

PUNJAB STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION

RED CROSS BUILDING, NEAR ROSE GARDEN,

SECTOR 16, CHANDIGARH.

Ph: 0172-2864115, Email: - psic26@punjabmail.gov.in

Visit us: - www.infocommpunjab.com



Advocate Tejinder Singh, (9041004313)

Civil Court, Tehsil Complex,

Backside Sanjh Kender,

Phillaur-144410

....Appellant

VERSUS

Public Information Officer,

O/o Regional Transport Officer,

Ram Tirath Road, Near Sadar Police Station,

Amritsar.

First Appellate Authority,

O/o Secretary,

Regional Transport Office,

Ram Tirath Road, Near Sadar Police Station,

Amritsar.

....Respondents

APPEAL CASE NO. 0712 OF 2024

PRESENT: Shri Tejinder Singh, Advocate/Appellant.

Shri Gurpreet Singh, Steno (6280193012) for the Respondents.

ORDER:

To be read in continuity with the previous Bench orders dated 12.08.2025, 08.10.2025, 09.12.2025, 16.02.2026 and 14.05.2026.

2. That the appellant stated before the Bench that no information has been provided till date. The respondent appeared on behalf of the PIO; however, he was not conversant with the facts of the appeal case and was unable to make any specific submission regarding the status of the appeal case.

3. That it is matter of serious concern on the non-presence of the PIO in past Five Bench hearings i.e. 12.08.2025, 08.10.2025, 09.12.2025, 16.02.2026 and 14.05.2026, the respondent authority failed to ensure compliance before the Commission Bench.

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-02-

APPEAL CASE NO. 0712 OF 2024

4. That the continued and intentional non-compliance with the specific directions issued by the Commission in the said appeal case, coupled with the failure to submit the information sought as directed, demonstrates that the respondent authority has taken the proceedings of this Commission lightly and virtually made a mockery of the provisions of the Right to Information Act, 2005. This conduct reflects negligence and disregard towards the authority of the Commission and cannot be countenanced.

5. That the continuous non-compliance on the part of the respondent authority has caused unnecessary delay in the disposal of the present appeal and is defeating the very object of the Right to Information Act, 2005, which seeks to promote transparency and accountability in public administration. Due to the persistent failure to comply with the Commission's repeated directions, the proceedings have been seriously prejudiced, resulting in avoidable delay in the functioning of the Commission and hindering the expeditious disposal of the appeal on merits. Accordingly, the Commission finds it necessary to issue bailable warrants to secure compliance with its lawful directions.

6. That it is pertinent to mention that the Commission had issued Show Cause Notice under Section 20(1) of the RTI Act, 2005, vide order dated 09.12.2025, to the PIO. However, despite due service of the said notice, neither did the PIO appear before the Bench to explain the reasons for non-compliance nor has the requisite information been furnished to the appellant till date.

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-03-

APPEAL CASE NO. 0712 OF 2024

7. That the respondent has failed to offer any reasonable cause for such non-compliance although number of genuine opportunities have been given to the RTO – cum – PIO as well as to the ATO – cum – PIO. It is also appropriate to mention that the orders of the Commission being sent regularly through registered post.

8. That from the facts and circumstances of the case, the Commission is satisfied that the respondent has wilfully and deliberately disobeyed the orders of the Commission, rather failed to discharge the statutory obligations cast upon the Public Information Officer under the RTI Act, 2005. Such conduct constitutes a gross violation of the provisions of the RTI Act, 2005, warranting the imposition of penalty under Section 20(1) of the RTI Act, 2005.

9. That the Commission draws the inference that the PIO, without any reasonable cause, having malafidly delayed the information and has rendered liable for punishment as provided under the RTI Act, 2005.

10. That the PIOs have already been given sufficient time to provide the information to the appellant. In these circumstances, **Shri Khushdil Singh, PCS, then RTO – cum – PIO O/o Regional Transport Office, Amritsar** and **Shri Mandeep Singh Sohi, ATO – cum – PIO O/o Regional Transport Office, Amritsar** are held guilty of default in the present appeal case. The facts of this case also prove beyond any doubt that the respondent PIOs does not deserve any kind of relief.

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-04-

APPEAL CASE NO. 0712 OF 2024

11. That the Bench of the Punjab State Information Commission imposed a penalty on both the PIOs O/o RTO Amritsar, for negligence towards the proceedings of the Bench and delay in the disposal of the RTI appeal case, despite five hearings having already been held and the continued non-presence of the PIO.

12. That hence, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 20(1) of the RTI Act, 2005, **penalty to the tune of Rs. 5,000/- (Rupees Five Thousand Only)** are imposed upon **Shri Khushdil Singh, PCS, then RTO – cum – PIO O/o Regional Transport Office, Amritsar** and **Shri Mandeep Singh Sohi, ATO – cum – PIO O/o Regional Transport Office, Amritsar** the same has to be deducted from their salary, which is to be deposited in the State Treasury under the relevant head which is as follows:-

- 0070 – Other Administrative Services
- 60 – Other Services
- 0800 – Other Receipts
- 86 – Fee under the RTI Act, 2005

13. That the Drawing and Disbursing Officer O/o RTO, Amritsar is directed to deduct the amount of penalty of Rs. 5000/- from the salary of the concerned PIO i.e. Shri Mandeep Singh Sohi, Assistant Transport Officer – cum – PIO O/o Regional Transport Office, Amritsar and deposit the same in the State Treasury in the relevant Head of Account and to report its compliance to the Commission.

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-05-

APPEAL CASE NO. 0712 OF 2024

14. Shri Mandeep Singh Sohi, Assistant Transport Officer – cum – PIO O/o Regional Transport Office, Amritsar is further directed to remain present on the next date of hearing failing which appropriate directions will be sent to the competent authority, as per the law settled in the Judgment passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P.No. 17677 of 2010 and M.P. No. 1 of 2010 and the relevant portion of the same is read as under:

"10.Such Officers must be taught a lesson and in my view, they are unfit to hold the post of Public Information Officer or any other post in connection with the discharge of duties under RTI Act and they should be shown the doors, so that it will be a lesson for other Officers to act in accordance with the terms of the Act, failing which they may also face the similar or more consequences."

In addition to the above penalty already imposed.

15. That the Secretary, Personnel (PCS Branch) Government of Punjab, is hereby directed to deduct the penalty amount of Rs. 5000/- from the salary of Shri Khushdil Singh, PCS, then RTO-cum-PIO, Office of the Regional Transport Office, Amritsar, presently posted as Deputy Excise Commissioner (DCX), Excise and Taxation, Sirhind Road, Patiala. The compliance in this regard may kindly be ensured and a report regarding deduction of the aforesaid penalty amount be furnished before the Bench.

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-06-

APPEAL CASE NO. 0712 OF 2024

16. Appeal case is adjourned for **16.10.2026 at 11:00 A.M.**

Sd/-

(HARPREET SINGH SANDHU)

15.09.2026

State Information Commissioner, Punjab

Copy of the above is forwarded for information and further necessary action:-

1) The Administrative Secretary (BY NAME)

Government of Punjab
Department of Personnel (P.C.S. Branch)
Punjab Civil Secretariat-I, Chandigarh.

2) Shri Varun Roojam, IAS

Secretary to Government of Punjab,
Department of Transport, Punjab,
Punjab Civil Secretariat, Chandigarh.

3) Shri Khushdil Singh, PCS

Deputy Excise Commissioner (DCX),
Excise & Taxation, Sirhind Road, Patiala.

4) Shri Mandeep Singh Sohi,

Assistant Transport Officer-cum-PIO
O/o Regional Transport Office,
Ram Tirath Road, Near Sadar Police Station, Amritsar.

Sd/-

(HARPREET SINGH SANDHU)

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Sd/-

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