



THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT, 1923



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THE PAKISTAN CODE

THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT, 1923

¹ACT NO. XIX OF 1923

[2nd April, 1923]

An Act to consolidate and amend the law in ²[Pakistan] relating to official secrets.

³[* * * * *]

WHEREAS it is expedient that the law relating to official secrets in ²[Pakistan] should be consolidated and amended;

It is hereby enacted as follows:—

1. Short title, extent and application.— (1) This Act may be called the ⁴[*] Official Secrets Act, 1923.

⁵[(2) It extends to the whole of Pakistan, and applies also to all citizens of Pakistan and persons in the service of Government wherever they may be.]

2. Definitions.— In this Act, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context,—

(1) any reference to a place belonging to ⁶[Government] includes a place occupied by any department of the Government, whether the place is or is not actually vested in ⁶[Government] ;

⁷[* * * * *]

(2) expressions referring to communicating or receiving include any communicating or receiving, whether in whole or in part, and whether the sketch, plan, model, article, note, document, or information itself or the substance, effect or description thereof only be communicated or received; expressions referring to obtaining or retaining any sketch, plan, model, article, note or document, include the copying or causing to be copied of the whole or any part of any sketch, plan, model, article, note, or document; and expressions referring to the communication of any sketch, plan, model, article, note or document include the transfer or transmission of the sketch, plan, model, article, note or document;

¹For Statement of Objects and Reasons, see Gazette of India, 1922, Pt. V, p. 210; and for Report of Select Committee, see *ibid.*, 1923, Pt. V, p. 61.

For temporary amendment of this Act during the continuance of war, and for a period of six months thereafter, see s. 6 of the Defence of India Act, 1939 (35 of 1939), since expired.

The Act has been extended to the Leased Areas of Baluchistan, see the Leased Areas (Laws) Order, 1950 (G.G.O. 3 of 1950), and applied in the Federated Areas of Baluchistan, see Gazette of India, 1937, Pt. I, p. 1499.

This Act has been extended to the Baluchistan States Union, see the Baluchistan States Union (Federal Laws) (Extension) Order, 1953 (G.G.O. 4 of 1953), as amended by the Baluchistan States Union (Federal Laws) (Extension) (Second Amdt.) Order, 1953 (G.G.O. 19 of 1953).

It has also been extended to the Khairpur State, see G.G.O. 5 of 1953, as amended by G.G.O. 25 of 1953.

It has also been extended to the State of Bahawalpur by the Bahawalpur (Extension of Federal Laws) Order, 1953 (G.G.O. 11 of 1953), as amended.

The Act has been and shall be deemed to have been brought into force in Gwadar with effect from the 8th September, 1958, by the Gwadar (Application of Central Laws) Ordinance, 1960 (37 of 1960), s. 2.

This Act has been applied with certain modifications to the Tribal Areas of West Pakistan by Regulation No. I of 1963, s. 2 and Sch. (*with effect from the 30th December, 1964*).

For notification of Procedure provided under this Act, see the Enemy Agents Ordinance, 1943 (1 of 1943).

²Subs. by the Central Laws (Statue Reform) Ordinance, 1960 (21 of 1960), s. 3 and 2nd Sch. (*with effect from the 14th October, 1955*), for “the Provinces and the Capital of the Federation” which had been subs. by A.O., 1949, for “British India”.

³Preamble omitted by the Federal Laws (Revision and Declaration) Ordinance, 1981 (27 of 1981), s. 3 and Sch. II.

⁴The word “Indian” omitted by the Federal Laws (Revision and Declaration) Act, 1951 (26 of 1951), s. 3 and Sch II.

⁵Subs. by the Central Laws (Statue Reform) Ordinance, 1960 (21 of 1960), s. 3 and 2nd Sch. (*with effect from the 14th October, 1955*), for sub-section (2) as amended by A.O., 1937, A.O., 1949 and the Federal Laws (Revision and Declaration) Act, 1951 (26 of 1951).

⁶Subs. by A.O., 1961, Art. 2 and Sch., for “His Majesty” (*with effect from the 23rd March, 1956*).

⁷Cl. (1A) which was ins. by A.O., omitted by A.O., 1949.

¹[(2A) ‘appropriate Government’ means, in relation to matters enumerated in the ²[Federal Legislative List in the Fourth Schedule] to the Constitution, the ³[Federal Government] and, in relation to any other matter, the Provincial Government;]

⁴[(3) “document” includes any written, unwritten, virtual, electronic, digital, or any other tangible or intangible instrument, and includes part of such document, the plans, measures, activities, contracts, agreements, memorandums, etc. related to procurements of supplies of or sales of munitions that relate to military capability and potential and would be needed by the state in time of peace and war:]

⁴[(3A) “intelligence agency” means, *inter alia*, the Directorate General of Inter-Services Intelligence and Intelligence Bureau;]

(4) “model” includes design, pattern and specimen ;

⁴[(5) “Munitions of war” includes the whole or any part of any ship, submarine, aircraft, tank, vehicles or similar engine, arms and ammunition, torpedo, or mine intended or adopted for use in war, and any other article, equipment, material, device or capability, system or platform including digital, physical, virtual, electronic, vehicular use by the Armed Forces, whether actual or proposed, intended for such use;]

(6) “Office under ⁵[Government]” includes any office or employment in or under any department of the Government ⁶[* * *];

(7) “photograph” includes an undeveloped film or plate ;

(8) “prohibited place” means—

- (a) any work of defence, arsenal naval, military or air force establishment ⁴[office, or part of building] or station, mine, minefield, camp, ship or aircraft belonging to, or occupied by or on behalf of, ⁵[Government], any military telegraph or telephone so belonging or occupied, any wireless or signal station or office so belonging or occupied and any factory, dockyard or other place so belonging or occupied and used for the purpose of building, repairing, making or storing any munitions of war, or any sketches, plans, models or documents relating thereto, or for the purpose of getting any metals, oil or minerals of use in time of ⁴[peace and] war ;
- (b) any place not belonging to ⁵[Government] where any munitions of war or any sketches, models, plans or documents relating thereto are being made, repaired, gotten or stored under contract with, or with any person on behalf of, ⁵[Government], or otherwise on behalf of ⁵[Government];
- (c) any place belonging to or used for the purpose of ⁵[Government] which is for the time being declared by the ⁷[appropriate Government], by notification⁸ in the ⁹[official Gazette], to be a prohibited place for the purposes of this Act on the ground that ⁴[any access, intrusion, approach, attack or] information with respect

¹Subsection (2A) ins. by A.O., 1964, Art. 2 and Sch.

²Subs. by F.A.O., 1975, Art. 2 and Sch., for “Third Schedule”.

³Subs. *ibid.*, Art. 2 and Table for “Central Government”.

⁴Subs. and Ins., by Act LXIII of 2023, s.2.

⁵Subs. by A.O., 1961 Art. 2 and Sch., for “His Majesty” (*with effect from the 23rd March, 1956*).

⁶The words “or of the Government of the United Kingdom or of any British possession” omitted *ibid.*, (*with effect from the 23rd March, 1956*).

⁷Subs. by A.O., 1964, Art. 2 and Sch., for “Central Government” which had been subs. by A.O., 1937, for “G.G. in C.”.

⁸For such notifi., see Gaz. of P., 1957, Ext., p. 1172; *ibid.*, 1959, Pt. I, p 518 and *ibid.*, 1960, Pt. I, p. 520.

⁹Subs. by A.O., 1937, for “Gazette of India”.

thereto, or damage thereto, would be useful to an enemy, and to which a copy of the notification in respect thereof has been affixed in English and in the vernacular of the locality ;

- (d) any railway, road, way or channel ¹[or any strategic infrastructure], or other means of communication by land or water ¹[or air] (including any works or structures being part thereof or connected therewith) or any place used ¹[for modern communication means,] for gas, water or electricity works or other works for purposes of a public character, or any place where any munitions ¹[related to defence] of war or any sketches, models, plans, or documents relating thereto, are being made, repaired or stored otherwise than on behalf of ²[Government], which is for the time being declared³ by the ⁴[appropriate Government] by notification in the ⁵[official Gazette], to be a prohibited place for the purposes of this Act on the ground that information with respect thereto, or the destruction or obstruction thereof, or interference there with, would be useful to an enemy, and to which a copy of the notification in respect thereof has been affixed in English and in the vernacular of the locality [:]⁶

⁷[Provided that where for declaring a prohibited place under sub-clause (c) or sub-clause (d) a notification in the official Gazette is not considered desirable in the interest of the security of the State, such declaration may be made by an order a copy or notice of which shall be prominently displayed at the point of entry to, or at a conspicuous place near, the prohibited place.]

- ¹[(e) any place occupied by armed forces for the purpose of war games, exercises, training, research and development, movement of troops, in camera briefings;
- (f) any place, any land, building or a property situated in Pakistan or anywhere in the world having physical or virtual custody or storage of protected information or an asset, the access to and use of which is prejudicial to the safety or interest of Pakistan.]

¹[(8A) “Enemy” for the purposes of this Act means “any person who is directly or indirectly, intentionally working for or engaged with the foreign power, foreign agent, Non-State Actor, organization, entity, association or group guilty of a particular act tending to show a purpose that is prejudicial to the safety and interest of Pakistan;]

(9) “sketch” includes any photograph or other mode of representing any place or thing ; ¹[*]

(10) “Superintendent of Police” includes any police officer of a like or superior rank, and any person upon whom the powers of a Superintendent of Police are for the purposes of this Act conferred by the ⁴[appropriate Government], ⁸[* * *] ¹[;and]

¹[(11) “unauthorized access” means without authorization any physical, electronic, or virtual access or contact, direct or indirect, to a prohibited place, an information system, application, network, data, processed or derived, or any such document or resource or prohibited place which is not available for access by general public.]

¹Ins. and omitted by Act LXIII of 2023, s.2.

²Subs. by A.O., 1961 Art. 2 and Sch., for “His Majesty” (with effect from the 23rd March, 1956).

³For such declaration see Gaz. of P., 1955, Pt. I, p. 43 and 383; and *ibid.*, 1958, Pt. I, p. 1470.

⁴Subs. by A.O., 1964, Art. 2 and Sch., for “Central Government” which had been subs. by A.O., 1937, for “G.G. in C.”.

⁵Subs. by A.O., 1937, for “Gazette of India”.

⁶Subs. by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1966 (8 of 1966), s. 2, for semicolon.

⁷Proviso ins. *ibid.*

⁸The words “or by any L. G.” omitted by A.O., 1964, Act. 2.

¹[3. Offence.— (1) A person shall commit an offence under this section **If** he intentionally for any purpose prejudicial to public order, defence, safety or interests of the State,—

- (a) approaches, inspects, passes over or is in the vicinity of, or enters, attacks, destroys or otherwise undermines any prohibited place; or
- (b) makes any sketch, plan, model, or note which is calculated to be or might be or is intended to be, directly or indirectly, useful to an enemy;
- (c) obtains, collects, records or publishes or communicates to any other person any secret official code or password, or any electronic or modern device, sketch, plan, model, article or note or other document or information, in any manner whatsoever, which is calculated to be or might be or is intended to be, directly or indirectly, useful to an enemy of the State;
- (d) gains unauthorized access to document or information from within or outside of Pakistan with or without use of electronic or modern devices;
- (e) causes an unmanned vehicle or device to access, enter, inspect, pass over or under, approach or be in the vicinity of a prohibited place; and
- (f) disclosure or retention of any activity, information, document, related to invention, research, development, production, maintenance, operation, storage and disposal of weapons, equipment or any capability of these forces, and access to or unauthorized disclosure of which is prejudicial to the safety and interest of Pakistan.]

(2) On a prosecution for an offence punishable under this section with imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years, it shall not be necessary to show that the accused person was guilty of any particular act tending to show a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State, and, notwithstanding that no such act is proved against him, he may be convicted if, from the circumstances of the case or his conduct or his known character as proved, it appears that his purpose was a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State ; and if any sketch, plan, model, article, note, document, or information relating to or used in any prohibited place, or relating to anything in such a ¹[prohibited place, related to work of defence during peace or war by land, sea or air] place, or any secret official code or password is made, obtained, collected, ¹[retained,] recorded, published or communicated by any person other than a person acting under lawful authority, and from the circumstances of the case or his conduct or his known character as proved it appears that his purpose was a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State, such sketch, plan, model, article, note, document or information shall be presumed to have been made, obtained, collected, ¹[retained,] recorded, published or communicated for a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State.

²[(3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be punishable, —

- (a) where the offence committed is intended or calculated to be, directly or indirectly, in the interest or for the benefit of ¹[enemy], or is in relation to any work of defence, ¹[military] arsenal, naval, military or air force establishment or station, mine, minefield, factory, dockyard, camp, ship or aircraft

¹Subs. and Ins. by Act LXIII of 2023, s.3.

²Added by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1966 (8 of 1966), s. 3.

or otherwise in relation to the naval, military or air force affairs of Pakistan or in relation to any secret official code, ¹[with death, or] with imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years; and

(b) in any other case, with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years.]

²**[3A. Restriction against photographs, sketches, etc., of prohibited and notified areas.** — (1) No person shall, except under the authority of a written permit granted by or on behalf of the ³[appropriate Government], make any photograph, sketch, plan, model, note or representation of any kind of any prohibited place or of any other place or area ⁴[any document, work of defence, by using any digital, analogue or virtual device or means], notified by the ³[appropriate Government] as a place or area ⁴[any document, work of defence, by using any digital, analogue or virtual device or means] with regard to which such restriction appears to that Government to be expedient in the interests of the security of Pakistan, or of any part of or object in any such place or area ⁴[any document, work of defence, by using any digital, analogue or virtual device or means].

(2) The ³[appropriate Government] may, by general or special order make provision for securing that no photograph, sketch, plan, model, note or representation of any kind made under the authority of a permit granted in pursuance of subsection (1) shall be published unless and until the same has been submitted to and approved by such authority or person as may be specified in the order, and may retain or destroy or otherwise dispose of anything so submitted.

(3) If any person contravenes any of the provisions of this section, he shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years or with fine or with both.

(4) The ⁵[Federal Government] may by ⁶notification in the official Gazette empower any Provincial Government to exercise all or any of the powers exercisable by the ⁵[Federal Government] under this section, or under sub-clause (c) or sub-clause (d) of clause (8) of section 2, or under clause (10) of that section.]

⁴**[4. Communications with enemy or foreign agents to be evidence of commission of certain offence.]** (1) In any proceedings against a person for an offence under section 3, the fact that he has been in communication with, or attempted to communicate with, a foreign agent, whether within or without ⁷[Pakistan], shall be relevant for the purpose of proving that he has, for a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State, obtained or attempted to obtain information which is calculated to be or might be, or is intended to be, directly or indirectly, useful to an enemy.

⁴(2) For the purpose of this section, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provision,—

- (a) a person may be presumed to have been in communication with enemy or a foreign agent if—
- (i) **Knowingly** he has, either within or without Pakistan visited the address of a foreign agent or consorted or associated with enemy or a foreign agent; or

¹Ins. by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1968 (8 of 1968), s. 2.

²S. 3A ins. by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1956 (10 of 1956), s. 2.

³Subs. by A.O., 1964, Art. 2 and Sch., for “Central Govt.”.

⁴Ins. and Subs. by Act LXIII of 2023, s.4-5

⁵Subs. by F.A.O., 1975, Art. 2 and Table, for “Central Government”.

⁶For notifi. empowering the Provincial Governments, the Chief Commissioner of Karachi and the Agent to the Governor General and Chief Commissioner in Baluchistan to exercise the powers exercisable by Central Government under this section and under cls. (c) and (d) of subsection (8) of section (2) and subsection (10) of section 2, see Gaz. of P., 1955, Ext., pp 1019, 1338 and 1470.

⁷Subs. by the Central Laws (Statue Reform) Ordinance, 1960 (21 of 1960), s. 3 and 2nd Sch. (*with effect from the 14th October, 1955*), for “the Provinces and the Capital of the Federation” which had been subs. by A.O. 1949, for “British India”.

- (ii) he either within or without Pakistan, has in possession the name or address of, an enemy or any other information regarding, an enemy foreign agent has been obtained by him from any other person;
- (b) the expression “enemy or foreign agent” includes any person who is or has been or in respect of whom it appears that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting him of being or having been employed by, an enemy either directly or indirectly, for the purpose of committing an act, either within or without Pakistan, prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State, or who has or is reasonably suspected of having, either within or without Pakistan, committed, or attempted to commit, such an act in the interests of or an enemy;
- (c) any address, whether within or without Pakistan, in respect of which it appears that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting it of being an address used for the receipt of communications intended for an enemy or a foreign agent; or any address at which an enemy or a foreign agent resides, or to which he resorts for the purpose of giving or receiving communications, or at which he carries on any business, may be presumed to be the address of an enemy or a foreign agent, and communications addressed to such an address to be communications with an enemy or a foreign agent.]

5. Wrongful communication, etc., of information. — (1) If any person having in his possession or control any secret official code or password or any sketch, plan, model, article, note, document or information which relates to or is used in a prohibited place ¹[or relates to the activities of Armed Forces during peace and war] or relates to anything in such a place, or which has been made or obtained in contravention of this Act, or which has been entrusted in confidence to him by any person holding office under ²[Government], or which he has obtained ¹[or retained] or to which he has had access owing to his position as a person who holds or has held office under ²[Government], or as a person who holds or has held a contract made on behalf of ²[Government], or as a person who is or has been employed under a person who holds or has held such an office or contract—

- (a) wilfully communicates the code or password, sketch, plan, model, article, note, document or information to any person other than a person to whom he is authorised to communicate it, or a Court of Justice or a person to whom it is, in the interests of the State, his duty to communicate it ; or
- (b) uses the information in his possession for the benefit of any ¹[enemy] or in any other manner prejudicial to the safety of the State ; or
- (c) retains the sketch, plan, model, article, note or document in his possession or control when he has no right to retain it, or when it is contrary to his duty to retain it, or wilfully fails to comply with all directions issued by lawful authority with regard to the return or disposal thereof ; or
- (d) fails to take reasonable care of, or so conducts himself as to endanger the safety of, the sketch, plan, model, article, note, document, secret official code or password or information ;

¹Ins. by Act LXIII of 2023, s.6.

²Subs. by A.O., 1961, Art. 2, for “His Majesty” (with effect from the 23rd March, 1956).

he shall be guilty of an offence under this section.

(2) If any person voluntarily receives any secret official code or password or any sketch, plan, model, article, note, document or information knowing or having reasonable ground to believe, at the time when he receives it, that the code, password, sketch, plan, model, article, note, document or information is communicated in contravention of this Act, he shall be guilty of an offence under this section.

¹[(3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be punishable, —

- (a) where the offence committed is a contravention of clause (a) of sub-section (1) and intended or calculated to be, directly or indirectly, in the interest or for the benefit of a foreign power, or is in relation to any work of defence, arsenal, naval, military or air force establishment or station, mine, mine-field, factory, dockyard, camp, ship or aircraft or otherwise in relation to the naval, military or air force affairs of Pakistan or in relation to any secret official code, ²[with death, or] with imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years ; and
- (b) in any other case, with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.]

6. Unauthorized use of uniforms; falsification of reports, forgery, personation and false documents. —(1) If any person for the purpose of gaining admission or of assisting any other person to gain admission to a prohibited place or for any other purpose prejudicial to the safety of the State—

- (a) uses or wears, without lawful authority, any naval, military, air force, police or other official uniform, or any uniform so nearly resembling the same as to be calculated to deceive, or falsely represents himself to be a person who is or has been entitled to use or wear any such uniform ; or
- (b) orally, or in writing in any declaration or application, or in any document signed by him or on his behalf, knowingly makes or connives at the making of any false statement or any omission ; or
- (c) forges, alters, or tampers with any passport or any naval, military, airforce, police, or official pass, permit, certificate, licence, or other document of a similar character (hereinafter in this section referred to as an official document) or knowingly uses or has in his possession any such forged, altered, or irregular official document ; or
- (d) personates, or falsely represents himself to be, a person holding, or in the employment of a person holding office under ³[Government], or to be or not to be a person to whom an official document or secret official code or password has been duly issued or communicated, or with intent to obtain an official document, secret official code or password, whether for himself or any other person, knowingly makes any false statement ; or

¹Subs. by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1966 (8 of 1966), s. 4. for subsections (3) and (4).

²Ins. by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1968 (8 of 1968), s. 3.

³Subs. by A.O., 1961, Art, 2, for "His Majesty" (with effect from the 3rd March, 1956).

- (e) uses, or has in his possession or under his control, without the authority of the department of the Government or the authority concerned, any die, seal or stamp of or belonging to, or used, made or provided by, any department of the Government, or by any diplomatic, naval, military or air force authority appointed by or acting under the authority of ¹[Government], or any die, seal or stamp so nearly resembling any such die, seal or stamp as to be calculated to deceive, or counterfeits any such die, seal or stamp, or knowingly uses, or has in his possession or under his control, any such counterfeited die, seal or stamp,

he shall be guilty of an offence under this section.

(2) If any person for any purpose prejudicial to the safety of the State —

- (a) retains any official document, whether or not completed or issued for use, when he has no right to retain it, or when it is contrary to his duty to retain it, or wilfully fails to comply with any directions issued by any department of the Government or any person authorised by such department with regard to the return or disposal thereof ; or
- (b) allows any other person to have possession of any official document issued for his use alone, or communicates any secret official code or password so issued, or, without, lawful authority or excuse, has in his possession any official document or secret official code or password issued for the use of some person other than himself, or, on obtaining possession of any official document by finding or otherwise, wilfully fails to restore it to the person or authority by whom or for whose use it was issued, or to a police officer ; or
- (c) without lawful authority or excuse, manufactures or sells, or has in his possession for sale, any such die, seal or stamp as aforesaid ;

he shall be guilty of an offence under this section.

(3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

(4) The provisions of sub-section (2) of section 3 shall apply, for the purpose of proving a purpose prejudicial to the safety of the State, to any prosecution for an offence under this section relating to the naval, military or air force affairs of ¹[Government], or to any secret official code in like manner as they apply, for the purpose of proving a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State, to prosecutions for offences punishable under that section with imprisonment for a term which may extend to fourteen years.

²[6A. Unauthorized disclosure of identities, etc.— (1) A person shall commit an offence who intentionally acting in any manner prejudicial to public order, safety, interests or defence of Pakistan, or any part thereof, discloses in such a manner that exposes the identity of such undisclosed persons in any manners the identity of the members of the intelligence agencies, or the informants or sources thereof.

¹Subs. by A.O., 1961, Art. 2, for "His Majesty" (with effect from the 23rd March, 1956).

²Ins. by Act LXIII of 2023, s.7.

(2) Whoever commits an offence under sub-section (1) shall be liable to punishment of imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine which may extend to one million rupees, or with both.

(3) Any person who abets, incites, conspires or attempts to commit the offence under sub-section (1) shall be liable to the same punishment provided for under sub-section (2).]

7. Interfering with officers of the Police or members of the armed forces of Pakistan.—(1) No person in the vicinity of any prohibited place shall obstruct, knowingly mislead or otherwise interfere with or impede, any police officer, or any member of ¹[the armed forces of Pakistan] engaged on guard, sentry, patrol, or other similar duty in relation to the prohibited place.

(2) If any person acts in contravention of the provisions of this section, he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

8. Duty of giving information as to commission of offences.—(1) It shall be the duty of every person to give on demand to a Superintendent of Police, or other police officer not below the rank of Inspector, empowered by an Inspector-General ²[* * *] in this behalf, or to any member of ¹[the armed forces of Pakistan] engaged on guard, sentry, patrol or other similar duty, any information in his power relating to an offence or suspected offence under section 3 or under section 3 read with section 9 and, if so required, and upon tender of his reasonable expenses, to attend at such reasonable time and place as may be specified for the purpose of furnishing such information.

(2) If any person fails to give any such information or to attend as aforesaid, he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

³**9. Attempts, incitements, etc.**— Any person who incites to commit, conspires to commit, attempts to commit, aids or abets the commission of an offence under this Act shall be punishable with the same punishment, and be liable to be proceeded against in the same manner as if he had committed such offence.]

10. Penalty for harbouring spies.—(1) If any person knowingly harbours any person whom he knows or has reasonable grounds for supposing to be a person who is about to commit or who has committed an offence under section 3 or under section 3 read with section 9 or knowingly permits to meet or assemble in any premises in his occupation or under his control any such persons, he shall be guilty of an offence under this section.

(2) It shall be the duty of every person having harboured any such person as aforesaid or permitted to meet or assemble in any premises in his occupation or under his control any such persons as aforesaid, to give on demand to a Superintendent of Police or other police officer not below the rank of Inspector empowered by an Inspector-General ²[* * *] in this behalf, any information in his power relating to any such person or persons, and if any person fails to give any such information, he shall be guilty of an offence under this section.

(3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year, or with fine, or with both.

¹Subs. by A.O., 1961, Art. 2 and Sch. for “His Majesty’s forces” (with effect from the 23rd March, 1956).

²The words “or Commissioner of Police” omitted by A.O., 1949.

³Ins. by Act LXIII of 2023, s.8.

11. Search Warrants. —(1) If a ¹[* * *], Magistrate of the first class ²[* * *] is satisfied, by information on oath that there is reasonable ground for suspecting that an offence under this Act has been or is about to be committed, he may grant a search-warrant authorising any police officer named therein, not being below the rank of an officer in charge of a police station, to enter at any time any premises or place named in the warrant, if necessary, by force, and to search the premises or place and every person found therein, and to seize any sketch, plan, model, article, note or document, or anything of a like nature, or anything which is evidence of an offence under this Act having been or being about to be committed which he may find on the premises or place or any such person, and with regard to or in connection with which he has reasonable ground for suspecting that an offence under this Act has been or is about to be committed.

(2) Where it appears to a police officer, not being below the rank of Superintendent, that the case is one of great emergency, and that in the interests of the State immediate action is necessary, he may by a written order under his hand give to any police officer the like authority as may be given by the warrant of a Magistrate under this section.

(3) Where action has been taken by a police officer under sub-section (2) he shall, as soon as may be, report such action, ¹[* * *] to the ²[Magistrate of the first class having jurisdiction].

12. Power to arrest. — ³[(1)] Notwithstanding anything in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898 (V of 1898),—

(a) ⁴[* * * * *]

⁵[(b)] an offence under this Act, other than an offence punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to ³[ten] years, shall be a cognizable and bailable offence ; and].

⁶[(c)] any member of the armed forces of Pakistan ³[or an intelligence agency] may, without an order from a Magistrate and without a warrant, arrest, in or in the vicinity of a prohibited place, any person who has been concerned in an offence under section 3, or under section 3 read with section 9, or under clause (a) or clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 5, or under clause (a) of sub-section (1) of section 6, or against whom a reasonable complaint has been made or credible information has been received, or a reasonable suspicion exists of his having been so concerned, and shall without unnecessary delay take or send the person arrested before a Magistrate having jurisdiction in the case or before an officer in charge of a police-station, and thereupon the provisions of the said Code ³[shall be] applicable in respect of a person who, having been arrested without warrant, has been taken or sent before a Magistrate or before an officer in charge of a police-station shall apply to him.]

¹The words "Presidency Magistrate" omitted by A.O., 1949.

²Omitted by Ord. 68 of 2002, s. 2.

³Re-numbered, Subs. and Ins. by Act LXIII of 2023, s.9-10.

⁴Clause (a) omitted by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1968 (8 of 1968), s. 5.

⁵Subs. *ibid.*, for clause (b), which was previously amended by Act 13 of 1952, s. 2 to read as above.

⁶Subs. by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1967 (15 of 1967), s. 2, for clause (c).

¹[(2) **The material seized during arrest of an accused by an arresting officer shall be handed over by him to the investigating officer or the head of the Joint Investigating Team as the case may be and the same shall be admissible in evidence.**]

¹[**12A. Investigation etc.**— (1) An investigating officer under this Act shall be an officer of the Federal **Investigation** Agency not below the rank of BPS-17 or equivalent. The said Officer shall be designated by the Director General, Federal **Investigation** Agency for the purposes of investigation. If the Director General, Federal **Investigation** Agency deems necessary, he may constitute a Joint Investigation Team, **convened** by such officer and consisting of such other officers of intelligence agencies as he may appoint. The Joint Investigation Team may co-opt any additional person from any Federal or Provincial institution or department as it deems appropriate for investigation:

Provided that the offence relating to civil espionage shall be investigated by Federal Investigation Agency or Joint Investigation Team.

(2) The investigating officer or the JIT, as the case may be, shall complete the investigation in respect of cases triable by the Court established or designated under section 13 within thirty working days. The report under section 173 of the Code shall be signed and forwarded by the investigating officer appointed under sub-section (1) through public prosecutor to the court.]

13. Restriction on trial of offences. — ²[(1) No Court ³[inferior to] that of a Magistrate of the first class specially empowered in this behalf by the appropriate Government shall try any offence under this Act.]

(2) If any person under trial before a Magistrate for an offence under this Act at any time before a charge is framed claims to be tried by the Court of Session, the Magistrate shall, if he does not discharge the accused, commit the case for trial by that Court, notwithstanding that it is not a case exclusively triable by that Court.

(3) No Court shall take cognizance of any offence under this Act unless upon complaint made by order of, or under authority from, the ⁴[appropriate Government] ⁵[* * *] or some officer empowered by the ⁴[appropriate Government] in this behalf:

Provided that a person charged with such an offence may be arrested, or a warrant for his arrest may be issued and executed, and any such person may be remanded in custody or on bail, notwithstanding that such complaint has not been made, but no further or other proceedings shall be taken until such complaint has been made.

(4) For the purposes of the trial of a person for an offence under this Act, the offence may be deemed to have been committed either at the place in which the same actually was committed or at any place in ⁶[Pakistan] in which the offender may be found.

⁷[* * * * *]

¹Added and Ins. by Act LXIII of 2023, s.9-10

²Subs. by the Federal Laws (Revision and Declaration) Ordinance, 1981 (27 of 1981), s. 3 and Sch., II, for subsection (1), which was previously amended by various enactments.

³Subs. by Ord. 68 of 2002, s. 3.

⁴Subs. by A.O., 1937, for “G.G. in C.”.

⁵The words “the L.G.” rep., *ibid*.

⁶Subs. by the Central Laws (Statue Reform) Ordinance, 1960 (21 of 1960), s. 3 and 2nd Sch. (*with effect from the 14th October, 1955*), for “the Provinces and the Capital of the Federation” which had been subs. by A.O., 1949, for “British India”.

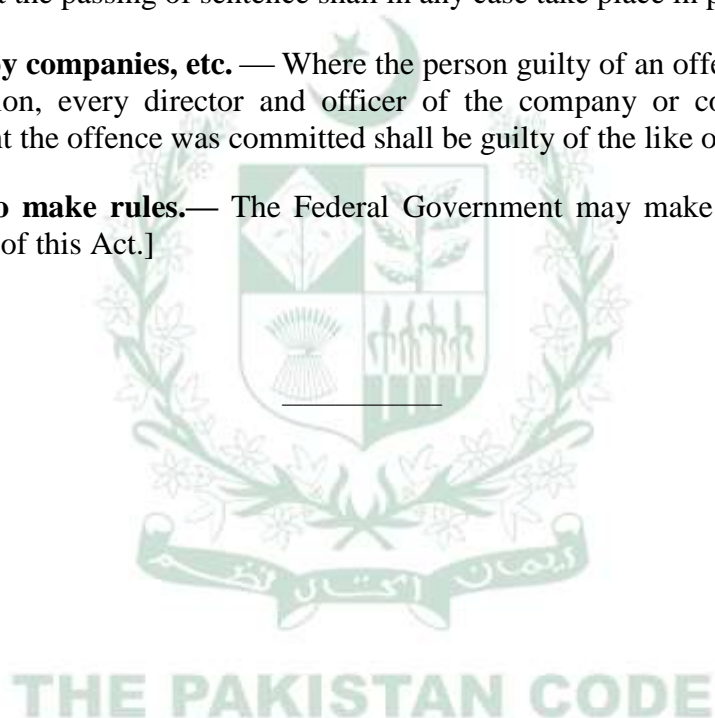
⁷Subsection (5) which was ins. by A.O., 1937, omitted by A.O., 1964, Art. 2 and Sch.

¹[(6) The ²[appropriate Government] may, if it thinks fit, by general or special order direct that the procedure for the trial of an offence ³[under section 3, or under section 3 read with section 9, or under clause (a) or clause (b) of sub-section (1) of section 5, or] under clause (a) of sub-section (1) of section 6 shall be that prescribed for offences under the Enemy Agents Ordinance, 1943 (Ord. I of 1943), or under the Pakistan Criminal Law, Amendment Act, ⁴[1958 (XL of 1958)].

14. Exclusion of public from proceedings.—In addition and without prejudice to any powers which a Court may possess to order the exclusion of the public from any proceedings if, in the course of proceedings before a Court against any person for an offence under this Act or the proceedings on appeal, or in the course of the trial of a person under this Act, application is made by the prosecution, on the ground that the publication of any evidence to be given or of any statement to be made in the course of the proceedings would be prejudicial to the safety of the State, that all or any portion of the public shall be excluded during any part of the hearing, the Court may make an order to that effect, but the passing of sentence shall in any case take place in public.

15. Offences by companies, etc.— Where the person guilty of an offence under this Act is a company or corporation, every director and officer of the company or corporation with whose knowledge and consent the offence was committed shall be guilty of the like offence.

⁵[**16. Power to make rules.**— The Federal Government may make rules to carry out the purposes and objects of this Act.]



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¹Subsection (6) ins by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1952 (13 of 1952), s. 3.

²Subs. by A.O., 1964, Art. 2 and Sch., for “Central Government”.

³Subs. by the Official Secrets (Amdt.) Act, 1967 (15 of 1967), s. 3, for “mentioned in clause (a) of section 12 or an offence”.

⁴Subs. *ibid.*, for “1948”.

⁵Ins. by Act LXIII of 2023, s.11.