



NEWSLETTER

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KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA RIGHT TO INFORMATION COMMISSION



KPK RTI ACT 2013



Promoting Citizens Integration in governance

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Dear Readers!

This newsletter is a synopsis of activities undertaken by the KPK Right to Information Commission in the first quarter of the year 2018.

The KPK RTI Act 2013 was enacted by the provincial government, as part of its good Governance Legislative framework to promote transparency and accountability in the functioning of public bodies of the province. Over the past three years or so, thousands of citizens were able to exercise their constitutional right of accessing information of public importance through the RTI law. The KP RTI Commission which has been tasked to oversee the implementation of the law is taking consistent steps to make the public bodies truly accountable to the citizens, thereby helping in building the much required state-citizen trust. While doing so, the Information Commission is also mindful of the Sustainable Development Goal (16.10) which envisages public access to information in accordance with provincial legislation and international agreements.

The Commission would be pleased to receive any suggestions/proposals which would help us in further improving the efficacy of KP RTI law for benefit of the citizens.

CHIEF INFORMATION COMMISSIONER,
KPK Right to information commission

The KPIC is an independent body established under the KPK RTI Act 2013, to see the implementation of RTI law in KPK. It has been lucky in the sense that ever since its establishment in October 2013, The Commission has been fully functional owing to the support and ownership of the provincial government. Not only it was able to dispose off 317 complaints of the citizens during the period under review, but simultaneously monitored the disposal of RTI requests by the public bodies. The KPIC with the support of the Chief Secretary was able to improve, the hitherto weak area of proactive disclosure of information by government departments as required under Section-5 of the Act. For convenience of the public the KPIC appointed focal person in different divisional headquarters of the province. These focal persons constantly pursue the RTI request / complaints at the local level. Other activities under taken by the commission during the first quarter has been highlighted in the subsequent pages of the news letter.

NOMINATION OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICERS (PIOs) IN ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENT BODIES OF KPK.

As a large number of citizens were persistently demanding information from the elected local councils of KPK, therefore 2482 Secretaries of Village Councils / Neighborhood council were notified as PIOs for the purposes of the Act. Pamphlets were also got printed and distributed among these PIOs for their guidance viz-a-viz disposal of the RTI requests of citizens.



The RTI Commission participated in a workshop organized by Rural Support Programme Network on 16, Feb 2018 at Peshawar. The workshop was aimed at the role of RTI Act in cases of violence against women in KP. The participants were briefed about the use of RTI law in combating and adjudication of cases relating to violence against women.



Participants of the workshop at Peshawar dated 16 Feb, 2018.

The following major activities under the work plan 2018 were under taken by the Commission during the period under review:-

- 1)
 - a. Printing and distribution of 500 hand books among the PIOs
 - b. Printing and distribution of 3000 copies of RTI Act.
 - c. Printing and distribution of 3000 pamphlets relating to RTI Act.
 - d. Printing and distribution of 3000 pamphlets relating to the functions of Secretaries Village / Neighborhood Councils, under the RTI Law.
- 2) Under an agreement signed with the center for Governance & Public Accountability (CGPA) work on the development of a Software for the RTI Commission for efficient disposal of complaints taken in hand.
- 3) Work initiated on the development of a manual relating to pro-active disclosure of information and maintenance of the records by all public bodies of the province with the assistance of USAID funded KP Governance Project.
- 4) Social audit of District Headquarter Hospital Karak using the RTI Law with the objective of improving service delivery in the hospital. This exercise will be conducted through a community group and done in other districts of KPK in a phase manner.
- 5) An awareness seminar on RTI Law for local bodies councillors of District Kohat was organized by the Commission at TMA Hall on 17th Jan 2018.



Deputy Commissioner Kohat addressing the participants of the awareness seminar on RTI Law for Local Bodies Councillors of Kohat dated 17th Jan, 2018

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TOWARDS ATTAINMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL (SDG-16.10) THROUGH THE KP RTI ACT.

Goal 16.10 of the SDG envisages public access and protection of fundamental freedoms accordance with national legislation and international agreements. The KPK RTI Act 2013 is an indicator that the provincial government has provided a legislative mechanism to the general public to have access to information of public importance subject to reasonable restrictions. During the past 3 years of so more than 11000 citizens filed information requests with public bodies of KPK, out of which more than 92% citizens received the information which they have desired.

KPIC also remained engaged with other stakeholders like the UNESCO and UNDP by way of participating in the multi stakeholder round table at Islamabad on 12 April 2018 & the launch event for the report on SDG goal 16 at Peshawar on 19 April 2018 respectively.



Participants of the seminar on legislative/policy gap analysis relating to SDG-16

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VISIT OF MR. TOBY MENDEL TO KPIC (PESHAWAR)



Mr. Toby Mendel, Executive Director, Centre for Law and Democracy, an NGO that works internationally to promote fundamental rights for democracy, with an emphasis on freedom of expression, freedom of association and the right to information, visited KPIC in March 2018. In connection with the preparation of new RTI training manuals in collaboration with GIZ & to do some ground work for the development of methodology for measuring RTI implementation in Pakistan, based on current status quo. In this connection, he had a few inter-active sessions with selected PIOs, media persons, academia, civil society & members of the KPIC. It was a matter of pride for KPIC that the methodology so developed will subsequently be used for evaluating RTI laws of other countries of the world.



Mr. Toby Mendel briefing the participants of the onboarding workshop for the new RTI Training Manual for master trainers

7 RTI COMMISSION ORGANIZES TRAININGS FOR (PIOs).



Under the Support to Local Governance (Logo) programme the GIZ (Government of Germany) is supporting the RTI Commission in the result area State - Citizen dialogue. During the period under review, training sessions for government functionaries (PIOs) were organized by the Commission in collaboration with GIZ in the district shown below.

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|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| i. Abbottabad | 27th Feb 2018 | ii. Battagram | 7th March 2018 |
| iii. Mansehra | 8th March 2018 | iv. Nowshera | 15th March 2018 |
| v. Haripur | 21st March 2018 | vi. Tank | 29th March 2018 |
| vii. D I Khan | 28th March 2018 | viii. Torgar | 5th April 2018 |
| ix. Peshawar | 19th April 2018 | | |

During the training sessions the PIOs were imparted trainings on disposal of Information requests of citizens & the relevant provisions of the law relating to their functions. The difficulties highlighted by the PIOs in responding to the requests of citizens were invariably discussed in these sessions and the PIOs were provided the required guidance.

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Transparency and accountability top priority of the government says Deputy Commissioner Peshawar while addressing the PIOs of the District.



Training session for PIOs of Nowshera dated 15 March 2018.



Mr. Parvez Khan Deputy Commissioner Torgar addressing the training session of PIOs on 5th April, 2018.



Deputy Commissioner Battagram, addressing the PIOs on 7th March, 2018.



Ambassadors of Germany & Switzerland during the Training Session of PIOs at Haripur at 21st March 2018.



Training Session for govt functionaries (PIOs) on KPK RTI Law at Tank dated 29th March 2018.



Under Section 5 of the KP RTI law, all public bodies are required to pro-actively disclose certain categories of information in an up to date fashion and in a manner that they are accessible to citizens, including over the internet. This was however not being done by majority of public bodies. With the support of the Chief Secretary KPK, this area was reasonably improved and more than 35 departments have now up loaded the required information on their respective web sites.

As stated earlier a manual is being prepared for guidance of the public bodies regarding pro-active disclosure plus maintenance of public record. The manual so prepared will be handed over to all public bodies for guidance.

During in the period under review the citizens continued to file complaints for against the public bodies for non-provision of the demanded information. The commission therefore took actions against the defaulting public bodies in the form of imposition of fines, issuance show cause notices and censures etc. The aim was to impress upon the PIOs the need for effective implementation of the RTI law.

SOCIAL AUDIT OF THE DISTRICT HEADQUARTER HOSPITAL KARAK THROUGH THE RTI LAW.

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Commission and Center for Governance and Public Accountability (CGPA) signed an MoU dated 31st January 2018, to strengthen the capacity of the commission for effective enforcement of the RTI Law. Apart from other activities the Commission will extend its support to CGPA in the implementation of Community Social Audits. These audits are aimed to address the public complaints launched in the social audit process.

In this context, the social audit of DHQ Hospital Karak is proposed which will account the minimum service delivery standards vs available service delivery standards. The said activity will take three to four months, including making of four to five minutes documentary followed by launching of a Social Audit Report at the provincial seminar here at Peshawar.



Mr. Malik Masood, CGPA briefing the community group of social audit at Karak on 25th April 2018.

The GIZ, development partner of the RTI Commission, organized a partner planning workshop at Islamabad on 29th Feb, 2018.

The Agenda was to analyse the achievements of the Local Governance LoGo Program of 2017 and to discuss the upcoming activities along with time lines and shared responsibilities regarding the implementation of the RTI law in 2018.



Participants of the RTI Partnership Workshop in Islamabad dated 29 Feb, 2018.



Training of Master Trainers on KPK RTI Law at Local Government School Peshawar dated 1st March 2018.

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