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**Public Works for a Better Government**

May 4, 2015

Shri Rahul Gandhi, Chairperson  
Indian Youth Congress  
12 Tughlaq Lane  
New Delhi 110 011  
India

Dear Shri Gandhi:

Shri Sam Pitroda suggested that I write to you and enclose a copy of the India National Building Code (2005), which my nonprofit organization has formatted and printed against the wishes of the government's Bureau of Indian Standards.

The National Building Code is a vital government document, governing the safe construction of buildings in India. The National Building Code costs Rs 12,440.00 in India and the Bureau insists that all Indian citizens—including engineering students and government officials charged with enforcing public safety—pay this fee. Because copyright is asserted on this government document, the Bureau maintains that my noncommercial republication of this document is contrary to law.

The National Building Code—as well as the 19,000 other Indian Standards we have posted for noncommercial use on the Internet—is important for the creation of jobs and the furtherance of economic activity in India. The standards represent the codified knowledge not only for how to create buildings properly, but in vital fields such as agriculture, public health, water management, and industries such as construction, textiles, food, and power generation. Indian Standards create jobs and insure the public safety.

The National Building Code and the other 19,000 Indian Standards are also vital to education of the youth and those wishing to enter the professions. By reading these documents, we can help strengthen education in India and help create a new generation of technical professionals.

When we post these standards, we add considerable value to these important documents. Many of them have been recoded into modern web standards, we provide bulk access so a student can download all the documents in their field of study. The online version of the documents include extensive links to other standards, redrawn graphics suitable for including in new mobile applications, and provide access to the blind and visually impaired.

This is the promise of the Internet for innovation and broader access, but the Bureau of Indian Standards has objected to our efforts and has refused to renew our contract for updated standards.

You may find the entire collection of Indian Standards we have made available for noncommercial use at the following Internet address:

<https://law.resource.org/pub/in/>

Shri Sam Pitroda and I wish to continue this effort, making the standards ever more useful. We have offered to host “hackathons” in India, bringing together the incredible talent in the engineering programs in Indian universities and asking them to help make Indian Standards ever more useful. We have offered to work with the Bureau and to donate all the work my group has done so that they in turn may make these standards even better. This is the promise of the Internet, to provide this kind of innovation and access to government information.

I am writing to you today because of your important role and leadership in the Indian Youth Congress and the National Students Union. My hope is you can bring this issue to the attention of the government and that together we can make this important resource available to the youth of India, as well as to those in the professions and those dedicated public servants that wish to make a safer and more prosperous India.

Please let me know if I can provide any further information and I thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter.

With best regards,

Carl Malamud  
Public.Resource.Org

cc: Shri Sam Pitroda