



Centre for Peace and
Development Initiatives

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CPDI Right to Information Watch

Editorial:

The federal government is motivated to establish Pakistan Commission on Access to information. Under the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017 an independent appellate forum is to be established for strengthening the enforcement mechanism of RTI at federal level. After taking no action for 10 months, PML-N led government had recommended few names but the current government is inclined towards making some changes. The situation will be open to many doubts, in case the names are changed by the current government. On the other hand, media houses and proponents of the freedom of expression are claiming that [freedom of press is at the decline in Pakistan](#). Many media houses are at the verge of shutdown and [journalists are losing their jobs at a surprising pace](#).

RTI Legislative Landscape

Implementation and Status of Online Proactive Disclosure in Punjab

CPDI is taking several steps to protect citizen's fundamental right to know. We conducted a comprehensive study on the status of online proactive disclosure of information in provincial departments of Punjab, so that online public access to information is ensured. The studies show that there is a significant lack of online disclosure of information and compliance with section 4 of Punjab RTI Law is very low. [The detailed report and score sheet is available on website of CPDI](#). Website of Punjab Information Commission was also evaluated and could stand with only 38% on the scale of online proactive disclosure.

Sindh Transparency and Right to Information Act 2016

The status of Sindh RTI law is unpromising. Not only the appellate forum is non-functional but the awareness regarding Sindh RTI Law is very low. CPDI has raised demand and the government is stating that the commission will be formed soon. Sikandar Ali hullo, notified commissioner in Sindh Information Commissioner participated in the Open Discussion on International Right to Know Day organized by CPDI. He said that the commission will be made functional by October 2018 but it is still undone. CPDI conducted a study to measure the status of online proactive disclosure of information in Sindh. [The detailed report and scoresheet is available on the website of CPDI](#).

Establishment of Pakistan Commission on Access to Information

Fawad Chaudhry, Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National and Literary Heritage has said in one of the event held on international right to know day that the Federal Information Commission will be established soon. It seems that the government is moving towards making a significant.

CPDI has written letters to all federal ministries and institutions to designate Public Information Officers which has resulted in the designation of PIOs in several departments.

Balochistan Lagging Far Behind In the Race of RTI

Balochistan is lagging far behind and it is hoped that the provincial government will pay attention to the effective legislation on RTI in the province. Freedom of information Act 2005 is a weak RTI law which does not ensure the free flow of information even it lacks provision on proactive disclosure of information. CPDI is also planning to reach the provincial minister for Information, Zahoor Ahmed to raise demand.

RTI in Action

In the month of October CPDI gauged the online proactive disclosure of information in the provincial departments of Punjab, KP and Sindh. In today's digital era, higher demand of online proactive disclosure has become inevitable. With this aim, studies were conducted in Punjab KP and Sindh to improve the online presence of public authorities. Province wise highest scoring departments are KP RTI Commission with 95%, Punjab Assembly with 88% and Sindh Finance department with 54%. Highest reaching percentages also give a glimpse of status of implementation in KP, Punjab and Sindh.

Transparency and Right to Information Program

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