NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE TRUST
(Public Welfare • Justice • Development)
(A social organization registered under Central Act No. 2 of 1882)
Regd. No. – 212/IV/2026
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Ref. No. NPST/134/2026 Dated - 19.11.2026

1- The Secretary,
Uttarakhand Information Commission,
RTI Bhawan, Mussoorie Bypass Ring Road,
Ladpur, Dehradun - 248008
Email: secy-uic@gov.in

2- The Secretary (Home),
Government of Uttarakhand,
Secretariat, Dehradun – 248001
Email: bagaulis@ias.nic.in

3- The Director General of Police
State Police Headquarters, Dehradun
Email: dgc-police-ua@nic.in

Subject: Letter seeking formulation and implementation of uniform statewide Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)/guidelines, a centralized institutional database and coordinated enforcement mechanisms to prevent misuse of the Right to Information Act, 2005, for harassment, intimidation, blackmail, extortion and obstruction of public administration in Uttarakhand, while safeguarding transparency, genuine information-seekers and public servants.

Sir,

National Public Service Trust is a public-interest organisation working for public welfare, justice, protection of constitutional rights, institutional accountability and good governance. In furtherance of these objectives, the Trust launched a public-interest initiative, namely **"Abhiyan Abhay,"** to collect grievances, documentary and electronic evidence, and statistical particulars

concerning the misuse of proceedings under the Right to Information Act, 2005, by certain individuals who represent themselves as RTI activists but exploit statutory mechanisms for targeted harassment, intimidation, blackmail, extortion and interference with the lawful discharge of public duties. The Trust wishes to draw your kind attention to the urgent necessity of establishing a comprehensive and uniform administrative framework throughout Uttarakhand to address such unlawful practices without compromising the fundamental objectives of transparency, accountability and citizens' statutory rights.

During the course of this initiative, several government officials serving in different departments of Uttarakhand have furnished information and supporting material concerning harassment, intimidation and unlawful monetary demands by persons claiming to be RTI activists. An Excise Inspector posted in Haridwar reported that a single applicant submitted **more than 90 RTI applications within approximately six to seven months, including as more than 5 RTI applications in a single day before the same office and Public Information Officer.** In another instance, a government officer furnished a video recording in which a person claiming to be an RTI activist speaks that demanding ₹5 lakh is within his discretion, that he may accept ₹2 lakh or waive the amount, and that otherwise the concerned officer would face difficulties. The Trust has also received material concerning the targeted harassment of a woman Public Information Officer through intimidation, threatening conduct and adverse social media publications and criminal complaints and FIRs have been registered in Uttarakhand concerning allegations of blackmail, extortion and related unlawful conduct by certain persons claiming to act as RTI activists. These incidents warrant independent examination by the competent authorities and demonstrate the necessity of effective safeguards for public officials facing unlawful interference in the discharge of their duties.

The Right to Information Act, 2005, is an indispensable instrument of democratic governance, transparency and citizen empowerment. However, the legitimate exercise of the statutory right to information must be distinguished from independently identifiable criminal conduct involving intimidation, extortion, blackmail, impersonation or threats against public officials and other citizens and where credible evidence establishes that RTI proceedings are being accompanied by unlawful monetary demands, threats, coercion or deliberate interference with public administration, the absence of an effective institutional response may expose government employees to harassment, divert administrative resources and undermine the efficient disposal of genuine information requests.

The State Government bears an important responsibility to ensure that public servants are able to discharge their statutory and administrative functions without unlawful intimidation or coercion. Accordingly, there is an immediate need for the Government of Uttarakhand to establish a clear, transparent and accountable administrative SOP/framework applicable to all government departments, district administrations, police authorities and other public institutions throughout the State.

The Trust further requests the Government of Uttarakhand to develop and operationalise a centralized State-level RTI Monitoring, Accountability and Grievance Redressal Portal, under the supervision of an appropriate nodal department, accessible to all government departments, public authorities and designated officers throughout the State. The proposed database should enable departments and Public Information Officers to flag and report applicants who are systematically misusing RTI proceedings by submitting repeated, excessive or voluminous applications targeting the same department, Public Information Officer or government employee, particularly where such conduct is accompanied by credible evidence of harassment, intimidation, blackmail, extortion or other unlawful activities and it should also provide an interdepartmental verification facility enabling authorised officers to ascertain whether an applicant has previously been flagged, subjected to adverse findings or formally blacklisted by another department under any applicable lawful authority, together with the reasons and current status of such action and any departmental flag should remain subject to verification, notice where appropriate, review and correction.

The Trust further requests that the proposed portal should incorporate a publicly accessible complaint and evidence-submission platform, enabling government employees, affected citizens, witnesses, whistleblowers and other persons possessing credible information concerning alleged misuse of RTI proceedings to submit complaints, documentary records, audio-video recordings, electronic communications and other relevant evidence and each submission should be forwarded through a designated nodal mechanism to the concerned administrative department, police authority or other competent institution for examination and appropriate action in accordance with law. This mechanism would enable citizens and witnesses to participate in identifying unlawful exploitation of statutory processes while strengthening transparency, institutional accountability and interdepartmental coordination and the SOPs should prescribe reasonable timelines for verification, referral, investigation and review, including procedures for removing inaccurate or unsubstantiated flags.

The proposed framework must simultaneously incorporate effective safeguards for genuine RTI applicants, whistleblowers and public-interest activists and this letter is submitted exclusively in the larger public interest and concerns the protection of genuine information-seekers, the dignity and safety of government employees, the efficient functioning of public institutions and preservation of the integrity of the Right to Information Act, 2005.

National Public Service Trust therefore requests the Government of Uttarakhand to urgently initiate interdepartmental consultation, formulate and notify uniform statewide SOPs/guidelines, develop the proposed centralized RTI Monitoring, Accountability and Grievance Redressal Portal with departmental flagging and public complaint-submission facilities, designate competent nodal authorities, and communicate a reasoned decision along with the action taken on this representation. Such measures would strengthen public administration, protect genuine transparency and reinforce public confidence in the rule of law throughout Uttarakhand.

Regards,
Krishnakant
(Chairman)