

BEFORE THE APPELLATE AUTHORITY
(Under the Right to Information Act, 2005)
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA

Appeal No. 5574 of 2023

Mehul Grover	:	Appellant
	Vs	
CPIO, SEBI, Mumbai	:	Respondent

ORDER

1. The appellant had filed an application dated December 22, 2022 (received by the respondent through RTI MIS Portal) under the Right to Information Act, 2005 (“**RTI Act**”). The respondent, by a letter dated January 17, 2023, responded to the application filed by the appellant. The appellant filed an appeal (Reg. No. SEBIH/A/E/23/00020) dated January 17, 2023. I have carefully considered the application, the response and the appeal and find that the matter can be decided based on the material available on record.
2. **Ground of appeal-** The appellant has filed the appeal on the ground that access to the requested information was refused. On perusal of the appeal, it appears that the appellant is not satisfied with the response provided with respect to query number 3. In view of the submissions made by the appellant, I am only dealing with the said query and the response provided thereto, in this order.
3. **Query number 3-** The appellant, vide query number 3, sought the following information pertaining to the Brightcom Group :

“3. Please provide me details of investor complaints pending and communications related to these with the company.”
4. The respondent, in response to the aforesaid query, informed that the requested information is exempt from disclosure under section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act since the same relates to personal information, the disclosure of which has no relationship to any public activity or interest and may cause unwarranted invasion into the privacy of the individual. The appellant, in his appeal, *inter alia*, submitted that he only wanted the content of the complaints and their current status.

5. I have perused the query and the response provided thereto. I note that that the respondent has denied the requested information under section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act. In my opinion, providing details/copy of the complaints filed against Brightcom Group would reveal personal information pertaining to the complainants. Further, I note that the appellant has not established larger public interest in the extant matter. In this context, I note that in the matter of *Chandrakant Kantilal Patel vs. CPIO, SEBI* (order dated December 27, 2022) the appellant had sought copies of complaints filed against Aakruti Nirmiti Ltd. The Hon'ble CIC, in the said matter, *inter alia*, observed that the RTI application clearly reveals that the information sought is related to a third party as defined under section 2(n) of the RTI Act. Further, the complainants who filed complaints against Aakruti Nirmiti Limited and the SEBI, are all third parties. The Hon'ble CIC also relied on the judgement dated November 13, 2019 passed by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of *CPIO, Supreme Court of India vs. Subhash Chandra Agarwal* and held that the information sought was not disclosable under section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act and that the appellant could not establish larger public interest in that case. Based on the aforesaid discussions, I am of the opinion that the respondent was right in claiming exemption under section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act.
6. In view of the above observations, I find that there is no need to interfere with the decision of the respondent. The Appeal is accordingly dismissed.

Place: Mumbai
Date: February 14, 2023

ANAND BAIWAR
APPELLATE AUTHORITY UNDER THE RTI ACT
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE BOARD OF INDIA