

# CENTRAL INFORMATION COMMISSION

(Room No.315, B-Wing, August Kranti Bhawan, Bhikaji Cama Place, New Delhi 110 066)

**Prof. M. Sridhar Acharyulu (Madabhushi Sridhar)**

Information Commissioner

**CIC/SA/A/2014/001213**

**(Video Conference)**

**Meeta Sharma v. PIO, ARID Forest Research Institution.**

Important Dates and time taken:

<b>RTI:</b> 17.2.2014	<b>Reply:</b> 3-3-14	<b>Time:</b> 16 days
<b>FAA:</b> 11.4.2014	<b>FAO:</b> 5.5.2014	<b>Time:</b> 25 days
<b>SA:</b> 7.8.2014	<b>Hearing:</b> 23.4.2015	<b>Decision:</b> 30.3.2015
<b>Result: Direction to provide copy of thesis collecting cost.</b>		

## **Parties Present:**

Both the parties are present video conference at the NIC centre at Jodhpur. The Public Authority is represented by Dr. Tarun Kant.

## **FACTS:**

2. Appellant though his RTI application had sought for the copy of minutes of meeting of pre-thesis submission seminar of Ms. Anchal Sharma, copy of her thesis, all correspondence of research work since inception til date, rules & regulation of research work taken by DUC and MOU

signed between ICFRE & DUC regarding the research work to be taken by the scholars. CPIO Transfer the application to Dr S.I Ahmad. On not receiving any reply from the respondent authority, the appellant made first appeal. First appellate authority disposed of the appeal by stating that information sought in point no 1 is third-party information and for rest enclosed the copy of document sought. Being unsatisfied with the FAA order, the appellant approached the Commission through this Second Appeal.

### **Proceedings Before the Commission:**

3. Both the parties made their submissions through video conference from Jodhpur. The appellant submitted that she and Ms Anchal Sharma were working on same project under a supervisor Dr. S.I. Ahmed, in the AFRI (Arid Forest Research Institute, which is a deemed university) under regulatory control of the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun. She alleged that Ms. Anchal Sharma cunningly took the theme and her work from her research work and submitted as her thesis to the FRI. She came to know about this, when the meeting for award of Ph.D was scheduled where Ms. Anchal Sharma's thesis was being discussed. She immediately wrote to the Nodal CPIO of the FRI to supply a copy of the thesis submitted by Ms. Anchal Sharma, in order check with her thesis, but the respondent authority have not supplied so far. The CPIO of the AFRI who is present in the studio at Jodhpur, for video conference, stated that they have also written to the Nodal CPIO of the FRI, Dehradun, but so far they have not sent the thesis of the Ms. Anchal Sharma.

4. The Commission, having heard the submissions and having perused the entire record thoroughly, states that the thesis submitted to a university is not private or personal information of the candidate who submitted it, but the property of the University, which has to discuss and decide whether it deserves the award of Ph D or not. One of the purposes of seminar of pre-submission and viva voce of Ph. D candidate is to ascertain whether research work of candidate is original and the work done by the candidate only. It is not third party information. Moreover, there is a

public interest in knowing the originality of otherwise of the thesis, especially when a serious allegation of appropriating the research work is made by the co-researcher, it is the duty of the academic institution to clear the allegation after due verification.

5. The Commission hereby directs the Nodal CPIO, FRI, Dehradun to furnish the copy of the thesis of Ms. Anchal Sharma to the appellant on collecting the costs of copying, within one month from the date of receipt of this order. The Commission also directs the Nodal CPIO to coordinate and get the information and treat the RTI application as a complaint, collect explanation of Ms. Anchal Sharma, and furnish a comprehensive action taken report to the Commission with a copy to the appellant, covering the points raised by the appellant in her RTI application, within one month from the date of receipt of this order. The Commission orders accordingly.

(M.Sridhar Acharyulu)  
Information Commissioner

Authenticated true copy

(Babu Lal)  
Deputy Registrar

Addresses of the parties:

1. The CPIO under the RTI Act, Govt. of India

Ministry of Environment and Forests, Arid Forest Research Institute, Indian Council of Forestry  
Research and Education, PO-Krishi Upaz Mandi, New Pali Road, JODHPUR -342005

2. Dr. Meeta Sharma

Room No.24, Deptt. Of Forests,

Arid Forest Research Institute, Indian Council of Forestry

Research and Education, PO-Krishi Upaz Mandi, New Pali Road, JODHPUR -342005

3. The CPIO under the RTI act, Govt of India

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