

Information Technology Act, 2000

Chapter X - The Cyber Appellate Tribunal

(1) The Central Government shall, by notification, establish one or more appellate tribunals to be known as the Cyber ¹[***] Appellate Tribunal.

(2) The Central Government shall also specify, in the notification referred to in sub-section (1), the matters and places in relation to which the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may exercise jurisdiction.

1. Omitted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to omission text read as under :-

"Regulation"

Section 49 - Composition of Cyber Appellate Tribunal

¹[49. Composition of Cyber Appellate Tribunal.--

(1) The Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall consist of a Chairperson and such number of other Members, as the Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, appoint.

Provided that the person appointed as the Presiding Officer of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal under the provisions of this Act immediately before the commencement of the Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 shall be deemed to have been appointed as the Chairperson of the said Cyber Appellate Tribunal under the provisions of this Act as amended by the Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008.

(2) The selection of Chairperson and Members of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be made by the Central Government in consultation with the Chief Justice of India.

(3) Subject to the provisions of this Act--

(a) the jurisdiction, powers and authority of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may be exercised by the Benches thereof;

(b) a Bench may be constituted by the Chairperson of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal with one or two Members of such Tribunal as the Chairperson may deem fit.

(c) the Benches of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall sit at New Delhi and at such other places as the Central Government may, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify;

(d) the Central Government shall, by notification in the Official Gazette, specify the areas in relation to which each Bench of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may exercise its jurisdiction.

(4) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (3), the Chairperson of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may transfer a Member of such Tribunal from one Bench to another Bench.

(5) If at any stage of the hearing of any case or matter it appears to the Chairperson or a Member of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal that the case or matter is of such a nature that it ought to be heard by a Bench consisting of more Members, the case or matter may be transferred by the Chairperson to such Bench as the Chairperson may deem fit.]

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-

A Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall consist of one person only (hereinafter referred to as the Presiding Officer of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal) to be appointed, by notification, by the Central Government.

Section 50 - Qualifications for appointment as Presiding Officer of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal

¹[50. Qualifications for appointment as Chairperson and Members of Cyber Appellate Tribunal.--

(1) A person shall not be qualified for appointment as a Chairperson of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal unless he is, or has

been, or is qualified to be, a Judge of a High Court.

(2) The Members of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal, except the Judicial Member to be appointed under sub-section (3), shall be appointed by the Central Government from amongst persons, having special knowledge of, and professional experience in, information technology, telecommunication, industry, management or consumer affairs:

Provided that a person shall not be appointed as a Member, unless he is, or has been, in the service of the Central Government or a State Government and has held the post of Additional Secretary to the Government of India or any equivalent post in the Central Government or State Government for a period of not less than one year or Joint Secretary to the Government of India or any equivalent post in the Central Government or State Government for a period of not less than seven years.

(3) The Judicial Members of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be appointed by the Central Government from amongst persons who is or has been a member of the Indian Legal Service and has held the post of Additional Secretary for a period of not less than one year or Grade I post of that Service for a period of not less than five years.]

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-

A person shall not be qualified for appointment as the Presiding Officer of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal unless he

(a) is, or has been, or is qualified to be, a Judge of a High Court; or

(b) is, or has been, a member of the Indian Legal Service and is holding or has held a post in Grade I of that Service for at least three years.

Section 51 - Term of office

¹[51. Term of office, conditions of service, etc., of Chairperson and Members.--

(1) The Chairperson or Member of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall hold office for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of sixty-five years, whichever is earlier

(2) Before appointing any person as the Chairperson or Member of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal, the Central Government shall satisfy itself that the person does not have any such financial or other interest as is likely to affect prejudicially his functions as such Chairperson or Member.

(3) An officer of the Central Government or State Government on his selection as the Chairperson or Member of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal, as the case may be, shall have to retire from service before joining as such Chairperson or Member.]

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-

"The Presiding Officer of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall hold office for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of sixty-five years whichever is earlier."

Section 52 - Salary, allowances and other terms and conditions of service of Presiding Officer

¹[52. Salary, allowances and other terms and conditions of service of chairperson and Members.--

The salary and allowances payable to, and the other terms and conditions of service including pension, gratuity and other retirement benefits of, the Chairperson or a Member of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be such as may be prescribed.]

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-

The salary and allowances payable to, and the other terms and conditions of service including pension, gratuity and other retirement benefits of, the Presiding Officer of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be such as may be prescribed:

Provided that neither the salary and allowances nor the other terms and conditions of service of the Presiding Officers shall be varied to his disadvantage after appointment.

Section 52A - Powers of superintendence, direction, etc.

¹[52A. Powers of superintendence, direction, etc.--

The Chairperson of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall have powers of general superintendence and directions in the

conduct of the affairs of that Tribunal and he shall, in addition to presiding over the meetings of the Tribunal, exercise and discharge such powers and functions of the Tribunal as may be prescribed.

1. Inserted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008.

Section 52B - Distribution of business among Benches.

¹[52B. Distribution of business among Benches.--

Where Benches are constituted, the Chairperson of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may, by order, distribute the business of that Tribunal amongst the Benches and also the matters to be dealt with by each Bench.

1. Inserted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008.

Section 52C - Power of Chairperson to transfer cases.

¹[52C. Power of Chairperson to transfer cases.--

On the application of any of the parties and after notice to the parties, and after hearing such of them as he may deem proper to be heard, or suo motu without such notice, the Chairperson of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may transfer any case pending before one Bench, for disposal to any other Bench.]

1. Inserted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008.

Section 52D - Decision by majority.

¹[52D. Decision by majority.--

If the Members of a Bench consisting of two Members differ in opinion on any point, they shall state the point or points on which they differ, and make a reference to the Chairperson of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal who shall hear the point or points himself and such point or points shall be decided according to the opinion of the majority of the Members who have heard the case, including those who first heard it.]

1. Inserted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008.

Section 53 - Filling up of vacancies

If, for reason other than temporary absence, any vacancy occurs in the office of the ¹[Chairperson or Member, as the case may be] of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal, then the Central Government shall appoint another person in accordance with the provisions of this Act to fill the vacancy and the proceedings may be continued before the Cyber Appellate Tribunal from the stage at which the vacancy is filled.

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-

"Presiding Officer"

Section 54 - Resignation and removal

(1) The Presiding Officer of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal may, by notice in writing under his hand addressed to the Central Government, resign his office:

Provided that the said ¹[Chairperson or the Member] shall, unless he is permitted by the Central Government to relinquish his office sooner, continue to hold office until the expiry of three months from the date of receipt of such notice or until a person duly appointed as his successor enters upon his office or until the expiry of his term of office, whichever is the earliest.

(2) The ¹[Chairperson or the Member] of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall not be removed from his office except by an order by the Central Government on the ground of proved misbehavior or incapacity after an inquiry made by a Judge of

the Supreme Court in which the ¹[Chairperson or the Member] concerned has been informed of the charges against him and given a reasonable opportunity of being heard in respect of these charges.

(3) The Central Government may, by rules, regulate the procedure for the investigation of misbehavior or incapacity of the aforesaid ¹[Chairperson or the Member].

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-

"Presiding Officer"

Section 55 - Orders constituting Appellate Tribunal to be final and not to invalidate its proceedings

No order of the Central Government appointing any person as the ¹[Chairperson or the Member] of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be called in question in any manner and no act or proceeding before a Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be called in question in any manner on the ground merely of any defect in the constitution of a Cyber Appellate Tribunal.

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-

"Presiding Officer"

Section 56 - Staff of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal

(1) The Central Government shall provide the Cyber Appellate Tribunal with such officers and employees as that Government may think fit.

(2) The officers and employees of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall discharge their functions under general superintendence of the ¹[Chairperson].

(3) The salaries, allowances and other conditions of service of the officers and employees of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be such as may be prescribed by the Central Government.

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-

"Presiding Officer"

Section 57 - Appeal to Cyber Appellate Tribunal

(1) Save as provided in sub-section (2), any person aggrieved by an order made by controller or an adjudicating officer under this Act may prefer an appeal to a Cyber Appellate Tribunal having jurisdiction in the matter.

(2) No appeal shall lie to the Cyber Appellate Tribunal from an order made by an adjudicating officer with the consent of the parties.

(3) Every appeal under sub-section (1) shall be filed within a period of forty-five days from the date on which a copy of the order made by the Controller or the adjudicating officer is received by the person aggrieved and it shall be in such form and be accompanied by such fee as may be prescribed:

Provided that the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may entertain an appeal after the expiry of the said period of forty-five days if it is satisfied that there was sufficient cause for not filing it within that period.

(4) On receipt of an appeal under sub-section (1), the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may, after giving the parties to the appeal, an opportunity of being heard, pass such orders thereon as it thinks fit, confirming, modifying or setting aside the order appealed against.

(5) The Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall send a copy of every order made by it to the parties to the appeal and to the concerned Controller or adjudicating officer.

(6) The appeal filed before the Cyber Appellate Tribunal under sub-section (1) shall be dealt with by it as expeditiously as possible and endeavour shall be made by it to dispose of the appeal finally within six months from the date of receipt of the appeal.

Section 58 - Procedure and powers of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal

(1) The Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall not be bound by the procedure laid down by the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (5 of 1908), but shall be guided by the principles of natural justice and, subject to the other provisions of this Act and of any rules, the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall have powers to regulate its own procedure including the place at which it shall have its sittings.

(2) The Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall have, for the purposes of discharging its functions under this Act, the same powers as are vested in a civil court under the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 (5 of 1908), while trying a suit, in respect of the following matters, namely:

- (a) summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him on oath;
- (b) requiring the discovery and production of documents or other electronic records;
- (c) receiving evidence on affidavits;
- (d) issuing commissions for the examination of witnesses or documents;
- (e) reviewing its decisions;
- (f) dismissing an application for default or deciding it ex parte;
- (g) any other matter which may be prescribed.

(3) Every proceeding before the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be deemed to be a judicial proceeding within the meaning of sections 193 and 228, and for the purposes of section 196 of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) and the Cyber Appellate Tribunal shall be deemed to be a civil court for the purposes of section 195 and Chapter XXVI of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (2 of 1974).

Section 59 - Right to legal representation

The appellant may either appear in person or authorise one or more legal practitioners or any of its officers to present his or its case before the Cyber Appellate Tribunal.

Section 60 - Limitation

The provisions of the Limitation Act, 1963 (36 of 1963), shall, as far as may be, apply to an appeal made to the Cyber Appellate Tribunal.

Section 61 - Civil court not to have jurisdiction

No court shall have jurisdiction to entertain any suit or proceeding in respect of any matter which an adjudicating officer appointed under this Act or the Cyber Appellate Tribunal constituted under this Act is empowered by or under this Act to determine and no injunction shall be granted by any court or other authority in respect of any action taken or to be taken in pursuance of any power conferred by or under this Act.

Section 62 - Appeal to High Court

Any person aggrieved by any decision or order of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal may file an appeal to the High Court within sixty days from the date of communication of the decision or order of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal to him on any question of fact or law arising out of such order:

Provided that the High Court may, if it is satisfied that the appellant was prevented by sufficient cause from filing the appeal within the said period, allow it to be filed within a further period not exceeding sixty days.

Section 63 - Compounding of contraventions

(1) Any contravention under this¹[Act] may, either before or after the institution of adjudication proceedings, be compounded by the Controller or such other officer as may be specially authorised by him in this behalf or by the adjudicating officer, as the case may be, subject to such conditions as the Controller or such other officer or the adjudicating officer may specify:

Provided that such sum shall not, in any case, exceed the maximum amount of the penalty which may be imposed under this Act for the contravention so compounded.

(2) Nothing in sub-section (1) shall apply to a person who commits the same or similar contravention within a period of three years from the date on which the first contravention, committed by him, was compounded.

Explanation.-For the purposes of this sub-section, any second or subsequent contravention committed after the expiry of a period of three years from the date on which the contravention was previously compounded shall be deemed to be a first contravention.

(3) Where any contravention has been compounded under sub-section (1), no proceeding or further proceeding, as the case may be, shall be taken against the person guilty of such contravention in respect of the contravention so compounded.

1. Substituted by S.O. 1015 (E), dated 19th September, 2002, for "chapter" (w.e.f. 19-9-2002).

Section 64 - Recovery of penalty

A ²[penalty imposed or compensation awarded] under this Act, if it is not paid, shall be recovered as an arrear of land revenue and the licence or the ¹[Electronic] Signature Certificate, as the case may be, shall be suspended till the penalty is paid.

1. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008. Previous text was digital.
 2. Substituted vide Information Technology (Amendment) Act, 2008 Prior to substitution text read as under :-
"penalty imposed"
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