

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

INHERENT JURISDICTION

CONTEMPT PETITION (CIVIL) No. 107 OF 2025

IN

WRIT PETITION (CIVIL) 360 OF 2021

MANOJ SINGH NEGI

CONTEMPT PETITIONER(S)

VERSUS

SHRI RAJ KUMAR VISHWAKARMA, CHIEF STATE  
INFORMATION COMMISSIONER OF  
UTTAR PRADESH & ANR.

ALLEGED CONTEMNOR(S)/  
RESPONDENT(S)

O R D E R

1. Application seeking permission to appear and argue in-person is allowed.
2. One Kishan Jain preferred a Writ Petition(C) No. 360 of 2021 before this Court under Article 32 of

the Constitution seeking directions for the better functioning of the State Information Commissions under the Right to Information Act, 2005.

3. The writ petition was heard by this Court and ultimately came to be disposed of vide the judgment and order dated 09-10-2023.

4. While disposing of the writ petition, this court issued various directions. We may refer to those directions as under:-

*"23. In view of the above discussion, we are of the considered view that access to the Information Commissions is integral to securing the right to information, which is a necessary concomitant of right to equality under Article 14, the freedom of speech and expression under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution, and the right to life under Article 21. Accordingly, we direct that all SICs across the country must provide hybrid modes of hearing to all litigants for the hearing of complaints as well as appeals. All SICs must provide an option for availing of a hybrid mode of hearing which shall be at the discretion of the applicant, or as the case may be, the appellant. The links for availing of the option must be stipulated in the daily cause list of the Information Commissions across the country. This shall be operationalized no later than by 31 December 2023.*

*24. That apart, there can be no gainsaying the fact that e-filing provides round the clock access to courts, and in the process, facilitates the convenience of lawyers*

*and litigants.<sup>18</sup> We direct that all SICs must ensure that e-filing of complaints and appeals is provided in a streamlined manner to every litigant. Steps should also be taken having regard to the provisions of Section 26 of the RTI Act to ensure that service is effected on the Public Information Officers through the electronic mode. This shall also be implemented by 31 december 2023.*

*25. All Central and State Ministries shall take steps within a period of one month from the date of this order to compile the email addresses of the Central and State Public Information Officers which shall be furnished to the CIC and to all the SICs, as the case may be.*

*26. In order to facilitate the implementation of this order, we direct that the Secretary, Department of Personnel and Training shall convene a meeting of all the Central and State Information Commissioners within a period of one month from the date of this order. Comprehensive modalities for the implementation of the above directions shall be set up.*

*27. All the State Governments shall cooperate in the implementation of the order. The State Governments shall, where funds are required, ensure provision of necessary funds to all the SICs for setting up the infrastructure for conducting virtual hearings. The CIC and SICs would be at liberty to avail of the facilities which have been provided by the NIC for setting up the websites on the S3 WAS Platform which provides for ease of access in the electronic mode.*

*28. We are hopeful that with the fulfilment of the above directions, the implementation of the RTI Act would be streamlined to facilitate access to justice and information to citizens."*

5. The contempt petitioner is here before this Court with a grievance that the directions issued by this

Court referred to above have not been complied with, and therefore, the authorities are in contempt.

6. Notice was issued to the respondents.

7. We heard Mr. Manoj Singh Negi, the contempt petitioner appearing in-person.

8. We also heard Mr. K. Parmeshwar, the learned senior counsel appearing for the respondents.

9. Our attention has been drawn to the affidavit/compliance report filed by Shri Raj Kumar Vishwakarma, Chief State Information Commissioner Of Uttar Pradesh. In the affidavit, it has been stated as under:-

*"3. ....It is humbly submitted that the applicants have been provided with the option of virtual hearing from May, 2024 and first virtual hearing was conducted on 29.07.2024 in Hearing Room S-1 chaired by Chief Information Commissioner Dr. Raj Kumar Vishwakarma- Respondent No. 1 herein through CATS-UPSIC (Complaint & Appeal Tracking System) platform. It is further submitted that the links to avail the option of virtual hearing are being published in the daily causerlists published on the public portal i.e. website of UPSIC <https://upsic.up.gov.in/cispu/>. The same are available on the citizen's personalized dashboard as well. Additionally, the links are being shared via SMS and email to the concerned parties and it is also visible*

on the dashboard of PIOs for their reference and information. A true copy of Module of UPSIC on CATS-UPSIC Hybrid Hearing dated 22.04.2025 is annexed herewith and marked as ANNEXURE R-2.

4. That in reference to para 24 of said order dated 09.10.2023 it is submitted that the e-filing of complaints and appeals is provided in a streamlined manner to every applicant/ appellant from 05.01.2024 on the CATS-UPSIC portal. It is pertinent to mention that notices and related information about the educational programmes, etc. under the provision of Section 26 of the RTI Act are being communicated to Public Information Officers (PIOs) through their registered email addresses and mobile numbers in pursuance of the directions of this Hon'ble Court.

5. That in reference to para 25 of said order dated 09.10.2023 it is submitted that various departments have been contacted and email addresses of 841 State PIOs and 549 First Appellate Authorities (FAAs) have been collected and the same have been entered into the CATS-UPSIC which is the online portal for Uttar Pradesh State Information Commission. It is further submitted that the login credentials are generated and shared on their registered mobile numbers.

6. That in reference to para 26 of said order dated 09.10.2023 it is submitted that an online meeting of all the Central and State Information Commissioners was convened on 17.11.2023 hosted by Mr Sidh Kumar, Joint Secretary, CIC. It is submitted that the meeting focused on sharing this Hon'ble Court's mandate and aligning the strategies of all State Information Commissions (reliance is placed on ANNEXURE R-1). It is further submitted that series of internal compliance meetings were held by UPSIC chaired by the then Chief Information Commissioner, Mr Bhavesh Kumar Singh. Following are the objectives achieved by the internal compliance meetings-

(i) The primary agenda was to coordinate the collection

of data for nodal officers, Public Information Officers (PIOs), and First Appellate Authorities (FAAs)

(ii) Departments across the State were instructed to submit data including names, emails, and mobile numbers of designated officials.

(iii) The purpose was twofold to-

- 1) Enable communication between UPSIC and designated officers via the system.
- 2) Allow on boarding of the said officers into CATS-UPSIC by generating login credentials.

(iv) Communication (emails and letters) was formally dispatched to government departments, requesting submission of required officer data in structured formats.

7. That in reference to para 27 of said order dated 09.10.2023 it is submitted that the State Government has provided the funds whenever required and requested for setting up the infrastructure for conducting virtual hearings. It is respectfully submitted that UPSIC is at present taking assistance of the National Informatics Centre Services Incorporated (NICSI) under the supervision of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) for the development of the new software/website (UPSIC-CATS).

#### **PARAWISE REPLY**

8. That para 1 of the Petition under reply is denied to the extent that there has been no wilful non-compliance by the Respondents to the order dated 09.10.2023 passed by this Hon'ble Court in WP (C) 360 of 2021.

9. That para in reply para 2 it is stated that the same is matter of record.

10. That in reply to para 3 it is submitted that

submission that the Petitioner found the case to be unavailable for tracking on the official website of the Commission is denied. However, it is submitted that the facility to track a case online is available on the official website of the Commission i.e., <https://upsic.up.gov.in/cispu/> under the head of '**Click Here to View Details of Online Cases**' shown on the Home Page (Annexure P-4 at Page 30 of Petition under Reply). It is further submitted that options of 'View All orders' and 'View Hearing Date' are also available under the same head. It is pertinent to mention here that all the users/ litigants are also provided with their personalised dashboards for various purposes including filing and tracking their cases and viewing the orders.

11. That in reply to para 4 and 5 it is respectfully submitted that the online hearing was not available on particular some particular dates due technical glitch in Hearing Room S-11 chaired by Mr Virendra Pratap Singh-Respondent No. 2 herein. It is also submitted that since some court room staff were under training therefore some applicants faced difficulties for online hearing. It is submitted that the Commission is strengthening its system with human resources for uninterrupted online hearing and by the month of May, 2026 more effective system will come in place.

12. That it is further submitted that online hearing of Petitioner/ Complainant was conducted on 22.04.2025 in Hearing Room S-01, by bench comprising of Chief Information Commissioner, Mr Rajkumar Vishwakarma-Respondent No. 1 herein and State Information Commissioner, Mr Virendra Pratap Singh-Respondent No. 2 herein. An order has been passed issuing notice to provide the desired information to the Petitioner herein. A true and translated copy of Order in Complaint No. S-11-C-0181/2024 dated 22.04.2025 is annexed herewith and marked as ANNEXURE R-3.

13. That in reply to para 6 it is submitted that Petitioner was not given online hearing due to some technical glitch on 8.11.2024. It is also submitted

that Petitioner was given online hearing on the last date of hearing i.e., 22.04.2025.

14. That in reply to para 7 it is submitted that the order of hearing on 20.12.2024 has been uploaded on website and can be viewed by clicking on '**Click Here to View Details of Online Cases**' shown on the Home Page on the website and is available to be viewed. It is further submitted that the case status is available to be viewed on the website in the manner as above-mentioned.

15. That para 8 is denied. It is submitted that there are no such deficiencies on the official website of the Commission. It is reiterated that that all the users/ litigants are also provided with their personalised dashboards for various purposes including filing and tracking their cases and viewing the orders.

(a) Links for hybrid mode of hearings are available in the Causelists for those who have availed the facility of online hearing. The users can go to '**Home Page of Commission's website <https://upsic.up.gov.in/cispu/>**', then to '**Current Weekly Cause List**', then select '**Hearing Room**', then the Cause List appears on the webpage, users can also print the said Causelist. It is pertinent to point that the option to 'Join Hearing' online is shown in the Causelist itself against the cases where parties have availed the option of online hearing. It is further submitted that the parties can avail option of virtual hearing at any time through application or email. A true copy of Causelist downloaded from the website on 19.04.2025 is annexed herewith and marked as ANNEXURE R-4.

(b) When a user files Complaint/ Appeal, he can file additional documents/submissions/applications after the said Complaint/ Appeal is registered and is allotted Hearing Room. It is denied that there is no provision for filing additional documents/submissions/applications after initial filing.

*(c) The links on the website to track case status and view orders are active and accessible in the manner aforementioned."*

10. The contempt petitioner appearing in-person would submit that by and large all the directions issued by this Court in the judgment, referred to above, have been complied with. However, there are few glitches as regards uploading of additional documents.

11. We believe that such glitches can be taken care of over a period of time.

12. However, if the contempt petitioner has any suggestions to make for better and effective implementation of the directions issued by this Court as well as to take care of the glitches as regards uploading of the documents, he may file an appropriate representation in that regard, addressed to the Chief State Information Commissioner, Uttar Pradesh.

13. With the afore-said the Contempt Petition is disposed of.

14. Pending application(s), if any, stands disposed of.

.....J.  
[J.B.PARDIWALA]

.....J.  
[R. MAHADEVAN]

New Delhi  
28<sup>th</sup> April, 2025.

ITEM NO.54

COURT NO.13

SECTION PIL-W

S U P R E M E C O U R T O F I N D I A  
RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

CONMT.PET.(C) No. 107/2025 in W.P.(C) No. 360/2021

MANOJ SINGH NEGI

Petitioner(s)

VERSUS

SHRI RAJ KUMAR VISHWAKARMA, CHIEF STATE  
INFORMATION COMMISSIONER OF UTTAR  
PRADESH & ANR.

Respondent(s)

IA No. 6042/2025 - PERMISSION TO APPEAR AND ARGUE IN PERSON

Date : 28-04-2025 This matter was called on for hearing today.

CORAM :

HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE J.B. PARDIWALA  
HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE R. MAHADEVAN

For Petitioner(s) : Petitioner-in-person

For Respondent(s) :

Mr. K Parmeshwar, Sr. A.A.G.  
Mr. Yasharth Kant, AOR  
Ms. Sonal Kushwah, Adv.  
Mr. Suryaansh Kishan Razdan, Adv.

UPON hearing the counsel the Court made the following

O R D E R

1. Application seeking permission to appear and argue in-person is allowed.

2. The Contempt Petition is disposed of in terms of the signed order, which is placed on the file.

3. Pending application(s), if any, stand disposed of.

(CHANDRESH)  
ASTT. REGISTRAR-cum-PS

(POOJA SHARMA)  
COURT MASTER (NSH)