**E-CONTENT**

 **MJMC,  SEM-IV, PAPER-XIV (CC-402)**

**Topic : The Freedom of Information Act - 2000**

 **Date : 15-02-2020, TIME : 2.00 P.M.-3.00 P.M.**

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**The Freedom of Information Act – 2000**

The bill aimed to provide for freedom to every citizen to secure access to information under the control of public authorities, consistent with public interest, in order to promote openness, transparency and accountability in administration. The Act suggests every public authority to maintain the records systematically, for access and duplication, publishing at intervals, about the organizations, decisions, policies etc.

The Act recommends appointments of public information officers to deal with requests for information, to assist the public in making requests, and to provide information.

The Bill makes it mandatory for the PIO to either provide the information or reject the request within 30 days of the request being made except in cases where an additional fee is required for various reasons. While rejecting a request, the PIO has to give the reasons for such a rejection, the period within which the appeal shall be preferred and the particulars of the appellate authority. The Bill also provides for a second appeal. Requests for Information may be refused if the information is too voluminous and demands high resources, too general, kept for publication within 30 days, already published and available for public, invades the privacy of any person.

But, information relating to the following are exempted from disclosure.

1. information, the disclosure of which would prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of India, security of the state, strategic scientific or economic interest of India or conduct of international relations;

2. information, the disclosure of which would prejudicially affect public safety and order, detection and investigation of an offence or which may lead to an incitement to commit an offence or prejudicially affect fair trial or adjudication of a pending case;

1. information, the disclosure of which would prejudicially affect the conduct of centre-state relations, including information exchanged in confidence between the central and state governments or any of their authorities or agencies;
2. cabinet papers including records of deliberations of the council of ministers, secretaries and other officers;
3. minutes or records of advice including legal advice, opinions or recommendations made by any officer of a public authority during the decision-making process prior to the executive decision or policy formulation;

6. trade or commercial secrets protected by law or information, the disclosure of which would prejudicially affect the legitimate economic and commercial interests or the competitive position of a public authority; or would cause unfair gain or loss to any person; and

7. information, the disclosure of which may result in the breach of privileges of parliament or the legislature of a state, or contravention of a lawful order of a court. Access may be given to parts that could be given to public when it is a part of information that are exempted from public scrutiny. Information considered confidential regarding a third party could be given to public with the permission of the third party, unless when the public interest in disclosure outweighs in importance any possible harm or injury to the interests of such third party.