

**DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW,
UTTAR PRADESH**

Presents

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
“The Right to Information Act, 2005: Two Decades of Transparency
and Democratic Accountability”
Advancing Citizens’ Right to Know
(15th – 16th November 2025)**

The International Conference on “*The Right to Information Act, 2005: Two Decades of Transparency and Democratic Accountability*” was successfully organised on 15 and 16 November 2025 at Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University, Lucknow. The two-day academic event brought together scholars, researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to deliberate on the evolving contours of the Right to Information and its relevance in contemporary governance. The conference provided a vibrant platform for critical reflection on twenty years of the Right to Information Act, its achievements, challenges, and the way forward.



Day 1 of the conference commenced with participant registration and distribution of conference kits, followed by seating in the seminar hall. The Chief Guest for the session was Shri Rajendra Singh, State Information Commissioner, who shared valuable insights on transparency and administrative accountability. The welcome address and presentation of mementos marked the formal opening of the conference.



Following the inaugural session, participants interacted during the high tea break. Through three thematic sessions, the conference examined the evolving legal, institutional, and technological dimensions of the RTI framework, highlighting its enduring significance in ensuring transparency and democratic accountability.



Session I: Translating the Right to Information into Action – The Interplay of Judiciary, Legislature, and Institutional Implementation

The first session, held on 15 November at 1pm, was co-chaired by Mr. Rahul Singh, U.P. State Resource Person, and Dr. Aparna Singh of Dr. RMLNLU. Mr. Singh highlighted the citizen-centric nature of the U.P. RTI Rules framed under Section 27 of the Act and informed the audience that over seven lakh RTI applications have been filed online in the State, reflecting its wide reach.

Dr. A.K. Tiwari, the keynote speaker, traced the conceptual and constitutional foundations of the RTI Act, emphasizing its evolution from the judicial recognition of the “right to know” to its statutory enactment. He also addressed contemporary issues such as digital governance and data protection, calling for the

preservation of RTI’s pro-disclosure ethos in the digital age.



A total of seven presenters shared their research and perspectives on the subject. Presenters discussed constitutional principles, statutory

interpretation, and administrative challenges in implementation. Papers examined landmark cases such as *State of U.P. v. Raj Narain*, *S.P. Gupta*, and *PUCJ*, focusing on how judicial reasoning has deepened transparency and citizen participation. Other contributions highlighted administrative bottlenecks, institutional autonomy, and the effects of the RTI (Amendment) Act, 2019.

Recommendations emerging from this session included restoring the independence of Information Commissions, ensuring timely appointments, balancing privacy with transparency, and strengthening proactive disclosures under Section 4(2) of the Act.

Session II: RTI, Privacy, and Digital Data Protection in the Era of e-Governance

The second session, co-chaired by Prof. Dr. Preeti Mishra (BBAU, Lucknow) and Dr. Shweta Trivedi (KMC Language University), featured Prof. Dr. Ashish Srivastava as the keynote speaker. He underscored that despite completing two decades, the RTI framework is still evolving to meet the challenges posed by artificial intelligence and digital governance.

Eleven papers were presented, covering emerging debates surrounding data protection, technological governance, and the relationship between privacy and transparency. Presentations explored the relationship between informational privacy and transparency in light of the Puttaswamy judgment and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. Papers proposed tests for balancing disclosure and privacy, suggested administrative coordination between Information Commissions and the Data Protection Board, and examined international privacy–transparency models in countries such as the U.K., Canada, and South Africa.



Research presented by participants emphasized the need for structured training for Public Information Officers (PIOs), doctrinal clarity, and digital infrastructure reforms to reduce delays and misuse of exemptions.

Session III: Emerging Dimensions of RTI – Comparative and International Perspectives

The third session was chaired and keynoted by Dr. Kiran Rai and co-chaired by Dr. Seema Siddiqui (Integral University). The session explored global experiences and comparative perspectives on RTI. Discussions addressed the intersection of RTI with artificial intelligence, algorithmic accountability, and international data protection standards such as the GDPR.



Presentations included a comparative analysis of RTI implementation in India, the U.S., and Canada; a case study from Jammu & Kashmir demonstrating how RTI promotes equity in welfare administration; and analyses of how the DPDP Act affects public-interest disclosure. Participants emphasized that ethical, human-centric AI and institutional transparency are vital to achieving SDG-16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

The Valedictory Session held from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM included reflections, participant feedback, the valedictory address, the vote of thanks, and award distribution. Prof. Dr. Ajay Taneja, Vice-Chancellor, Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Language University, attended as Chief Guest, and Prof. Dr. Rishendra Verma joined as Special Guest.

Awards were presented in recognition of academic merit and excellence. The Best Paper Presenter Award of Rs. 5,000, along with a trophy and certificates, was



awarded to Saamya Gautam and Shailja Yadav. The Best Paper Award consisting of Rs. 10,000, a trophy, and certificates was presented to Prachi Singh and Deepika Nallabeli for their outstanding scholarly contribution.

Special acknowledgment was extended to Ms. Manjusha Tiwari for serving as the Conference Rapporteur. Members of the organising committee were also recognised and felicitated

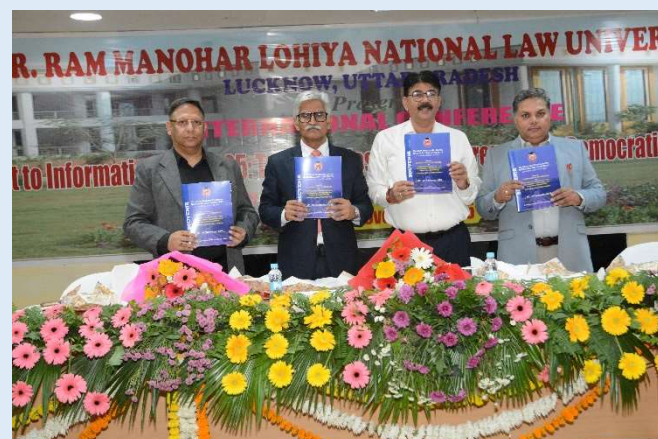
with mementos, including Utkarsha Singh, Vaishali Verma, Akshat Agarwal, and Aarush Khanna, whose dedicated coordination ensured the smooth functioning and success of the event.

The conference expressed deep gratitude to the Convener, Prof. R.K. Yadav, and Co-Convener, Dr. Maneesh Bajpai, whose leadership, planning, and guidance remained instrumental throughout the process. Special appreciation was also extended to



the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Amar Pal Singh, for his constant support, and to the Head of the Department of Law, Dr. Manish Singh, whose supervision and academic direction meaningfully shaped the conference objectives. Their collective vision and encouragement were vital in transforming the conference from concept to execution.

The conference concluded with the National Anthem, formally marking the close of the event.



The two-day conference served as a significant platform for meaningful dialogue and scholarly engagement on RTI and governance. Through its presentations, deliberations, and collaborative exchanges, the event reinforced the role of transparency as an essential pillar of democracy and encouraged future research, discourse, and academic engagement in the field.