

**Pakistan Information Commission**

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**Appeal NO-481-08/2020**

**Muhammad Saleem**

(Appellant)

Vs.

**Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited**

(Respondent)

**ORDER**

Date: November 9, 2020

**Mohammad Azam:** Chief Information Commissioner

**A. The Appeal**

1. The Appellant filed an appeal with the commission on 18/08/2020 in which he stated that he had requested information from Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited, Gujranwala under the Right of Access to Information Act 2017.
2. The information sought by the Complainant, through application dated 30/06/2020 and 17/07/2020 is as under:  
“My Account ID is 91874020000 & Bill ID is 918349064536. Few years back, SNGPL collected amount on head of “Security”. Kindly confirm that how much total amount is held with your office on said head against my account?”

**B. Proceedings**

3. Through a notice dated 20/08/2020, the Commission called upon the Respondent to submit reasons for not providing the requested information.
4. The Respondent did not respond to the notice and the hearing date was fixed for 13/10/2020 through the hearing notice sent on 02/10/2020 and both parties were informed accordingly.
5. No one appeared on behalf of the Respondent on the date of hearing on 13/10/2020.

**C. Discussion and Commission’s View on Relevant Issues**

6. The questions before the Commission in the instant case are as under:

- a) Should the requested information be accessible to the general public or not?
  - b) Did the Respondent follow the due procedure in responding to the information request of the citizen?
7. The Appellant has inquired regarding the amount submitted by him under the head of “Security” to SNGPL.
  8. Such information is public record under Section 6 (c) of the Right of Access to Information Act 2017, and must be accessible to the general public and in this case to the appellant as he is asking the exact amount deposited under the head of “security”.
  9. The Public body has failed to respond to the Citizen’s information request or the Commission’s notices hence violating Section 9, 10, 12 and 14 of the Act.
  10. The Respondent has continuously displayed an undesirable attitude in responding to the information requests of the citizens.
  11. The Commission in **Appeal No 171-11/2019, titled Muhammad Waseem Elahi V. Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited**, has established SNGPL as a public body in the following words:

“The commission is of the view that the Respondent is a public body as it is “engaged in the business of Transmission, Distribution and Sale of gas”. The Respondent receives public funds from national exchequer for the development of infrastructure for Transmission, Distribution and Sale of gas.

The Respondent is also a public body as according to its own web site, the President of Pakistan has more than 31% shares in SNGPL. As such, the Respondent is a public body under Section 2 (d) of the Right of Access to Information Act 2017 which is as under:

“Any incorporated or unincorporated body of the Federal Government functioning under the control or authority of another public body or wherein once or more public bodies own or have controlling interest or provide substantial funding;”

The Respondent is also a public body in accordance with the Section 2 (5) of the Right of Access to Information Act 2017 which is as under:

“Any other organization which undertakes a public function, to extent of that function;”

12. Provision of information to the citizens is highly encouraged all around the world to aid transparency in public affairs.

13. By denying the provision of information, the Respondent is depriving the Appellant of his constitutional right guaranteed under Article 19-A of the Constitution.
14. The directions of the Commission in this order must be followed or the Commission will be left with no other option but to impose a penalty, according to the Provisions of the Act.

**D. Order**

15. The appeal is allowed. The Respondent is directed to provide the requested information to the Appellant, with intimation to this office, at the earliest, but in any case, not later than 10 working days of the receipt of this Order.
16. Respondent is directed to notify Public Information Officer, (PIO), as required under Section 9 of the Act, put their contact details on its web site as required under Section 5 (1) (h) of the Act and submit compliance report to the commission within 10 working days of the receipt of this order.
17. Copies of this order be sent to the Respondent and the Appellant for information and necessary action.

**Mohammad Azam**

Chief Information Commissioner

**Fawad Malik**

Information Commissioner

**Zahid Abdullah**

Information Commissioner

Announced on:

November 9, 22, 2020

This order consists of 3 (Three) pages, each page has been read and signed