

## The Blame Game\_ A Very Short Story

My friends and I wanted to obtain some documents from a government office for its submission in a court case. This was long after RTI was implemented. We unsuccessfully wrote to the officer in charge several times. Finally, we had to go to the office to collect the papers in person.

An employee of that office received us and enquired whys of our presence. He listened to our story and said that he would prepare the papers in our names for which we had to pay Rs500. In addition we were supposed to pay a fee of Rs1000. We did not know the application format to obtain what we needed. On top of that, we had no time to understand the sections and columns of the relevant act published in the gazetteer notification. We paid him what he asked for and tried to convince ourselves that it was his part time legitimate occupation.

Two days later, while looking for an address of a government office on the internet, we accidentally came across a catchy hyperlink. The link took us to a page full of Downloadable Model Applications in PDF, which was maintained by the government. To our shame, we found the format of the application that had cost us an illegal expenditure or I should say it was our stupidity that had cost us a lot more than 500 bucks.

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