

**BY COURIER**

Ref: PILAP/HO/2021/645

Dated: 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

**The Foreign Secretary,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Foreign Office Building,  
Constitution Avenue, G-5,  
Islamabad**

**APPLICATION UNDER THE RIGHT OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT, 2017 AND ARTICLE  
19A OF THE CONSTITUTION OF PAKISTAN**

Dear Sir,

The Public Interest Law Association of Pakistan (PILAP) is a public interest association concerned with the primary objective of enabling the citizens of Pakistan to attain the realization of their civil, human, economic, social and political rights, as guaranteed by the Fundamental Rights laid down in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. PILAP addresses matters of public interest by means of advocacy and by seeking redress for the people of Pakistan through the justice system. It respectfully submits as under:

1. That we seek information on the recommendations given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the concerned Provinces for the issuance of permits for the hunting of Houbara Bustard in Pakistan, a species of bird that has been declared "vulnerable" by the IUCN Red List. It is also included in Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) which has been ratified by Pakistan and given effect through municipal legislation.
2. That Appendix I of CITES includes those species that are threatened with extinction. While the overarching purpose of CITES is to control and regulate trade in wild flora and fauna, the preamble to the Convention recognizes that the varied forms of flora and fauna are an *irreplaceable part of the natural systems of the earth which must be protected for this and the generations to come*. CITES is also conscious of the *ever-growing value of wild flora and fauna from aesthetic, scientific, cultural, recreational and economic points of view*. It further recognizes that *peoples and States are and should be the best protectors of their own wild flora and fauna*. Hence, while CITES controls and regulates trade in wild flora and fauna, the intent of the Convention is to protect the same for the benefit of the planet.
3. That according to news reports, fourteen Arab dignitaries have recently been granted permits for hunting Houbara Bustard by the Sindh Government at the recommendations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
4. That while the Supreme Court of Pakistan has declared that there can be no complete ban on the hunting of the Houbara Bustard, the Code of Conduct for the

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**PUBLIC INTEREST LAW ASSOCIATION OF PAKISTAN**

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Hunting of Houbara Bustard in Pakistan issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs states that only sustainable hunting is allowed and sets a limit on the number of birds that can be hunted. In principle, we do not agree with the such a high limit. However, from the available facts it is apparent that in the past permit holders have dishonoured even these extravagant limits set by the Government of Pakistan.

5. That, in view of the above, PILAP respectfully submits this application under the right granted to all citizens under the Right of Access to Information Act, 2017 and Article 19A of the Constitution as under:
  - i) Please provide certified true copies of the recommendations given to the concerned Provinces for the issuance of hunting permits for Houbara Bustard between 2015 and 2021.
  - ii) What is the process for monitoring compliance with the Code of Conduct for the Hunting of Houbara Bustard in Pakistan issued by the Government of Pakistan? What action is taken against those individuals and hunting parties who violate the Code? Please provide documentation of such monitoring as well as a record of action taken against violators of the Code.
  - iii) How is the export of Houbara Bustard specimen controlled and regulated by the Government as per the terms of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna and the Pakistan Trade Control of Wild Fauna and Flora Act, 2012 which gives effect to the Convention?
6. That in the circumstances, PILAP would be grateful for a reply at the earliest.

Thank you.

Best regards,