

Extention of RTI Act to former FATA is need of hour: Azmat Hanif

All kind of public information can be accessed by citizen under the RTI Act except to information related to national security, International Relations and privacy of individuals.

- 4 days ago

🔥 147



📷 TNN reporter Said Nazir interviewing commissioner KP information Commission Azmat Hanif Orakzai in connection with International Day for Universal Access to Information. Photo by Tayyeb Afridi

TNN reporter Said Nazir interviewing commissioner KP information Commission Azmat Hanif Orakzai in connection with International Day for Universal Access to Information. Photo by Tayyeb Afridi

Said Nazir

ISLAMABAD: The Chief Commissioner of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information (RTI) Commission Azmat Hanif Orakzai has said the commission has addressed 11500 cases pertaining to citizens' requests for accessing to public information since its inception in 2013.

Talking to Tribal News Network in Islamabad a day before International Day for Universal Access to Information, Azmat said that over 12000 applications were received by the commission out of which 11500 applicants got required information from various departments.

According to the commission, RTI Act which was passed from KP assembly in 2013, is applicable in 17 districts of the province, where government has appointed Public Information Officers (PIOs) in various departments to facilitate citizen in getting timely access to information.

All kind of public information can be accessed by citizen under the RTI Act except to information related to national security, International Relations and privacy of individuals.

"We are trying to improve the Act and in this regarded we had proposed some changes in the act to the provincial government to make public information more accessible to citizen as it is their basic fundamental right.

Article 19A of the constitution of Pakistan provides that every citizen shall have the right to access to information in all matters of public importance, subject to regulation and reasonable restrictions imposed by law,

The RTI Act has not been extended to Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) and recently merged tribal districts which were formerly known as Federally Administered Tribal Areas- both regions have become part of KP after the passage of 25th constitutional amendment from the parliament in past May.

"I have sent a case to the provincial government for extension of the RTI Act and appointment of PIO in seven districts of PATA some three months back and now the provincial law department is examining the case and whenever the government decides, it will be extended to PATA", Azmat Hanif informed.

However, the case of FATA is different where extension of RTI Act is not in pipeline as yet due to lack of various departments' structures such as police and judiciary etc, Orakzai said and added "Personally, I believe that people of FATA have lived through dark ages and were deprived of basic human rights under FCR, but now it is time to give them this basic fundamental right of access to information forthwith".

<https://www.tnn.com.pk/over-eleven-thousand-applicants-get-access-to-public-information-under-rti-act-azmat-hanif/>