

**PUNJAB STATE INFORMATION COMMISSION**  
**Red Cross Building, Near Rose Garden,**  
**Madhya Marg, Sector 16, Chandigarh.**  
**Ph: 0172-2864114, Visit us @ [www.infocommpunjab.com](http://www.infocommpunjab.com),**  
**Email: [psicsic30@punjabmail.gov.in](mailto:psicsic30@punjabmail.gov.in)**



Smt Kamaldeep Kaur, W/o Sh Ajaypal Singh,  
VPO Guntala, Opp Govt Dispensary,  
Ward No-5, Amritsar. (9872139640).

... Appellant

Versus

**Public Information Officer,**  
O/o Project Director,  
Sarv Sikhya Abhiyan-cum-DEO (EE),  
Amritsar.

**First Appellate Authority,**  
O/o DEO (EE),  
Amritsar.

...Respondent

**Appeal Case No. 472 of 2020**

**PRESENT: None for the parties**

**ORDER:**

This order should be read in continuation to the previous order which was in two parts i.e. Part-A and Part-2.

Part-A pertains to the DEO Amritsar since the information was sought by the appellant from the DEO.

Part-2 is a part of larger order whereby the Commission had made Secretary School Education, Director, Public Instructions(EE) and Director Public Instructions(SE) as party of the case to implement the order of the Commission dated 28.07.2020.

Regarding part-A, the Commission has received a letter from DEO Amritsar stating that the complete information available with them has been provided to the appellant. However, the case could not be heard because of internet snag and it was adjourned.

Regarding part-B, there has been no communication from the above mentioned parties and neither of them has appeared at the hearing today. The Commission has taken a serious view of this and directs the Secretary School Education to implement the order of the Commission dated 28.07.2020 with immediate effect and a representative be present at the next date of hearing to show the evidence that the order has been complied with.

Part-B of the order is reproduced below:-

During the course of the hearing, I am of the view that a larger issue has emerged in front of this bench i.e regarding the safety of children and staff in schools all over Punjab. That there lies a humongous public interest in taking a broader view of the issue of safety of children and staff in schools than merely confining it to one school about which information is sought.

## **Appeal Case No. 472 of 2020**

It is evident from the ongoing hearings of this case that some schools –whether they are private, government-aided or government-operated may not be meeting and complying with the prescribed standards of building and fire safety norms set by the appropriate authority.

These, the bench feels are the most important requirements for any educational institution, much important than the service that they provide, as human safety is above everything else. Moreover, every parent has the right to know that the school where his or her ward is going or getting admitted to is safe and has a valid affiliation with a school board to run its day-to-day business.

Given the above, it is clear that there is an urgent need to bring about transparency in this matter, as these certificates/ materials should be a matter of suo-motto declaration rather than being confined in record rooms, only to be sought under the RTI Act.

Since certificates such as fire and building safety, as well as board affiliation certificates issued by the appropriate authorities clearly come under Information as defined in section 2 (f) of the ACT, this bench under the powers vested under section 19 (8) of the RTI Act hereby directs that valid certificates of fire and building safety and board affiliations issued by the appropriate authorities be declared suo-moto by all the schools in Punjab on their websites and notice boards. (Refer to section 4 (2) of the RTI Act. The certificates should be latest, legible and valid.

There is no exception, and this order is applicable to all Punjab schools whether government, government-aided or private. They all are required to display fire and building safety certification as well as board affiliation certificates. In case a school has no website it will be mandatory to display this information prominently on the notice board, and in case of schools with websites, this information will be displayed on both the forums. If a school is not compliant with any one of the three, it will still proactively disclose the status quo of all the three points. Schools will not evade sharing the complete status quo on all the three points- fire and building safety certificates and board affiliation certificate.

All District Education Officers are directed to ensure the compliance of this order with immediate effect, failing which they will be held responsible for not implementing this order.

DEOs will also upload this information on their respective departmental websites, including the name of the schools that are not compliant. For example, a school can be complaint in one and non compliant in the other two. Each compliance or non-compliance must be clearly stated on the website.

A copy of this order is being sent to the Secretary, School Education Punjab, and DPs of Elementary and Secondary Education, Punjab for the purpose of effective monitoring, supervision, and dissemination of this order to all the concerned DEOs. Should the appropriate authority need to issue additional guidelines to schools for implementation of this order, it should be done immediately for compliance of this order.

The case is being kept open to ensure that this order is implemented in its true spirits. A representative of the appropriate authority be present at the next date of hearing to show evidence that the order is being complied with.

**Appeal Case No. 472 of 2020**

To come up for further hearing on **15.09.2020 at 01.30 PM** through video conference facility available in the office of Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar. The PIO to appear at Chandigarh.

**Chandigarh**  
**Dated 25.08.2020**

**(Khushwant Singh)**  
**State Information Commissioner**

CC to : 1. The Secretary, Govt of Punjab,  
Department of School Education,  
Vidya Bhawan, Phase-VIII,  
SAS Nagar, Mohali

2. Director, Public Instructions  
(Elementary Education) Pb,  
Vidya Bhawan, Phase-VIII,  
SAS Nagar, Mohali.

3. Director Public Instructions  
(Secondary Education), Pb  
Vidya Bhawan, Phase-VIII,  
SAS Nagar, Mohali