

Analytical Study on Public Awareness and the Practice of Right to Information Act, No. 12 of 2016

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Abstract

Right to information is a fundamental principle which evolved with the concept which denotes that the ownership of the state lies with its peoples. This concept is legally accepted among most of the democratic countries all over the world, such as our nearest neighbor, India. By admitting and facilitating the free access to the information of which the functions of the state are accomplished using public funds, in order to effectively safeguard people's right to information, parliament of Sri Lanka has passed "Right to information Act", No. 12 of 2016. This act permits any citizen of Sri Lanka to request information from a public authority (A body of Government), which is required to reply expeditiously.

Sri Lanka as a country of democracy, this act comes to effect to establish citizens' active participation in governance and accountability in government to the people of the country. For the fulfilment of these purposes and to achieve the goals of democracy, it's essential that people of Sri Lanka has the knowledge of the power which is vested in them concerning the right they enjoy under this act. Moreover, it's essential to have a knowledge and social awareness on this matter to empower and practice that right. Discussing on this on this matter, Transparency International Sri Lanka has stated that the people of Sri Lanka remain largely uninformed of the right they enjoy and how it may be used.

Therefore, making assumptions on this account, it is needed to investigate public awareness of this act and its current utilization, likewise, current phase it took subsequent to the socialization. The research aims on these primary goals. Secondly, this research will reveal the barriers between this act and its practice. As a representative of public (population), it is intended to select a sample of 100 sample units in district basis considering on the profession there are in, to collect information on this matter. Similarly, it is expected to prepare a questionnaire for selected five government institutions, which is, used this and an interview will be conducted for getting data. Finally, steps are taken for planning to evaluate these results considering the practical application of this act depends on public awareness and participation for its enforcement.

Keywords: *Right to information act, Information right act, Community awareness, Information right*