

CENTRAL INFORMATION COMMISSION

2nd Floor, August Kranti Bhawan,
Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi-110066

Decision No. CIC/SB/A/2015/000089

Dated 14.10.2016

Appellant : Shri G. Prasanth,
56.B-2, Rayhen Residency,
Periyasubbanan Street,
K.K. Pudur, 3rd Cross,
Coimbatore-641038.

Respondent : The Central Public Information Officer,
O/o the Commissioner of Central
Excise, Coimbatore Zone,
6/7, A.T.D. Street,
Race Course,
Coimbatore-18.

Date of Hearing : 14.10.2016

Relevant dates emerging from the appeal:

RTI application filed on : 20.12.2014

CPIO's reply : 14.01.2015(transfer)

First appeal filed on : 17.04.2015

FAA's order : No order

Second appeal filed on : 22.06.2015

ORDER

1. Shri G. Prasanth filed an application dated 20.12.2014 under the Right to Information Act, 2005 (RTI Act) with the Central Public Information Officer (CPIO)/Assistant Commissioner, Nungambakkam seeking information whether Central Excise office is located and functioning in the areas of Hosur,

Salem, Sankari, Chitoor, Madanapalle, Vellore, Ranipet, Coimbatore and Erode, and the date and year from which it is functioning.

2. The appellant filed a second appeal before the Commission on 23.06.2015 on the grounds that the concerned CPIO did not provide the information sought by him and that the First Appellate Authority (FAA) too did not respond to his appeal.

Hearing:

3. The appellant Shri G. Prasanth was not present despite notice. The respondent Shri Anish Muraleedharan, Deputy Commissioner and CPIO, Central Excise, Coimbatore attended the hearing through video conferencing.

4. The respondent submitted that the appellant had filed RTI application dated 20.12.2014 with the O/o Commissioner of Central Excise, Chennai-III Commissionerate seeking information about the details of Central Excise Offices located and functioning in the areas of Hosur, Salem, Sankari, Chitoor, Madanapalle, Vellore, Ranipet, Coimbatore and Erode. The respondent further submitted that the RTI application was transferred to the O/o Chief Commissioner of Central Excise, Coimbatore who transferred it to O/o the Commissioner of Central Excise, Coimbatore/Salem vide letter dated 14.01.2015. The respondent further stated that the first appeal filed by the appellant was not received in the O/o Chief Commissioner of Central Excise, Coimbatore Zone. The respondent also submitted that though information had been obtained, due to oversight, the same could not be provided to the appellant within the stipulated period. However, on receipt of a notice of hearing from the Commission, information has been provided to him vide letter dated 10.10.2016 which was dispatched on 13.10.2016.

Decision:

5. The Commission, after hearing the submissions of both the parties and perusing the records, observes that the information sought was provided with a delay. However, it cannot be said that the CPIO acted consciously and deliberately in a manner to deny information. Nonetheless, the Commission takes a very serious view of this delay. The public information officers are entrusted with the responsibility of providing information to the citizen under the RTI Act. It is expected that the CPIO on receipt of a request shall as expeditiously as possible and in any case within 30 days provide information. In this case the CPIO did not discharge his responsibility properly. The CPIO is directed to ensure that in future the RTI applications received in the respondent office are dealt with due seriousness and the provisions of the RTI Act are implemented in letter and spirit.

6. With the above observations, the appeal is disposed of.

7. Copy of decision be given free of cost to the parties.

(Sudhir Bhargava)
Information Commissioner

Authenticated true copy

(V.K. Sharma)
Designated Officer