

Kanpur land-sharks intimidating RTI activist by fabricating false charges

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Land-mafia in Kanpur in connivance with officials of Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) have slapped false fabricated charges against an Right-to-Information (RTI) campaign leader - Roby Sharma.

Roby has been spearheading the RTI campaign in Kanpur since past two years now, exposing corruption and championing people's causes across the city.

Roby had filed a RTI application seeking the information from the KDA and Fire Department officials on how many multi-storey buildings are following the fire-safety norms setup by them, and how many of these buildings have obtained a no-objection certificate from the fire department.

Roby had further asked under the RTI Act that under which government order, are the private guest houses and businesses conducting commercial businesses in residential localities.

Also in Panki region of Kanpur, a 'ramleela' park was allotted to build a private school. Roby had filed a RTI application seeking to know under which government order have the allotment been made.

Due to the connivance of land-mafia with KDA officials, there are many such instances of illegal and unauthorized land grabbing across the city of Kanpur.

KDA has not given a response to many previous RTI applications of Roby and the hearing of these cases are currently undergoing in State Information Commission (SIC) of UP.

Also media has been colluding too! A leading city newspaper owns two major multiplexes - Rave three and Rave five - both of which are functioning without a no-objection certificate from Fire department. The bureau chief of this newspaper Sanjeev Mishra had threatened another acquaintance of Roby to 'stay away from Rave' related cases. The bureau chief also threatened the acquaintance to get Roby arrested and 'rot in jail for rest of his life.'

When Roby Sharma went for a hearing in the office of KDA's Secretary Hemant Kumar Singh, another senior KDA official Mahaveer Singh had verbally abused him and threatened of dire consequences if 'Roby doesn't stop seeking information'.

"RTI Act is a much-heralded public interest constitutional policy empowering the citizens and bestowing them with their fundamental right to information in the democratic India. But rampant corruption, malpractices and nexus between the 'powerful' and mighty and authorities are posing a huge challenge to the committed RTI champions like Roby Sharma" said Mahesh Kumar, another leading RTI activist in Kanpur.

The activists today met the district magistrate of Kanpur who assured them of taking action.

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