

**IN THE PAKISTAN INFORMATION COMMISSION ISLAMABAD**

**APPEAL NO. 278-02/2020**

**Azaz Syed**

**(Appellant)**

**Vs**

**Ministry of Law and Justice**

**(Respondent)**

Date: 11.3.2020

Fawad Malik: Information Commissioner

**A. APPEAL:**

1. Mr. Azaz Syed (appellant) has filed this appeal before the Pakistan Information Commission under the Right of Access to Information Act 2017 complaining therein that the Ministry of Law and Justice (respondent) has not responded to his request for information within the period specified under section 14 of the Act.
2. The information requested by the appellant in his application dated 3.7.2019 is as follows;  
*Please provide a list of Laws of different Ministries/autonomous bodies that were vetted by the Ministry of Law and Justice from January 1, 2008 to December 31, 2018.*
  - a) *How many of these vetted laws were approved by the Cabinet? Please give a complete list.*
  - b) *List of laws later on passed by the parliament, assented by the president and ultimately enacted. Please provide a complete list of laws with the titles.*

**B. PROCEEDINGS:**

3. The respondent was served with notice dated 12.2.2020 by the Commission directing to provide reasons in writing within seven days as to why the requested information has not been provided to the appellant as each public body is bound to respond to a request as soon as possible and in any case within ten working days.
4. The notice was not responded nor the written reply was submitted by the respondent therefore the appeal was fixed for hearing on 11.3.2020 before the Commission and both the appellant as well as the respondent were informed accordingly vide notices dated 27.2.2020. No body appeared before the commission to represent the public body at the time of hearing.\

**C. COMMISSION'S VIEW:**

5. The respondent has not processed the information request as desired under section 13, nor has observed the time limit provided in section 14 of the Act. The two notices of the Commission were also ignored. The reply was not submitted and no one appeared to represent the public body at the time of hearing. This amounts to wilful and deliberate obstruction in preventing and delaying the disclosure of information to the appellant warranting the imposition of fine under section 20(f) of the Act.
6. The desired information by the appellant is the list of the laws that were vetted by the Ministry of Law and Justice from 1.1.2008 till 31.12.2018. He has further asked for the lists of the laws that were approved after vetting by the Cabinet and later passed by the Parliament, assented by the President and finally enacted. All these information are neither excluded from the gradient of public record nor exempted from disclosure as detailed in sections 7 and 16 of the Act respectively.
7. It is mandatory for all the public bodies to publish all categories of information mentioned in section 5 of the Act, including uploading over the internet, within six months of the commencement of the Act.
8. The right to information is the fundamental right guaranteed under article 19-A of the constitution of Pakistan whereby citizens are provided the right to have access to all information held by the public bodies subject to reasonable restrictions. This right cannot be denied in arbitrary manner.

**D. ORDER:**

The appeal is allowed. The respondent is directed to share with the appellant the requested information forthwith but not later than ten days of the receipt of this order.

Copy of this order be sent to the Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice.

Mohammad Azam  
Chief Information Commissioner

Fawad Malik  
Information Commissioner

Zahid Abdullah  
Information Commissioner

Certified that this order consists of two (2) pages. Each page has been read and signed.