

The Hindu 02.09.2009

State Information Commission on e-governance map soon

Staff Reporter

Appeals under RTI Act to be disposed of before October

40 officers fined for not complying with Act

Commissioner in Dharmapuri to inquire about 20 pending petitions

DHARMAPURI: The State Information Commission will be put on e-governance map soon, said R. Perumalsamy, State Information Commissioner, here on Tuesday.

He told reporters that the e-governance project was being fully sponsored by the Government of India.

“Once the Commission’s administrative functions come under e-governance, the day-to-day

functioning will be possible at the click of a mouse in Chennai,” he said.

Videoconferencing

Even the Commissioner can take up the petitions pending for long, from the headquarters through videoconferencing and save thousands of rupees over transport and other expenses.

He said the Right to Information Act came into effect in Tamil Nadu on January 1, 2006.

Up to August 31 this year, as many as 1,18,400 petitions were received from the public seeking information from various government and government-aided departments.

Of these, 22,450 petitions did not come under the RTI purview, hence they were kept aside.

For the other petitions, the Commission instructed the authorities concerned to reply to the petitioners within the stipulated period as per the Act.

The Commission disposed of 8,950 appeals up to July and 850 appeals were pending.

These petitions would be disposed of possibly before October, the Commissioner said.

Since the Act came into effect, 40 officers were fined for not complying with it.

They were fined a maximum of Rs. 25,000 under section 20(1) of the Act.

In some cases, the Commission had recommended departmental disciplinary action under section 20(2).

The Commission was also empowered to direct the officials concerned to give compensation to the petitioners under section 19(8).

Mr. Perumalsamy was in Dharmapuri to inquire about 20 RTI petitions pending for the past 7 to 8 months.

He said nine petitions were from Salem, four from Dharmapuri, three from Villupuram, two from Krishnagiri and one each from Erode and Namakkal.