

GOA STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION
'Kamat Towers', Seventh Floor, Patto, Panaji –Goa
Tel No. 0832-2437880/2437208 email: spio-gsic.goa@nic.in
website: www.gsic.goa.gov.in

Appeal No. 16/2024/SIC

Mr. Devidas Gopinath Panjekar,
R/o. Podwal,
Khorjuem, Aldona,
Bardez-Goa 403508.

..... Appellant

V/s

The Public Information Officer.
Village Panchayat of Aldona,
Bardez-Goa 403508.

.....Respondent

Shri. Atmaram R. Barve

State Information Commissioner

Filed on: 12/01/2024
Disposed on: 10/11/2025

ORDER

1. The present second appeal arises out of the Right to Information (RTI) application dated 29/09/2023 made by the Appellant, Shri. Devidas Gopinath Panjekar and addressed to the Public Information Officer (PIO) at Village Panchayat Aldona, wherein the Appellant had sought certified copies of muster rolls of with respect to cutting of bushes as mentioned in general ledger and certified copies of total bill amounting to Rs. 1,15,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Fifteen Thousand only) shown in abstract register.
2. In response to this application, the PIO, Navanya Goltekar vide reply dated 28/10/2023 replied to Appellant herein citing that certified copies have been enclosed with respect to point No. 1 of the application and that the same may be presumed as point No. 2 of the application.

3. Aggrieved by this reply, the Appellant herein preferred first appeal before appropriate authority vide appeal memo dated 06/11/2023.
4. The First Appellate Authority (FAA) vide order dated 22/12/2023 allowed the first appeal and directed the PIO to provide physical inspection of concerned documents and also certified copies therein within 10 days from the said order.
5. Citing the grounds of non-compliance of the orders of the FAA, the Appellant herein preferred second appeal before this Commission dated 12/01/2024. Notices were served and matter came up to be heard from 21/02/2024 onwards.
6. However, on account of former State Information Commissioner demitting office, the proceedings in matter resumed from 12/12/2024 onwards.
7. It has to be noted that, during the entire period of pendency of this matter, the Respondent PIO has failed to file any reply and barring a few occasions. The PIO, Navanya Goltekar has grossly failed to even remain present for hearing. The Advocate appointed by the PIO has made couple of appearance as evident from the roznama. However, the advocate has not even bothered to file his wakalatanama. A show cause notice was issued on 23/01/2025, seeking replies from the PIO on or before 04/03/2025.
8. Thereafter, the PIO failed to file her reply and on two occasions sought time through an authorised representative to file her reply.
9. On 03/06/2025, the PIO provided another set of documents to the Appellant herein in view of his original RTI application.

10. On the same day, the Appellant filed his written arguments highlighting that no physical inspection of the documents was provided and that the information sought by him pertains to two type of documents (i) being the vouchers and other being the muster rolls and that the PIO has provided incomplete and misleading information.
11. In view of appeal memo and written submission made by the Appellant herein and in absence of any reply on the part of the PIO, this Commission is of considered opinion as under:-
- a. Although prima facie it appears that the PIO has duly discharged her duties by providing reply within prescribed time frame; however there also appears to be lacunae in the said reply which have been dealt with FAA thereby directing the PIO to provide physical inspection as well as certified copies to the Appellant.
 - b. The conduct of the PIO, Navanya Goltekar is of gross negligence and complete disregards towards the RTI Act as well as authorities constituted herein.
 - c. The acts of providing insufficient or misleading information, not complying with the directions of the FAA, continuous non-appearance before the Second Appellate Authority and non-responsive towards the show cause notice issued by Information Commission are solids grounds to establish that the PIO Navanya Goltekar has not acted in the spirit of her duties entrusted upon by the RTI Act.
12. Therefore, the present second appeal is disposed with following orders:-

- a. The present second appeal is allowed.
- b. The PIO, Smt. Navanya Goltekar is found to have attracted penalty to the tune of Rs. 25,000/- (Rupees Twenty-Five Thousand only) in terms of Section 20(1) of the RTI Act.
- c. The Director, Directorate of Panchayat at Government of Goa is hereby directed to forthwith recover the said amount from Smt. Navanya Goltekar and submit the compliance report to that effect on or before **28/11/2025**.
- d. The Director, Directorate of Panchayat is also hereby directed to initiate necessary disciplinary proceeding against the said PIO, Smt. Navanya Goltekar in terms of Section 20(2) of the RTI Act and submit compliance report to that effect on or before **15/12/2025**.
- e. The present PIO at Village Panchayat Aldona is hereby directed to access the Appellant RTI application dated 29/09/2023 afresh and provide physical inspection to the Appellant herein on **28/11/2025** during the working hours and also provide certified copies of all the documents therein on same day free of cost.
- f. The present PIO is directed to record the proceeding of the said file inspection and that of providing certified copies therein and inscribe his name and signature and also take an acknowledgment from the Appellant herein on the said compliance report.
- g. Registry to issue show cause notice to the present PIO seeking clarification as to why no action should be initiated in terms of directions herein above and the concerned PIO shall remain present in person alongwith reply to show

cause notice and compliance report on **15/12/2025 at 11.00 am**; failing which separate disciplinary and penalty proceeding shall be initiated. No order as to cost.

- Parties to be provided authenticated copies of the order.
- 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/-

(ATMARAM R. BARVE)

State Information Commissioner