

GOA STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION

"Kamat Towers" 7th Floor, Patto Plaza, Panaji, Goa – 403 001

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Appeal No.233/2025/SCIC

Mrs. Siona Maria Dias,
H. No. 1088, Tollecanto,
Velim, Salcete-Goa 403723.

----Appellant

V/s

1.Headmistress/Public Information Officer,
St. Rock's High School,
Tollecanto, Velim,
Salcete-Goa.

2.Deputy Director of Education,
First Appellate Authority,
South Educational Zone,
Margao-Goa.

-----Respondents

Shri. ARAVIND KUMAR H. NAIR- State Chief Information Commissioner

Relevant Facts Emerging from the Appeal

RTI application filed on	28/02/2025
PIO replied on	28/03/2025
First Appeal filed on	25/04/2025
First Appellate order on	19/05/2025
Second appeal received on	01/10/2025
Decided on	21/01/2026

Information sought and background of the Appeal

1. Mrs. Siona Maria Dias filed an application dated 28/02/2025 under RTI Act 2005 to the Headmistress, St. Rock's High School, Tollecanto, Velim, South Goa seeking CCTV footage of the chamber of the Headmistress, office and all other footages for the following dates and time –
 - (i) 18/02/2025 from 8.30 a.m. to 2.45 p.m.
 - (ii) 19/02/2025 to 25/02/2025 from 7.45 a.m. to 2.45 p.m. &
 - (iii) 27/02/2025 from 7.45 a.m. to 2.45 p.m.

2. In response to the RTI application, Headmistress, St. Rock's High School, Tollecanto, Velim, vide letter dated 28/03/2025 replied that

"CCTV footage cannot be provided as the same is not within the ambit of the RTI Act, 2005".

3. Being aggrieved by the reply received from the PIO, Appellant filed first appeal dated 25/04/2025 to the First Appellate Authority.

4. First Appellate Authority (Dy. Director of Education, South Educational Zone, Margao) vide order dated 19/05/2025 disposed off the appeal with the judgement as under :

"I have carefully examined the material placed along with the first appeal and heard oral arguments of the Respondent and the First Appellate Authority agreed thereto that the information sought by the Appellant is not within the ambit of the RTI Act, 2005. Since the Appellant was not able to prove the "larger public interest" required in seeking the information sought which the Appellant failed to substantiate, I am satisfied with the reply given by the Respondent PIO/Headmistress, St. Rock's High School, Tollecanto, Velim, Salcete Goa".

5. Being aggrieved by the order passed by the FAA, Appellant approached the Commission with the present appeal dated 01/10/2025 stating that she had sought the CCTV footage only to prove the harassment caused to her and her husband and as an evidence in defense against the false, baseless and malafide police complaint filed by the management and that Respondent No.2 (FAA) failed to appreciate the arguments put forth by the Appellant.

Appellant prayed before the Commission to call for the first Appeal No.13/2025, condone the delay of 39 days in filing the present appeal on medical ground, impose penalty and recommend disciplinary proceedings against the Respondent No.1.

FACTS EMERGING IN COURSE OF HEARING

6. Pursuant to the filing of the present appeal, parties were notified fixing the matter for hearing on 03/11/2025 for which Appellant present

and Adv. Siddhant Karpe present for Respondent PIO. Requesting for a longer date, Respondent PIO's lawyer submitted that reply to the appeal memo will be filed on the next date of hearing.

7. When matter took up for hearing on 08/12/2025, Appellant present alongwith Adv. Reagan A. Pinto and Adv. Vilas Pavithran present for Respondent PIO. Since Respondent PIO did not file reply to the appeal memo, matter posted to 12/01/2026.

8. On 12/01/2026, Appellant present alongwith Adv. Reagan Pinto and Adv. Sagar Rivankar present for Respondent. Both the parties placed their oral submissions before the Commission. Since there is a delay of 39 days in filing the present appeal by the Appellant on account of the hospitalisation of Appellant's minor daughter and mother in law, Appellant prayed before the Commission to condone the delay in filing the present appeal.

Respondent PIO's lawyer submitted that he would file reply to the present appeal as well as Appellant's plea for condonation of delay. Matter fixed for final hearing on 21/01/2026

9. When matter called out for final hearing on 21/01/2026, Appellant present alongwith Adv. Reagan Pinto and Adv. Sagar Rivankar present for Respondent PIO and filed Respondent PIO's reply dated 21/01/2026 to the appeal memo. Raising objection to the delay of 39 days in filing the present appeal, Respondent PIO submitted that the appeal filed by the Appellant deserved to be dismissed for want of sufficient cause to entitle the Appellant to condone the delay.

After hearing arguments of both the parties, Commission decided to allow the present appeal by granting condonation of the delay.

10. During the course of proceeding on 21/01/2026, Adv. Sagar Rivankar on behalf of the Respondent No.1 filed written submission dated 21/01/2026 stating that :

(a) The Appellant vide application dated 28/01/2025 has sought copy of CCTV footage of the chamber

of Headmistress, St. Rock's High School, Tollecanto, Velim, school office and other footages.

- (b) Headmistress of the school replied that CCTV footage cannot be provided as the same is not falls within the ambit of the RTI Act.
- (c) CCTV footage sought by the Appellant is highly sensitive due to security reasons.
- (d) Appellant failed to substantiate the larger public interest in seeking the CCTV footage of the school.
- (e) Appellant is not entitled to any relief as sought for in the appeal, which deserves to be dismissed with cost.

11. In order to strengthen his objection to the Appellant's request for CCTV footage, Respondent PIO's lawyer placed before the Presiding Commissioner, a copy of the *order dated 07/11/2019 of the Central Information Commission in Rahul Verma V/s CPIO, Diesel Locomotive Workshop, Varanasi, wherein the Commission observed that the CCTV footage as sought by the Appellant may contain sensitive security movements and can raise wider privacy concerns. Hence the exemption claimed by the Respondent u/s. 8(1) (a), u/s. 8(1) (g) of the RTI Act, 2005 is justified.*

12. Appellant however submitted that she had sought the CCTV footage only to prove her innocence in the police complaint filed against her and husband by the Manager and Headmistress of the St. Rock's School.

Presiding Commissioner ruled out the possibility of Respondent PIO furnishing CCTV footage of the School Headmistress's chamber, school administration office and all other footages of the school for 9 days (February 18 – 25 & 27, 2025) and that too, for the time from 7.45 a.m. to 2.45 p.m. Presiding Commissioner further reminded the

Appellant that there is no logic or ground in seeking the CCTV footage of the school where hundreds of students are studying and furnishing of CCTV footage will definitely have an intrusion into the privacy of the students and teachers of the school.

Ruling out the right to seek CCTV footages of seven long hours of the school for 9 days, Presiding Commissioner directed the Appellant to submit specific timing of the CCTV footage of specific date but Appellant failed to specify the time and date of the CCTV footage she desires. Respondent PIO's lawyer Adv. Sagar Rivankar submitted strong objection to the Appellant's request for the footage of the school. Ultimately, Appellant has come down to her CCTV footage request, pertaining to the office of the Headmistress only.

DECISION

After considering the original RTI application of the Appellant, her present appeal filed before the Commission and the argument/submissions placed before the Commission by the parties to the present appeal, Commission decided to condone the delay of 39 days in filing the present appeal and decided to dispose the matter with the following **directions to the Respondent PIO (Headmistress, St. Rock's High School, Tollecanto, Velim, Salcete Goa) :**

- 1) To allow ONLY the Appellant to view the CCTV footage pertaining to the chamber of the Headmistress, St. Rock's High School, Tollecanto, Velim, Salcete Goa, South Goa for the days sought by the Appellant vide her application dated 28/02/2025 (CCTV footage of 8.30 a.m. to 2.45 p.m. on February 18, 2025 and from 7.45 a.m. to 2.45 p.m. on February 19 to 25 and 27, 2025).**
- 2) Make adequate arrangement to view the CCTV footage by the Appellant alone in the presence of the Headmistress or her authorised lady representative.**

- 3)** Appellant shall not carry mobile phone while watching the CCTV footage and no photography/videography of the CCTV footage by the Appellant shall be allowed while viewing the CCTV footage.
- 4)** Respondent PIO should allow the Appellant to view the CCTV footage within 15 days from the receipt of this order.
- Respondent PIO's compliance report should reach the Commission within 21 days from the receipt of this order.
- 5)** Since Headmistress, St. Rock's High School is the PIO of the school, reply issued/information furnished to the RTI applicant under RTI Act should invariably bear the name/designation of the PIO as well as RTI stamping.

Failure of the compliance to the directions cited at Point No. 5 by the School/Headmistress will attract action under Section 20 (2) of the RTI Act, 2005.

Compliance report on this direction should reach the Commission within 15 days of the receipt of this order.

- Proceeding stands closed.
- Pronounced in Open Court.
- Notify the parties.

Aggrieved party if any, may move against this order by way of a Writ Petition as no further Appeal is provided against this order under the Right to Information Act, 2005.

Sd/-

(ARAVIND KUMAR H. NAIR)
State Chief Information Commissioner, GSIC