

Electronic RTI application system a failure

Officials asking people to file applications manually instead of using ERTI portal

By Manzoor Ali

PESHAWAR: Lack of interest on part of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Right to Information Commission and public information officers in the working of the electronic RTI application system has nearly crippled the initiative launched in Sept 2015.

Officials claim that the RTI commission's officials tasked with enforcing the relevant law are telling the people to file applications manually instead of using the ERTI portal.

An official told Dawn that the ERTI was part of the e-governance initiative launched by the PTI government soon after its formation.

"It is basically part of the citizen portal launched by the government," he said, adding that the project's aim was to provide an 'easy online' website to make job easier for both the officials and the citizens.

use ERTI system citing work burden, lack of computers and other protests.

The official said on the other hand, RTI Commission lack of will was also a main reason behind non-utilization of the system.

"Why the PIOs would start using a system, which requires them to be more efficient and responsive, if the commission itself is not willing to tell them to use the system in unequivocal terms," he said.

The official said in order to make the system work, the commission needed to issue strict instructions to PIOs.

"A notification from the chief secretary office would also do the trick, as currently the PIOs are not legally bound to use the ERTI system," he said.

The official said the PIOs' reluctance to use the system, too, adversely impacted on the implementation of proactive disclosure under the provision of the KP RTI Act 2013, as the PIO had been provided with authorization to feed the required data into the system.

The proactive disclosure of departments have to provide annual merit and seniority lists, annual reports, minutes of the meetings, rules and regulations from the government departments.

The official said the ERTI system was not working properly because of several reasons.

electronic-RTI application system by PIOs had forced the commission to take printouts of information requests before sending them to the relevant departments' PIOs.

"The RTI users confirm it. Mohsin Ali, a resident of Kohat, complained the PIOs concerned didn't bother to respond to his two online RTI requests filed in Nov 2016 within the stipulated time forcing him to approach the commission for relief."

He said when he contacted the commission, it was said that there were several issues with the online RTI system and he should file paper-based RTI.

"Later, the commission itself took printouts of his applications and forwarded them to the departments concerned," he said.

The PIOs' lenient attitude towards the implementation of the KP RTI Act 2013 also forced Chief Information Commissioner Asmat Hanif Aurakazi to ask provincial chief secretary Abid Saeed to intervene and direct the government.

Seven turned up for a seminar on RTI Act and had to register by paying Rs 200 in advance.

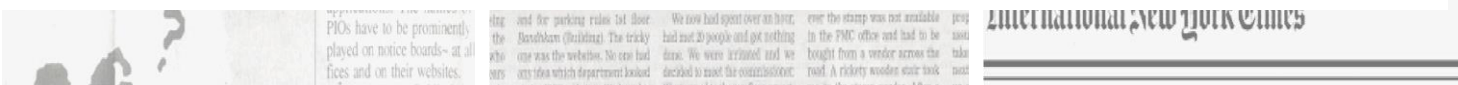
At least 100 people attended the seminar.

In your thirst for knowledge, be sure not to drown in all the information
— Anthony J D'Angelo
The Maharan Monday, September 19, 2016

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VIVEK EDUCATION SOCIETY'S VIVEK COLLEGE OF COMMERCE

STATE LEVEL WORKSHOP



RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT-2005: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN INDIA



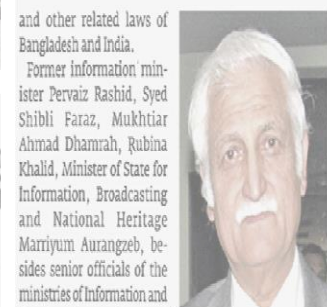
will have less difficulty in submitting and following up their applications. The APIOs have a capacity to forward the application to PIOs within 5 days of the receipt. However, if the information is readily accessible, they should process your application and provide information to you as soon as possible. In anticipation of non-compliance the RTI Act sets in place Appeals and Complaint procedures: It provides requesters with cheap, simple options for taking up issue with regard to decisions or poor performance of public authorities and Govt. officials. Requesters can make appeals to a senior officer within the concerned Dept. (Referred to the appellate authority) or I can complain to the Information Commissions that are set up at the Center and in all the States. Note that in any appeal proceedings, the burden of proof that denial of a request was justified lies on the person who wants to keep the information secret. Secrecy is now what needs to be justified.

RTI sections and many stairs and lifts all over the building, so we kept getting lost every two minutes. Found our way back to the main lobby and then made a fresh attempt. We got to the roads department at about 11 pm and were told that the commissioner was not in the office. They then said that the commissioner was last seen in office three days back so we weren't getting any help here. By now we were crestfallen and disheartened. It was obvious to us why bills have a field day for the public: The person at this entrance however saved our day as he pointed us to a window where a lady employed for reasons unknown to us accepted our form. We then found the statistics department. Like in all other

RTI seminar held



IMAPUR: A seminar on the Right to Information was organized by the Nagaland Government Registered Class-I Contractors' Union (NGCC-I CU) at Hotel Holiday Inn, Kohima on September 20. A release issued by KC Angami, president of the union said that the union held the seminar on RTI which came into effect on October 12 2005. The seminar discussed that Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) was a must and it was the obligation of the authority to ensure transparency. Lydia, Kheto Yeptho and Kezhokhoto Savi, president NVCO were the resource persons. Highlights of the programme included invocation from K Neiselie Sekhose, convenor action committee, welcome address from KC Angami, president and closing prayer by L Pukhato Shohhe, general secretary of the union.



Information from some institutions has always been withheld in the name of national security or some other excuse
Senator Farhatullah Babar

the fact that the information is not right and you do not need it for your request. However, if the information requested is essential for ensuring the life and liberty of a person, it is good practice to file an application explaining why you think the information relates to 'life and liberty' (that information to be given within 48 hours). The RTI Act imposes an obligation on Public Authorities to proactively publish a range of Information of public interest to citizens including updates about structure, functioning of Public Authorities, documents they hold,

their finances, relevant facts while formulating policies or announcing decisions etc. This is a key provision because it recognizes that some information is so useful/important to the community at large that it should be given out regularly without anyone specifically asking for it. The RTI Act designates two different types of officials to handle requests in public authorities: Public Information Officers (PIOs): PIOs must be designated in all administrative offices at the Central, State and Local administrative levels. PIOs are responsible for receiving and processing

and other related laws of Bangladesh and India. Former information minister Pervaiz Rashid, Syed Shibli Faraz, Mukhtiar Ahmad Dhamrah, Rubina Khalid, Minister of State for Information, Broadcasting and National Heritage Marriyum Aurangzeb, besides senior officials of the ministries of Information and Broadcasting, and Law and Justice attended the meeting. Babar, while discussing the clause 'exclusion of certain records', said: "Information from some institutions has always been withheld in the name of national security or some other excuse." "I have personally experienced this. Any such information sought by parliamentarians is denied to them on the pretext of national security or national interests - hence muzzling the infor-

relevant information causes less harm and more public good, then it should be released. "The same is being followed in the UK, India and Bangladesh," he said, suggesting that Pakistan should follow the same principle for transparency. Rashid suggested that a parliamentary oversight committee should be constituted to look into issues that pertain to national security. "The body would be briefed by the

Application filed as PM's wife, but the reply mentioned maiden name
Ahmedabad Mirror Bureau
@ahmedabadmirror
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Jashodaben, wife of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has filed an appeal at the office of district superintendent of police (DSP) in Mehsana challenging the reply given to her against her Right to Information (RTI). Jashodaben had sought details through RTI about the security arrangements that she and other family members of the PM are entitled to as per protocol on November 24 this year which she signed as Jashodaben Narendra Modi i.e. the wife of Narendra Modi. But this line-reply given to her mentioned her maiden name.

Jashodaben, wife of PM Narendra Modi filed a RTI application with the district superintendent of police (DSP) in Mehsana. The reply given to her query is related to LIB and as per Gujarat Home Department, LIB is exempted from RTI Act and so the information cannot be given to her.

The documents and evidence demanded in the RTI were not given to her and therefore she has challenged the reply.

DESCRIPTION

On the 3rd of February 2018, Vivek College of Commerce and its Dept. in Business Law, Dept. in Business communication and Dept. in Foundation course organized a State Level Workshop on Right to Information Act-2005: Issues and Challenges in India. The workshop invited teachers and students from various college as attendees.

RTI Act 2005 is to provide for setting out the practical regime of right to information for citizens to secure access to information under the control of public authorities, in order to promote transparency and accountability in the working of every public authority. The core of the session was to deliver this very message to the attendees with some technical assistance by the Resource persons. The Chief Guest for the workshop was Mr. Ramesh Iyer along with Mr. Ajit Jain I.A.S. and Mr. Shailesh Gandhi as the resource person.

The workshop was attended by around 30 attendees which included teachers and students accommodated in the college auditorium.



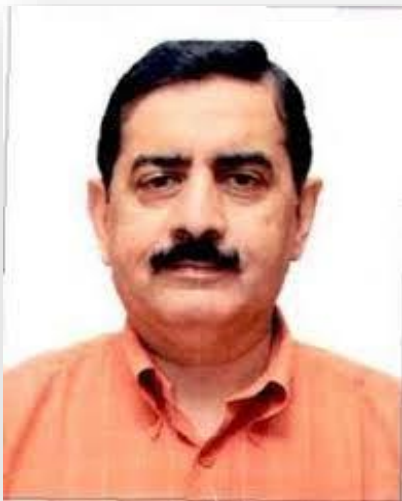
❖ GUESTS FOR THE WORKSHOP



Mr. Ramesh Iyer

Vice Chairman and Managing Director

Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Service Ltd, Mumbai

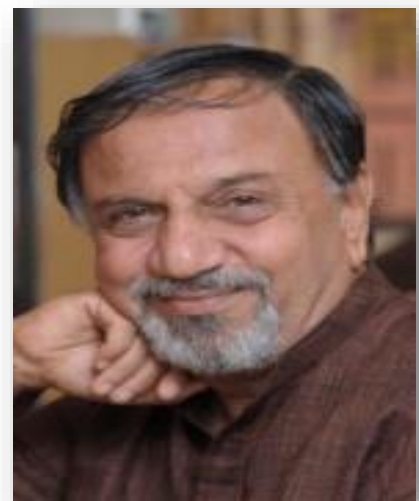


Mr. Ajit Kumar Jain

Chief Commissioner of State Information Commission

Topic: Procedure on How to file an RTI and

Other legal issues



Mr. Shailesh Gandhi

RTI activist



AGENDA FOR THE MEETING

1. Welcome the Guests and Introduction by Prof. Manisha Naik
2. Lighting the Lamp by Chief Guest Followed by Prayer Song
3. Felicitation of Chief Guest
4. Address by Chief Guest
5. Session 1: Shailesh Gandhi
6. Session 2: Mr. Ajitkumar Jain
7. Distribution of Certificate
8. Vote of Thanks by Prof. Shefali Naranje
9. Lunch

