

GOA STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION
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Penalty No. 51/2025
In
Appeal No.14/2025/SIC

Shri. Vinayak S. Methar,
H. No. 6, Madhalawada,
Arambol, Pernem Goa.

..... **Appellant**

V/s

1.The Public Information Officer (PIO),
The Secretary of Arambol Village Panchayat,
Arambol, Pernem Goa

2. The First Appellate Authority,
The Block Development Officer Pernem Taluka,
Pernem Goa.

.....**Respondent**

Shri. Atmaram R. Barve

State Information Commissioner

Disposed on: 20/04/2026

ORDER

1. The present penalty proceeding arise out of the order dated 16/12/2025 in Appeal No. 14/2025/SIC.
2. In the said appeal the relevant PIO, Shri. Subhash Kambli was directed to provide complete inspection of the relevant record in terms of the Appellants Right to Information application dated 17/08/2024 and also to provide certified true copies free of cost to the Appellant accordingly.
3. The relevant PIO, Shri. Subhash Kambli was directed to conduct the said exercise on 15/01/2026 during working hours and to record minutes of the proceedings upon completion of the said exercise.

4. The said PIO was directed to remain present along with minutes of proceedings before this Commission on 22/01/2026.
5. Additionally, a Show Cause Notice was issued to the said PIO to give an opportunity to be heard before imposition of any penalty in terms of Section 20(1) and 20(2) of the Right to Information Act and the relevant PIO, Shri. Subhash Kambli was directed to remain present in person alongwith reply to the said Show Cause Notice on 22/01/2026 before this Commission.
6. On the hearing dated 22/01/2026 the relevant PIO, Shri. Subhash Kambli remained present and filed reply to the Show Cause Notice to which the Appellant took an objection stating that the directions of this Commission has not complied with letter and spirit.
7. The PIO sought leave of this Commission to provide him additional time to comply with directions and this Commission directed him to comply with the order on or before 10/02/2026.
8. On the next date of hearing i.e on 05/03/2026 the respondent PIO filed his compliance report to which Adv. A. Bacal representing the Appellant filed the objection citing that the information that was presented for his inspection was neither catalogued nor indexed and as such the co-relation between documents sought by Appellant could not be established and that the compliance claimed by the PIO is misleading.
9. In response to the objection filed by the Appellant, the PIO filed a reply on present date of hearing claiming that the

inspection was carried out in the right manner and that the Appellants request for a fresh duly indexed records should be rejected.

10. Upon perusal of the complete report filed by the PIO, objection raised by the Appellant and all other material on record this Commission is of considered opinion as under:

- a- Whenever this Commission issues directions to the PIO to provide inspection of records, it means that the PIO has to provide inspection of records that are duly catalogued, indexed and accessible.
- b- Section 4 of the Right to Information Act, 2005 expressly lays down the obligation of public authorities and merely by citing the grounds that the officer is transferred from time to time; these obligations cannot be escaped or eluded.
- c- The relevant PIO has not been able to justify inaction on his part in so far as not maintaining the records in the manner prescribed by Section 4 of the Right to Information Act at the relevant time when he was the PIO at Village Panchayat Arambol in Pernem taluka.
- d- The instant matter also calls for a larger perspective wherein all the public authorities need to strictly adhere to their obligations under Section 4 of the Right to Information Act, 2005.

11. Therefore, in view of the above the present penalty proceeding are disposed with following orders.

- a. The relevant PIO, Shri. Subhash Kambli, is held liable for improper compliance of the directions of this Commission and as such a penalty of Rs. 25,000/- shall be recovered by

the Director, Directorate of Panchayats, Government of Goa from his eligible salaries and allowances. The said recovery shall be completed on or before 20/05/2026 and compliance of the same through any duly authorised representative.

- b. The Director, Directorate of Panchayats, Government of Goa shall issue directions to the present PIO at Village Panchayat at Arambol to carry out the exercise of cataloguing and indexing of all public record of the same panchayat on or before 30/06/2026 and thereafter provide an inspection to the Appellant herein of all the records sought by him in terms of his Right to Information application dated 17/08/2024 and the said PIO shall submit a compliance on or before 15/07/2026 by remaining present in person on 20/07/2026.
- c. The Government of Goa through its Chief Secretary shall issue directions to all the public authorities of the Government of Goa to strictly adhere to their obligations prescribed under Section 4 of the Right to Information Act, 2005 and that all such public authorities shall complete indexing and cataloguing their records on or before 31/07/2026. Copy of the directions issued by the Government of Goa shall be provided to this Commission on or before 25/05/2026.
- d. Registry to issue notice to the present PIO of Village Panchayat Arambol alongwith copy of this order to ensure compliance of directions above.
 - No order as to cost.

- Parties to be provided authenticated copies of this order separately under each appeal number.
- 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