

To,
The Chairperson
Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on
Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice
Rajya Sabha Secretariat
2nd Floor, Parliament House Annexe
New Delhi- 110 001

3/11/2013

Sub: Submission regarding RTI (amendment) Bill 2013.

Dear Sir,

Mahiti Adhikar Gujarat Pahel (MAGP) hereby make following submission to the dept –related parliamentary Standing committee.

1. RTI (amendment) 2013, bill seeks to exempt political parties from ambit of RTI. However political parties are substantially financed by the government directly and indirectly in terms of tax exemption, subsidies on rents, land allotted to them, DD and AIR timings. A study by ADR has clearly showing that it is huge amount.
2. Secondly, political party form very crucial part in democracy. They represent people, make policies on behalf of people. There is no reason that they should shy away from being accountable, transparent to people whom they are representing under RTI.
3. Political party are suppose to serve public, then there is no other argument needed to justify larger public interest in their functioning, decision making.
4. Thirdly, an argument by political party for exempting themselves from RTI is that their functions will be largely affected if they have to furnish information. This is not valid argument. RTI act has clear provisions of exemptions in section 8, 9, and also exemptions of “third party” information.
5. Sir, we are sending herewith a copy of letter submitted to Loksabha along with signature, and ballot boxes where in common citizens in Gujarat have voted against the amendment. More than 68000 citizen have voted in ballot boxes against the amendments and more than 30000 people have sent their signatures to Speaker Lok Sabha. Citizens of this country want transparency and accountability from Political Parties.

Regards,

Pankti Jog
Executive Secretary - MAGP