



Centre for Peace and  
Development Initiatives

September 2016

## CPDI Right to Information Watch

### Editorial:

Greetings from the Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, (CPDI).

It is encouraging to note that the Sindh government has finally decided to enact an effective right to information law for the province. The first draft right to information bill 2015 left much to be desired. The 2nd draft in the shape of the Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Bill 2016 is a major improvement on Sindh Freedom of Information Act 2006. However, there are certain lacunas in this draft that need to be fixed. Especially, the requirement to provide reason for seeking information is totally out of place and needs to be removed. There is no such provision in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Act 2013 and the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013. In fact, both these laws specifically prohibit public officials to ask reason from applicant for seeking information.

Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, (CPDI) urges Sindh government to table the bill in the assembly and invite civil society groups to provide feedback on this bill in front of the relevant committee.

Dilly-dallying by the federal government on the issue of RTI legislation continues. In fact, PMLN government is following the course set by PPP government in its tenure. There are promises and statements on RTI legislation but the bill is yet to be presented before federal cabinet for its approval. With less than two years remaining in its tenure, it is about time that PMLN government tables the draft bill in the parliament. Even if the draft bill goes through lengthy legislative process and is eventually enacted, it will take considerable time to operationalise this law.

### RTI Legislative Landscape

#### Movement in Sindh on RTI: the Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Bill 2016

The draft of the Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Bill 2016 is in the news these days. Umar Cheema, who has been following legislation on RTI very closely and has contributed excellent stories on the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act 2013 and on the

federal draft RTI bill, also contributed a good story on the Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Bill 2016 in the News on September 02, 2016 titled [Corrupt to be protected, info seekers to be punished](#).

### **Another month and another promise about federal RTI law:**

ON [August 26, 2016](#), Information Minister Pervaiz Rashid said the government would soon table Right to Information Bill in the National Assembly.

This latest pronouncement about legislation on right to information comes in the wake of the statement of Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting on [June 26, 2016](#) in which he shared the same information.

## **RTI in Action**

### **Proactive Disclosure of Information: Excellent News from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

It is not the enactment but the implementation of RTI laws that matters. It is heartening to note that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is taking steps to implement Section 5 of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Act 2013. ON [August 30](#), Express Tribune reported that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has made public the prices of 500 medicines through its web site. This is an excellent development and other provincial public bodies should follow the suit and start implementing Section 5 of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Act 2013.

### **Justice hurried justice buried? RTI commissioner accused of closing incomplete case**

On [September 01](#), 2016, Express Tribune carried a story titled Alleging corruption: RTI commissioner accused of closing incomplete case, in which Assistant Professor Khurram Mehtab of University of Haripur alleged that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Commission had closed his complaint without listening to his arguments. This is a very serious allegation and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Commission should make its position clear. While justice delayed is justice denied but at the same time justice hurried is justice buried.

### **Transparency and Right to Information Program**

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Centre for Peace and Development Initiatives, Pakistan (CPDI-Pakistan)

Tel: +92 (0) 51-2375158-9; 4319430

URL: [www.cpdipakistan.org](http://www.cpdipakistan.org)