

Proactive Disclosure of Quarterly Action Plan- Good Practice from the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (20 July, 2009)

Dear all,

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) under the Union Government of India has uploaded on its website an action plan for the period June-September 2009. Even though the proactive disclosure of the Ministry required to be done under section 4(1)(b) of the Right to Information Act is poor in quality, this action plan deserves to be treated as good practice. It gives an overview of some of the work that the Ministry plans to do. This is useful for any person or organisation that plans to do advocacy around any of the issues identified in the action plan. I hope this Ministry will continue to advertise its action plan in subsequent months.

I have checked the websites of a few other ministries- Ministry of Personnel, Rural Development and Law and Justice. None of them has uploaded similar plans of action on its website. Perhaps activists around the country should think of taking this issue up with every ministry they work with or target as part of their advocacy efforts.

Major highlights from the MHA's action plan are as follows (deadline for initiation/completion of task is mentioned in brackets):

1) Phase II of Prisons modernisation scheme: Obtaining approvals (14th August 2009); Provision of funds during the first supplementary (30th September 2009) at page 8

2) Reintroduction of Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Bill (31st July 2009)- {current session of Parliament is scheduled to go on till 7th of August} *at page 18*

3) The Communal Violence (Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation of Victims) Bill- (30th September 2009) [as Parliament will not be in session it looks like this Bill will be readied for cabinet's approval and may be presented in the next session of Parliament] *at page 21*

4) Incorporation of International Covenants and Conventions under section 2(1)(f) of the Protection of Human Rights Act 1993 (31st August 2009) [the said provision already mentions both International Covenants. so the reference may be to other Conventions not specifically mentioned in the Act] *at page 21*

5) National Investigating Agency- Operationalisation of NIA by notification of Rules, filling up of posts and finalisation of issues relating to notification of NIA as a Police Station and modalities of setting up Special Courts. (varied time line for different items up to 30th September 2009) at page 22

6) (i) To finalise the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Act, 2008 which are to be enforced. (ii) To notify the provisions which are to be enforced. (30th September 2009) at page 25

7) Naxal Management- at page 29

i) Approval of work plans under Security Related Expenditure (SRE) scheme for the States of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar & Orissa for 2009-10; (15th July 2009)

ii) Issue of orders for inclusion of 6 districts of Deogarh, Jajpur, Kondhamal, Dhenkanal and Nayagarh in Orissa and Nizamabad in Andhra Pradesh in the SRE list. (30th June 2009)

8) Modernisation of Police- the only references are to equipment and training. There is no mention of compliance with Supreme Court directives or enacting the Police Bill drafted by PADC. at pages 41-43

There are many more issues addressed in the action plan that may be of interest to friends in civil society. You may access the full text at: http://mha.nic.in/writereaddata/12465491641_AAP.pdf I hope this information is useful. Please feel free to circulate this amongst your networks.

Thanks

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