

**MINUTES OF 18<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE FULL COMMISSION OF THE STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION, PUNJAB, HELD ON 17.4.2013 UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF CHIEF INFORMATION COMMISSIONER, PUNJAB.**

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The following were present :-

1. Smt. Jaspal Kaur, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.
2. Sh. B.C.Thakur, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.
3. Sh. Chander Parkash, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.
4. Sh. Parveen Kumar, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.
5. Sh. Ravinder Singh Nagi, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.
6. Sh. Satinder Pal Singh, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.
7. Sh. Harinder Pal Singh, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.
8. Sh. Narinderjit Singh, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.
9. Sh. Surinder Awashti, State Information Commissioner, Punjab.

In attendance:-

Sh. Ravinder Kumar, Arora, M.F.A.  
Sh. K.R.Gupta, Deputy Registrar.

The Full Commission considered the following agenda items and the decisions taken in the meeting are indicated against each item:-

**Agenda Item No.1. Hearing of Cases through Video Conference.**

At present, cases of only four districts, namely Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Ferozepur and Ludhiana are being taken up for hearing through Video Conference facility. The Commission noted that extension of this facility to other districts is held up due to acute shortage of staff with the Commission. The matter, therefore, again needs to be taken up with the government to sanction a post of Video Conference Co-coordinator, who would be assigned the job to organize hearing of cases through Video Conference by coordinating with the offices of NIC, the concerned Deputy Commissioner and the telecommunication department.

The Commission resolved that for the time being only cases of the above-mentioned four districts should be fixed for hearing through Video Conference facility. However, this

should be done only in those cases where both the information seeker and the respondent public authority are from the same district.

If, however, any of the parties to a case fixed for hearing through Video Conference requests for hearing in person at Chandigarh or if the Presiding Information Commissioner feels the need to hear the parties in person, the case may be fixed for further hearing at Chandigarh in the office of the Commission.

The relevant Office Order be amended accordingly, to incorporate the above decision.

**Agenda Item No.2. Issue of I.D. Proof.**

The Commission considered the directions of the Punjab and Haryana High Court in Civil Writ Petition No.4787 of 2011 titled “Fruit and Merchant Union V/s Chief Information Commissioner and others.” In judgment dated: 02.11.2012, the HC has observed as under:-

*“23. Further, in all complaints before the Public Information Officer, the appeal before the first appellate authority or any proceedings before the Commission, it should be ensured that the applicant files his proof of identity along with the application. It is for the reason that in some cases, it has come to the notice of this court that the applicants were not identifiable. It would ensure that only the genuine persons file applications. applications.”*

The Commission considered the matter. It was decided that the relevant “**Office Order**” needs to be amended so as to incorporate a clause that henceforth in all Complaint or Appeal Cases filed in the Commission under Section 18 and 19 of the RTI Act, the Complainant or Appellant, as the case may be, shall submit a self-attested copy of his or her identity proof. Such self-attested copy of the identity proof may consist of any of the documents listed below. :-

1. Copy of Passport; or
2. Copy of Identity Card issued by a government department; or
3. Copy of Voter Card issued by Election Commission of India; or

4. Copy of PAN card issued by Income Tax department; or
5. Copy of Adhaar Card – Unique Identity Card of Govt. of India; or
6. Copy of Ration Card issued by government department; or
7. Copy of Driving License.

It was also decided that the Commission should encourage parties to cases before the Commission to disclose their telephone numbers as it would facilitate easy communication with them to intimate dates of hearing etc.

The Commission further decided that due publicity should be given to these decisions so that public is educated.

The government should also be conveyed the directions of the High Court in the above mentioned Judgment so that it may amend the relevant RTI Rules regarding submission of “proof of identity” at the level of Public Information Officer and First Appellate Authority.

### **Agenda Item No.3**

#### **Agenda Item No.3. Dispatch of orders of the Commission U/s 18 and 19 of the RTI Act.**

The Commission considered the existing system of verification of copies of the Orders passed by the Commissioners under Section 18 or 19 of the Act. The Commission resolved that in future Reader/s of the concerned Bench passing an order under Section 18 or 19 of the RTI Act should affix a stamp on each page of the Order and after duly initialing each page, forward the same to Deputy Registrar of the Commission. Thereafter, the Deputy Registrar shall attest each page of the Order, before mailing it to the parties to the case. The stamp and signature of the Reader of the concerned Bench shall be in the following form:

“Compared with the original Order .”

Sd/- Reader

Date :

The Commission should also adopt PDF software for loading orders, notices, documents etc on the website of the Commission.

**Item No.4. Review of disposal of cases**

The Commission reviewed the pendency of Appeal and Complaint Cases as on 31.03.2013. It was noted that in the last quarter of the financial year ending 31.03.2013, new cases numbering 2015 were instituted. 1704 cases were disposed of, thus leaving a balance of 1933 cases as on 1.4.2013.

**Agenda Item No. 5.**

**Streamlining the Posting of Dak.**

The Commission noted with concern instances of delay in dispatch of letters / copies of Orders to the concerned parties. There is acute shortage of staff in the Commission which results in delays of this kind. To ensure quick dispatch of letters, it was decided that “Collection of Dak System” of the Registered Letters being run by the Postal Authorities should be introduced in the Commission. By following this system, all registered letters will be stamped by the Post Office through its own Franking Machine. Other ordinary dak, however, would continued to be dispatched after stamping through Franking Machine of the Commission.

This system will ensure timely issuance of notices to the parties.

**Item No.6.**

**Grant received from the Punjab Govt. and Expenditure  
during the Financial year,2012-13.**

The Grant received from the Punjab Government and the expenditure thereof during the financial year 2012-13 was placed before the Full Commission for information.

**Item No. 7. Miscellaneous**

Some of the Commissioners pointed out instances of delay in accessing the required articles etc. for office work. It was decided that the sub-committee of the Commission dealing with administrative matters should consider and recommend entitlement of the Commissioners to various office facilities, which could be provided to each Bench, without any formal requisition from individual Commissioners.

The meeting ended with thanks to the Chair.

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