

PRESS RELEASE

CPDI Conducts Orientation Session on Right to Information for Government Officials and Journalists



Islamabad, 20 July, 2023 – The Center for Peace and Development Initiatives (CPDI) organized a comprehensive orientation session on the Right to Information (RTI) laws for government officials and journalists. The event aimed to foster understanding and awareness of the importance of transparency, accountability, and information accessibility in Pakistan.

The session witnessed the active participation of government officials and representatives from the National Institute of Management Quetta, with Director General Muhammad Aslam Ghani leading the delegation. Expressing their gratitude for the session, the delegation highlighted the significance of empowering public officials with the knowledge of RTI laws and their responsibilities to promote transparency in governance.

One of the key highlights of the session was the unanimous call for the effective enforcement of right to information laws across the country. Participants advocated for the establishment of the Balochistan Information Commission under the Balochistan Right to Information Act 2021, recognizing the urgency to ensure transparent governance and public access to information in Pakistan.

Another orientation session was also held for journalists and media professionals, focusing on harnessing the power of RTI for investigative reporting. Esteemed investigative journalists, including Mr. Waseem Abbasi, Mr. Umar Cheema, and Mr. Tahir Khalil, shared their invaluable experiences and insights on practicing investigative journalism in Pakistan. Despite the challenges and risks involved, they emphasized the paramount importance of truth-telling and using the RTI effectively to combat corruption and ensure accountability.

The senior journalists encouraged aspiring young reporters to fearlessly pursue the truth and contribute to the nation's social accountability through responsible journalism. The session delved into the evolution and contemporary relevance of RTI, positioning it as a catalyst for groundbreaking investigative reporting.

In an engaging interaction with young journalists, Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad Ali, the Executive Director of CPDI, shed light on the progressive journey of RTI in Pakistan. He provided a historical and legislative overview of the right to information and freedom of information in the country, highlighting RTI's

transformative impact from secrecy to transparency. Mr. Ali also addressed participants' inquiries, providing practical guidance on filing RTIs and lodging complaints under the federal and provincial RTI laws.

The event's Chief Guest, Mr. Shoaib Ahmad Siddiqui, Chief Information Commissioner of Pakistan Information Commission, reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to facilitating information disclosure for the public's greater benefit. He emphasized that the Pakistan Information Commission welcomes all citizens, particularly journalists, and encouraged them to uphold the profession's integrity by seeking the truth with dignity.

Overall, the orientation sessions provided valuable insights into promoting transparency and accountability in Pakistan's information landscape, and the participants left with a renewed commitment to utilize the power of RTI responsibly.

About the CPDI

CPDI is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting peace, development, and good governance. With expertise in advocacy and governance, CPDI strives to bring about positive change in Pakistan, including addressing the challenges posed by climate change.

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