes, names of successful bidders, contract values, work orders and implementation status of awarded works. This would enhance transparency and accountability in public procurement.

➤ **Expansion of E-Governance Services**

The Department may further strengthen citizen-centric digital services by introducing online applications, downloadable service forms, service request tracking systems and other digital service delivery mechanisms to improve public convenience and accessibility.

➤ **Regular Updating of Suo-Motu Disclosures**

All disclosures under Section 4(1)(b) should be reviewed and updated periodically. Particular attention may be given to officer directories, budget information, programme progress reports, RTI statistics and contact details to ensure that information remains current and accurate.

➤ **Development of Citizen-Friendly Information Resources**

The Department may consider publishing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), infographics, awareness materials and simplified guides relating to departmental services, water quality, sanitation programmes and RTI procedures for the benefit of citizens.

➤ **Strengthening Public Consultation Mechanisms**

Appropriate mechanisms may be developed for obtaining stakeholder feedback and public participation in matters relating to water supply, sanitation and service delivery. Information regarding such consultations may also be disclosed on the website.

➤ **Multilingual Accessibility**

Important public information, citizen advisories, service-related instructions and key disclosures may be made available in Manipuri in addition to English to improve accessibility and inclusiveness.

➤ **Publication of Grievance Redressal Statistics**

The Department may consider periodically publishing summary statistics relating to grievances received, disposed of and pending through various grievance redressal mechanisms to enhance public confidence and transparency.

9. CONCLUSION

The Public Health Engineering Department (PHED), Manipur has demonstrated a strong commitment towards the objectives of the Right to Information Act, 2005 by significantly strengthening its proactive disclosure framework and making substantial information available in the public domain.

The Department has published a comprehensive Suo-Motu Disclosure covering the requirements prescribed under Section 4(1)(b) of the RTI Act, 2005. Information relating to the organisational structure, powers and duties of officers, decision-making processes, norms for discharge of functions, budget allocations, remuneration details, categories of documents maintained, RTI authorities, grievance redressal mechanisms and other statutory disclosures has been made available through the Department's official website. In addition, Annual Administrative Reports, RTI statistics and programme-related information have been proactively disclosed to promote transparency and accountability.

The Department secured an overall score of **81 out of 100** in the present Third-Party Audit, placing it in the **“Very Good”** category of proactive disclosure compliance. This reflects the Department's sustained efforts towards transparency, public accessibility of information and adherence to the provisions of the RTI Act, 2005.

At the same time, opportunities remain for further improvement in areas such as procurement transparency, expansion of e-governance services, periodic updating of disclosures, public consultation mechanisms, citizen-friendly information dissemination and multilingual accessibility. Addressing these areas would further strengthen public trust and enhance the effectiveness of proactive disclosure.

The audit concludes that the Public Health Engineering Department has established a sound foundation for transparent and accountable governance. By continuing to update and expand its disclosures and by implementing the recommendations contained in this report, the Department can further strengthen its position as a citizen-centric and transparent public authority in the State of Manipur.