

# **PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU**



## **Information Manual**

### **Under**

## **Right to Information Act,2005**

This information manual contains details about the Press Information Bureau for use of all Citizens under the Right to Information Act,2005

**Price : Rs. ....**

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

The history of Press Information Bureau can be traced back to the first World War Years, when a Central Publicity Board came into existence under the Home Member of the colonial Government. Later a Cell was set up in the Home Department in June 1919 under Dr.L.F.Rushbrook Williams, to prepare every year a report on India, for presentation to British Parliament. In the following year, the functions of the Cell were amplified to provide and supervise “the distribution of correct information on all India questions” and to inform Departments of Government of “particular questions on which public opinion is exercised and on which further information is needed”. Towards the end of 1920, the Cell was rechristened as ‘ Central Bureau of Information ‘ and Dr. L.F.Rushbrook Williams became its Director. The designation of the Head of the Bureau was changed from Director to Principal Information Officer in 1938. Shri J.Natarajan became the first Indian in 1941 to be appointed as Principal Information Officer and the Organization’s name was changed to Press Information Bureau in 1946. The bureau’s functions as visualized by Dr.Williams were as follows:

- (i) To present material in the form required by the Press i.e news stories.
- (ii) To provide an “agency” news service, reporting facts without comment.
- (iii) To exclude any material of a communal nature; and
- (iv) Rigorous exclusion of political or controversial nature, except when attributable to a definite source.

Upon attainment of Independence, the scope of the Bureau underwent further changes. The Bureau was not only to give factual information on the programmes, policies and activities of the Government but was also entrusted with additional and more delicate task of interpreting those facts and Government policies. With the advent of sophisticated media related technology, expansion of Government activities and varied media requirements, the role of PIB has, since independence, been expanding and become more complex.

PIB is the nodal agency of the Central Government to disseminate information to the print, electronic and online media on government’s policies, programme initiatives, welfare activities and achievements. It is an interface between the Government and media, facilitating communication between the two. It acts as a bank of official data and provides background information to all media for launching multi-media campaigns, indicating thrust areas and hence acting as a consortium leader. It is in regular and close contact with all the Ministries and Departments of Government of India at Headquarters and through its Regional/Branch Offices with Central field agencies and media in the States. The Bureau has its Officers attached to all Ministries and Departments of the Central Government. They issue/explain/interpret the Government policies and disseminate factual information. The Bureau disseminates information through Press notes, handouts, backgrounders and features in English, Hindi and Urdu from Headquarters and through Regional languages from its Regional and Branch Offices. The Bureau is therefore able to reach Press in all languages simultaneously. These are made available on Bureau’s website ([www.pib.nic.in](http://www.pib.nic.in)). The Regional and Branch Offices of PIB are connected with the Headquarters through all the latest means of communication like Fax, internet etc. The Bureau has 8 Regional Offices and 34 Branch

Offices. They also provide independent information and PR support to various Government of India organizations in their jurisdiction and to the visiting GOI functionaries through press conferences, press releases, press visits and other media instructions.

The Press Information Bureau, under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting aims to facilitate the dissemination of information from the Central Government to the media, both print and electronic, through more and more modern, efficient, accurate and fast systems.

- Providing state-of-the art information retrieval facilities from its website.
- Developing an all encompassing electronic photo library, covering development issues as well as photographs of historic interest.
- Providing friendly and efficient media facilitation for its clients.
- Dissemination of information about Government policies, programmes and activities
- Providing feedback from the media to various Government departments and public sector organizations under various Ministries on how these policies and activities are received by the people, through the media.
- Advising the Government on its information strategy.
- Giving source material and launch of multi-media awareness campaigns.
- Providing explanation and background for official pronouncements.

Press Information Bureau in a nutshell performs following functions:-

1. Acts as an interface between the Government and media facilitating communication between the two.
2. Disseminates information to media – Official and non-Official
3. Reaches Government policies, programmes, their implementation and achievements to people through the media
4. Government's spokesman
5. Resource media for multi media campaigns and provision of background information.
6. Indication of thrust areas.
7. Corrects misinformation and issues clarifications
8. Gives feedback from media in Press analysis reports.
9. PR with media
10. Media accreditation to facilitate access to official sources of information.
11. Public relations counseling to Government Ministries & Departments.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Press Communiqué** : A Press Communiqué is issued when an important Government decision is to be published or an announcement of a noteworthy nature is to be made. It is formal in character and is always issued over the imprimatur of the Ministry or Department concerned. It is published in the Gazette of India. The Ministry/Department concerned has full responsibility for its issue.

**Press Note** : A Press Note is also issued over the imprimatur of the Ministry/Department concerned but is less formal in character than the Press Communiqué. It is issued primarily to give publicity to a Government decision.

**Hand-out** : A hand-out is less formal type of Press Release than either the Press Communiqué or the Press Note. It is issued to convey authentic information pertaining to day to day activities of the Ministries/Departments, proceedings of conferences and meetings etc., speeches by Ministers and senior officials and other information.

**Backgrounders** : A backgrounder is a self-contained press release meant to help the writers. It can also be used by sub-editors with a spot news story. Backgrounders need not normally go to a press correspondent.

**Press Conferences & briefings** : To supplement and reinforce conventional written publicity, press conferences and briefings are held. Press Conference are held by a Minister only, or under his direction, by the Secretary of a Ministry/Department. It is open to all correspondents. Press briefings are arranged to explain the background to a event or a news story.

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