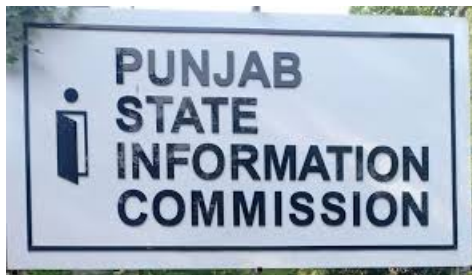


Punjab State Information Commission goes virtual through video conference and web meetings



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Kanwar Inder Singh/ royalpatiala.in/ Chandigarh

[Punjab State Information Commission](#) (PSIC) is back to being fully functional and ensuring implementation of the Right to Information Act, 2005, following the Punjab Government's decision to ease restrictions imposed during the Curfew and subsequent Lockdown in order to blunt the spread of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Disclosing this here today a Spokesperson of PSIC said that even during the Curfew and Lockdown, the Commission remained open to hear cases that pertained to matters of Life and Liberty, for which, a Double Bench comprising the Chief Information Commissioner (CIC) Suresh Arora and State Information Commissioner Asit Jolly was constituted on 16th April, 2020.

He said as many as 1231 Appeal and Complaint cases were heard by various benches of the Punjab State Information Commission (PSIC) in the month of June 2020. 438 new cases have been registered and allocated for hearing to different Commissioners of PSIC.

"Since the easing of Covid-19 related restrictions, the PSIC has taken a conscious decision to emphasize the continuing need for safety and social distancing by holding a majority of the hearings via videoconference and/or web meetings. Of the 1231 cases heard in June 2020, as many as 792 were heard through video conference with National Informatics Centre (NIC) facilities at various district headquarters, while 277 were heard via CISCO WEBEX. Besides significantly addressing safety concerns, this has also meant substantial financial relief to both, the complainants/appellants as well as different Public Authorities, by doing away with the need to travel to the Commission at Chandigarh" he said.

Signaling the importance of the RTI Act to citizens across Punjab, as many as 438 fresh appeal and complaint cases received in the Commission were allocated to various Benches in the month of June 2020. During this period, some 364 cases were also disposed of and closed. As on June 30, 2020, there were 2499 appeal and complaint cases pending before different Benches of the Commission.

He said during the month of June, to ensure proper implementation of the RTI Act, penalties amounting to Rs.30,000/- were imposed on concerned Public Information Officers (PIOs) in four cases and compensation amounting to Rs.30,500/- was awarded to appellants/complainants in 10 cases.

July,8,2020

