

ACCESS TO INFORMATION BILL, 2017

(Bill No. 4 of 2017)

OBJECTS AND REASONS

The Bill seeks to enact a law on the right of access to the information held by a public authority performing Government functions in order to give effect to the provisions of Article 28 of the Constitution.

The Bill is divided into 9 parts and a Schedule.

PART I - provides for short title, interpretation and overriding effect over Oaths Act.

PART II - provides for a duty on every information holder to keep their information in a manner which facilitates the right of a person seeking the information, proactive disclosure of information, submission of annual information publication plan, annual reports to the Information Commission and the publication of information manuals, designation of an officer in every public body as information officer, procedure for making request for information, detailed procedure for processing the application within the time frame, taking decisions to grant or not to grant the application and how to furnish the information.

PART III - provides for exemptions from providing the information like third party information, commercial and confidential information, information affecting the life and property of a person, information affecting the national security, international relations, economic interests of state and information relating to academic or professional examination and recruitment process, proposal submitted to Cabinet etc.

Part IV - provides for review of decisions of the Information Officer by the head of the information holder on application by the aggrieved party, procedure for taking decision on such review application.

PART V - provides for the establishment of the Information Commission consisting of Chief Information Commissioner and two Information