



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

What's Inside

President's Message.....	01
Message From General Secretary.....	02
Message From Executive Secretary.....	03
OICOA Events	04
Ombudsman Members Activities	07
OIC Ombudsman from Pakistan	24
OICOA in Media	28
OICOA at glance	31

Editorial Team
Tauseef Ahmed Qureshi
Abdul Ghani

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Esteemed Members,

I extend my gratitude to Pakistan for graciously hosting the 10th Board of Directors' Meeting in Islamabad. Heartfelt appreciation goes to all OICOA members who actively participated, making the meeting both engaging and fruitful.

These gatherings transcend mere meetings; they represent a confluence of shared visions dedicated to fostering the esteemed principles of Ombudsmanship on a global stage. Our collective ambition is to uphold justice, fairness, accountability, and the protection of human rights. The meeting in Islamabad served as a pivotal moment, with decisions made to fortify OICOA member institutions, ensuring they excel in dispensing good governance in their respective countries.

I eagerly anticipate the pivotal discussions on expanding OICOA's membership, echoing our joint commitment to enhancing its impact and reach. Additionally, these meetings will highlight the significant role that Islamic states FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIy in strengthening the ethos of Ombudsmanship, sending a powerful message of unity, justice, and equity worldwide.



I am pleased to announce the successful conclusion of our meeting, marking a significant milestone for OICOA. The decisions taken will undoubtedly contribute to a global outreach resonating with the core principles of justice and equity. I look forward to the camaraderie, exchange of insightful ideas, and meaningful deliberations that unfolded during our meetings, shaping a brighter future for Ombudsmanship.

Warm regards,

Şeref Malkoç

Chief Ombudsman of the
Republic of Türkiye
President OICOA



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

SECRETARY GENERAL'S MESSAGE

I am delighted to share the 'Sixth ISSUE' of OICOA e-Newsletter, embodying the core principle of accountability rooted in the Islamic concept. Our commitment at OICOA extends to the fight against maladministration, protection of human rights, and the promotion of good governance, believing that a peaceful society contributes to a peaceful world. Achieving the agenda of peaceful coexistence requires transparency, adherence to the rule of law, and a just system for addressing grievances – a responsibility we shoulder with unwavering commitment and resilience.

We express gratitude to the delegations from Turkiye, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Morocco, and Indonesia. Special thanks to the representatives from the Islamic Republic of Iran who participated through online mode. A heartfelt appreciation goes to the Bulgarian delegation for keenly participating in the meeting as an observer country.

The meeting strongly condemns the Israeli attacks against Palestinian Muslims, urging global institutions to take immediate measures to halt the violence and protect human lives. Horrendously, 30,000 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks since October 7, 2023. OICOA calls upon the UNO and Human Rights Organisations to bring all perpetrators of this unfortunate act to justice.

In solidarity with the affected Palestinians, OICOA calls upon the UNO and Human Rights Organizations to bring all perpetrators of these unfortunate acts to justice. A prompt ceasefire, in



accordance with the Security Council resolution, should be implemented, allowing international NGOs to work for the rescue, relief, and rehabilitation of the affected victims of war. With the support of member countries, we can build and fortify our association. May our actions be guided by the principles of justice, righteousness, and peace.

Dr. Asif Mehmood Jah
(Hilal-i-Imaz) (Sitara-i-Imaz)
Federal Tax Ombudsman of Pakistan
Secretary General, OICOA



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE

Ramadan Mubarak to all members. It brings me great pleasure to discuss the significant outcomes of the Tenth Board of Directors' Meeting held in Islamabad, a landmark event that underscores our dedication and collaborative efforts towards enhancing the governance landscape.

In this 'Sixth Edition' of the OIC Ombudsman Association's Newsletter, we highlight the vital role and active participation of OICOA delegations in fostering professional growth and strengthening our community. A heartfelt thanks is extended to all Forum of Pakistan Ombudsman members for their engagement and contributions during this meeting.

Special acknowledgment is also due for the cultural event at the Pakistan National Council of Arts, which served as a vibrant showcase of our rich heritage, providing an enriching experience for the delegations. This event underscored the importance of embracing our cultural diversity, fostering mutual respect, and understanding among members. Furthermore, the Tree Plantation Drive initiated by OICOA delegations stands as a testament to our collective responsibility towards environmental sustainability. This initiative not only contributes to greening our environment but also symbolizes our commitment to future generations, underlining the significance of ecological awareness and action within our activities.

Additionally, we are deeply appreciative of Mr. Suhail Altaf, former president of the Rawalpindi



Chambers of Commerce and President RCCI Sakib Rafik for his gracious hospitality towards OICOA members, offering a delightful lunch that marked a moment of unity and recognition among us.

Our ongoing mission is to empower our members with essential skills and tools to effectively address grievances, advocating for justice and fairness across our nation. The positive outcomes and collaborative spirit demonstrated at the Tenth Board of Directors' Meeting in Islamabad are testaments to our collective dedication to these principles.

Almas Ali Jovindah
Executive Secretary, OICOA
Forum of Pakistan Ombudsman



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

OICOA EVENTS

TENTH BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING OF OICOA HELD IN PAKISTAN

The 10th OICOA Board Meeting convened in Islamabad on January 30th at the Serena Hotel, marked a significant gathering of Ombudsmen and Ombudspersons from Islamic countries.

This meeting, characterized by its solemn commitment to addressing global injustices, focused particularly on the dire circumstances faced by Palestinians under ceaseless bombardment. Distinguished Board Members from Republic of Turkiye, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Indonesia, Kingdom of Morocco, and Kingdom of Bahrain attended in person, while representatives from the Islamic Republic of Iran participated virtually, creating a diverse and unified front against the backdrop of these grave concerns.

“We must elevate our collective voice to echo the cries of the innocent who suffer daily. The brutalities of the Zionist regime cannot go unchallenged,” asserted Secretary General of OICOA and Federal Tax Ombudsman of Pakistan, Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah. He called for action which went beyond empathy, urging the OICOA to transform their words into decisive, impactful advocacy. Dr. Jah emphasized the need for unified strength and action within the

Ombudsman community. “Now, more than ever, our solidarity, effort, and cooperation are vital. We possess the power to drive change,” he inspired.

Mirroring this sentiment, President of OICOA and Chief Ombudsman of Turkiye, Seref Malkoc, brought attention to the escalating issue of Islamophobia in the European countries, challenging the international community’s commitment to democracy and the rule of law. He lamented the collapse of humanity witnessed in the ongoing Palestinian genocide and expressed his disappointment on the silence of global leaders amidst all the despair and devastation.

“Imagine, for months, over 2.5 million people in Gaza have lived under the shadow of bombs, their city reduced to rubble, their lives torn apart, and the world leaders are nothing, but silent spectators”





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

Malkoc stated with palpable anguish. His condemnation of the use of illegal Phosphorus Bombs and the deafening silence of global powers like the USA, UK, and France was both an indictment and a call to conscience.

However, amidst the despair, Malkoc also carried a ray of hope as he said that “Brutality cannot last forever. Justice and humanity will ultimately prevail, and Palestinians will rise from these ashes,” he passionately proclaimed. He applauded South Africa’s initiative in bringing Israel’s actions to the International Court of Justice and stated that a letter of appreciation will soon be sent from his Office to the Ombudsman of South Africa.



He also highlighted the critical role of the Turkish Ombudsman Institute’s comprehensive report on Gaza that was finalized on the 29th January, which he hopes will achieve the goal of broadening the reach of bringing Israeli’s atrocities and war crimes to the forefront and serve as an invaluable academic contribution.

The 10th OICOA Board Meeting also witnessed unanimous support from other Board Members of OICOA. Miss Ghada Hameed Habib (Secretary-General of the

Ombudsman of Kingdom of Bahrain), Mohamed Benalilou (Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco), Mokhammad Najih (Chairman of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia), Dr. Ahmed Rehmania (Vice President of General Inspection Organization of Islamic Republic of Iran), and Sabina Aliyeva (Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan) all vehemently condemned the ongoing atrocities in Palestine. They supported the leadership of OICOA’s call for immediate and practical intervention by

He also highlighted the Turkish Ombudsman comprehensive report on on the 29th January, achieve the goal of bringing Israeli’s crimes to the forefront invaluable academic The 10th OICOA Board



critical role of the Institute’s

Gaza that was finalized which he hopes will broadening the reach of atrocities and war and serve as an contribution.

Meeting also witnessed

unanimous support from other Board Members of OICOA. Miss Ghada Hameed Habib (Secretary-General of the Miss Ghada Hameed Habib (Secretary-General of the Ombudsman of Kingdom of



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

Bahrain), Mohamed Benalilou (Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco), Mokhammad Najih (Chairman of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Indonesia), Dr. Ahmed Rehmania (Vice President of General Inspection Organization of Islamic Republic of Iran), and Sabina Aliyeva (Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan) all vehemently condemned the ongoing atrocities in Palestine. They supported the leadership of OICOA's call for immediate and practical intervention by OICOA, aligning with the principles of international law, and pledged support from their respective ombudsman offices for bringing

the atrocities of Zionist Israeli regime led by Benjamin Netanyahu to the forefront.

Executive Secretary OICOA, Almas Ali Jovindah commented that this Board Meeting of OICOA has marked a significant turning point for the impactful future of OICOA. "It is not just a meeting;

it is a united stand against injustice, a collective voice of resolve and compassion in a world often indifferent to the cries of the oppressed," remarked Jovindah. According to him,

the determination to move from passive observation to active intervention is a testament to OICOA's commitment to upholding human dignity and rights, and OICOA makes a promise to the Palestinian people that their suffering has not gone unnoticed and that their fight for justice is a fight shared by their Muslim brothers and sisters across the globe.





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

OICOA MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES

HARMONY IN HERITAGE: CELEBRATING UNITY AND CULTURE AT THE OIC OMBUDSMAN MEETING IN PAKISTAN

In a disFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIy of unity and collaboration, Ombudsman institutions from member nations of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) convened in Pakistan for the pivotal 10th Board of Directors' Meeting. This gathering, which saw active participation from countries such as Turkiye, Bahrain, Morocco, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, and Bulgaria, was not only a forum for discussing shared challenges but also an occasion for cultural celebration. The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) took this opportunity to arrange a cultural show, designed to welcome the delegations with the rich tapestry of Pakistani heritage. The event showcased an array of cultural performances, including traditional songs and dances, providing a vibrant insight into the nation's cultural depth. Such activities highlighted the cultural diversity within the Islamic world, emphasizing the shared bonds and mutual respect among the OIC nations.

Representatives from the OIC countries, amidst discussions on enhancing governance and human rights within their regions, were treated to this cultural exposition, which served as a reminder of the common cultural foundations that underpin their unity. The cultural show at PNCA not only provided a backdrop for relaxation and enjoyment but also fostered a sense of solidarity among the attendees. uring the event, the importance of collaboration in addressing issues of maladministration and human rights





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

violations was echoed by the Secretary General of the Ombudsman of the Ministry of Interior Bahrain, Gada Hameed, and other distinguished guests. They highlighted the significance of such gatherings in strengthening good governance and the rule of law across Muslim nations. As the cultural show drew to a close, the Director General of PNCA took the stage to present souvenirs to the delegates, marking a token of appreciation and friendship. These gifts, emblematic of Pakistani culture, were a gesture of goodwill, aiming to cement the relationships between the member countries and to encourage ongoing cooperation in their shared objectives.

The OIC Ombudsman Association, through its dedication to upholding human rights and promoting good governance, has thus utilized cultural diplomacy as a means to enhance the collaborative spirit among its members. The cultural show at PNCA, beyond being a mere entertainment event, was a significant step towards building bridges, sharing knowledge, and collectively tackling challenges faced by the member countries in their pursuit of a just and equitable governance model.





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

PLANTATION DRIVE TOOK PLACE AT FEDERAL TAX OMBUDSMAN OF PAKISTAN

In a significant display of unity and collaboration, delegations from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Ombudsman Association (OICOA) participated in a plantation drive at the Federal Tax Ombudsman Secretariat in Islamabad, Pakistan. This event not only highlighted the association's commitment to environmental stewardship but also served as a precursor to the 10th Board of Directors' Meeting. The gathering drew representatives from various OIC member countries, including Turkiye, Bahrain, Morocco, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, and Bulgaria, underscoring the collective effort in addressing shared challenges.

During this environmental initiative, the OICOA showcased its dedication to not just governance and human rights issues but also to contributing positively to the global challenge of climate change. The plantation drive symbolized a commitment to sustainability and environmental protection, aligning with the broader objectives of promoting good governance and human rights across member countries.

President Seref Malkov of the OIC Ombudsman Association highlighted the significance of such collaborative efforts. He reiterated the association's aim to expand its membership and strengthen its resolve in combating human rights violations, which are prevalent across Muslim countries. Through initiatives like the plantation drive, the OICOA fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility among its members.

The Secretary General of the Ombudsman of the Ministry of Interior Bahrain, Gada Hameed, and Mediator Mohammed Benalolou of the Kingdom of Morocco, both emphasized the importance of these meetings in strengthening good governance among Muslim nations. They noted that activities such as the plantation drive enhance solidarity and cooperation, vital in the collective fight against maladministration and human rights abuses.

Human Rights Commissioner for Azerbaijan, Sabina Aliyeva, stressed the importance of fortifying the concept of ombudsmanship through regular meetings and collaborative projects like the plantation initiative. These efforts provide a platform for exchanging ideas and best practices for better governance across the OIC member states.





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

In conclusion, the plantation drive by the OICOA delegations in Islamabad served as a meaningful gesture towards environmental conservation and highlighted the broader goals of promoting association's human rights and good governance. The Ombudsman Association OIC

continues to be a beacon of collaboration and support for its member countries, striving for just and rights-focused governance through shared knowledge and collective action.





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

STRENGTHENING BONDS AND GOVERNANCE: OIC DELEGATIONS MEET WITH ASIAN OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT IN PAKISTAN

In a significant step towards fostering international collaboration and understanding, the Ombudsman institutions from member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) embarked on a pivotal visit to meet the Honorable Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi, President of the Asian Ombudsman Association and the Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan. This visit was part of the broader context of the 10th Board of Directors' Meeting held in Pakistan, which saw active participation from nations such as Turkiye, Bahrain, Morocco, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, and Bulgaria. The meeting with Honorable Qureshi was not merely a formal engagement but a momentous occasion that symbolized the unity and shared commitment among the member countries towards enhancing governance and addressing human rights issues within their jurisdictions. The Executive Secretary of the OIC Ombudsman Association (OICOA), Almas Jovindah, also graced the event with his presence, underscoring the importance of this gathering in the broader context of OICOA's mission and objectives.



To commemorate this special visit, souvenirs were presented to the delegations by the Honorable Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan. These gifts, symbolizing the rich cultural heritage and hospitality of Pakistan, served as a gesture of goodwill and friendship, aiming to strengthen the bonds between the member nations and encourage continued cooperation.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER



During their interaction, discussions centered around various strategies to combat the common challenges of maladministration and human rights violations, emphasizing the role of Ombudsman institutions in promoting justice and equitable governance. The dialogue also highlighted the significance of regular meetings and exchanges among the member countries to share best practices and foster a collaborative approach towards addressing these issues. The visit to the President of the Asian Ombudsman Association underscored the collective efforts of the OICOA member countries in pursuing human rights and good governance. It reflected a commitment to unity, collaboration, and the sharing of knowledge and resources to address the challenges faced by their societies. Through such engagements, the OICOA continues to uphold its dedication to fostering international cooperation and promoting the principles of justice and equitable governance among its member nations.

By: Abdul Ghani

Mr. Abdul Ghani is currently serving as Editor OICOA Newsletter. He is also Assistant to Mr. Almas Ali Jovindah, the Executive Secretary OICOA and Advisor Federal Tax Ombudsman of Pakistan





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

TURKIYE

SPECIAL REPORT PREPARED BY THE OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTION OF TÜRKIYE ON GAZA: NAKBA OF HUMANITY-FROM THE WORLD'S LARGEST OPEN-AIR PRISON TO THE WORLD'S LARGEST CHILDREN'S CEMETERY.

The Ombudsman Institution of Türkiye is a constitutional institution for seeking legal remedies, established for the development of an accountable administration approach that respects human rights, which functions in accordance with law and fairness. Apart from handling applications, another function of the Ombudsman Institution is to prepare special reports taking into account the applications submitted to the Institution, in accordance with Law No. 6328 on the Ombudsman subparagraph (d) of the first paragraph of the Article 7 titled "Duties of the Chief Ombudsman and the Ombudsmen" stating "Preparing a special report on the matters requiring attention without waiting for the annual report." In this regard, the Ombudsman Institution of Türkiye prepared a special report on **Gaza: Nakba of Humanity-From the World's Largest Open-Air Prison to the World's Largest Children's Cemetery.**

The Ombudsman Institution, which is a constitutional institution for seeking legal remedies, has prepared many special reports within a 10-year period. Most recently, in 2021, the special report titled "Pushbacks in the Aegean Sea and 'Pushback' of Human Rights" was made public and was shared with national and international interlocutors. Because the reports prepared by the Ombudsman Institution are taken into account as expert opinions in human



rights proceedings and can be referred by those concerned to prove the allegations of violation of rights. Israel's attacks against civilians in Gaza after October 7 have led to an unprecedented humanitarian disaster. The Gaza Strip was considered the "world's largest open-air prison" because it had been under Israeli blockade from sea, land and air for 16 years. Today, Gaza, where one child is killed every ten minutes, has turned into "the world's largest children's cemetery", in the words of the UN Secretary General. In just four months, Israel dropped 45 thousand bombs and missiles of more than 65 thousand tons that is equivalent to three atomic bombs, on Gaza, which has the world's



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

highest population density, where 2.2 million Palestinians live in an area of only 365 km². In Israeli attacks, the number of people killed has exceeded 29 thousand and the number of injured has exceeded 69 thousand. At least 12,700 of those killed were children and 8,600 were women. This figure does not include the missing people of more than 7 thousand, out of which 4 thousand 700 women and children whose bodies are thought to remain among the ruins. Nearly 2 million people who were forcibly displaced in Gaza had to shelter in refugee camps and tents. While the people of Gaza try to protect themselves from Israel's endless attacks and bombardments, they also struggle with severe hunger, thirst and epidemics, as they prevent the entry of food, water and the most basic human needs. Since Israel has blocked the entry of basic foods, babies and children have begun to die not only from bombs but in the strictest sense of the word, die from starvation.

In our special report titled "Gaza: From The World's Largest Open-Air Prison To The World's Largest Children's Cemetery", the actions of the Israeli administration and security forces, which caused serious violations of international humanitarian law and which should be investigated as war, genocide and crimes against humanity, are included in detail. The information we provide in our report clearly reveals the crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by Israel in the Gaza Strip, including the crime of genocide.

The Special Report, which consists of three parts, comprise the detection of violation of rights in 10 areas and legal assessment on the crimes against war, genocide and humanity including the historical background before October 7 of the Israeli attacks that have been

carried out against the Palestinian people in the form of continuous destruction, death and displacement for the last





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

76 years, as well as topics related to mass punishment and mass murder of civilians, 70% of whom are children and women, the killing of healthcare workers, journalists and members of aid organizations who have immunity even in wartime, the forced migration of people within and outside the country, the use of prohibited white phosphorus bombs, the arbitrary detention, the torture The Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and ill-treatment in custody, the withholding of access to food, water and the most basic human needs after October 7, which international humanitarian law clearly prohibits and foresees to be punished as war crimes.

The meeting of report was Grand Assembly of the 27th of 2024. The Parliament Kurtulmuş, Ombudsman of OICOA Malkoç, and Ambassador Africa to Dipuo made the meeting. was held with participation number of Representatives diplomatic high-level of Turkish



introductory this special realized at the National Türkiye on February Speaker of the Mr. Numan Chief and President Mr. Şeref the of South Türkiye Ms. Letsatsi-Duba speeches at The meeting the of a large Ambassadors, of Officials and representative authorities.



The introductory meeting of this special report was realized at the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye on the 27th of February 2024. The Speaker of the Parliament Mr. Numan Kurtulmuş, Chief Ombudsman and President of OICOA Mr. Şeref Malkoç, and the Ambassador of South Africa to Türkiye Ms. Dipuo Letsatsi-Duba made speeches at the meeting. The meeting was held with the participation of a large number of Ambassadors, Representatives of diplomatic missions, high-level Officials and representatives of Turkish authorities.

Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye and President of OICOA Mr. Şeref Malkoç mentioned in his speech that, the Ombudsman Institution documented in the report what has happened in Palestine since 7 October, which is experiencing the largest occupation, in light of the international conventions without adding comments.

Mr. Malkoç added that: "The Palestinian Territories have been occupied by Israel for 100 years. The Gaza Strip has been turned into the "world's largest open-air prison" because it had been under Israeli blockade from sea, land and



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

air for 16 years. An unprecedented disaster and massacre is happening in front of the world. In brief, human rights, law, democracy, justice, humanity have unfortunately failed in Gaza. We will send this report to the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court and all human rights institutions around the world, and also to the universities, faculties and to non-governmental organizations on human rights.” At the end of the programme, participants visited the photo exhibition on “Gaza: World’s Largest Children’s Cemetery”.



Chief Ombudsman and President of OICOA Mr. Malkoç also realized bilateral meetings with Ambassadors of South Africa, Ambassador of Palestine, Ambassador of Venezuela and Ambassador of Brazil to Türkiye. Mr. Malkoç introduced the special report to the Ambassadors.



Moreover, the special report of the Ombudsman Institution of Türkiye has also been distributed at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum to the representatives of nearly 200 countries by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Türkiye. In our special report titled “Gaza: From The World’s Largest Open-Air Prison To The World’s Largest Children’s Cemetery”, the actions of the Israeli administration and security forces, which caused serious violations of international humanitarian law and which should be investigated as war, genocide and crimes against humanity, are included in detail. The information we provide in our report clearly reveals the crimes against humanity and war crimes committed by Israel in the Gaza Strip, including the crime of genocide.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

MOROCCO

THE POWER OF PROPOSAL IN THE ACTION OF OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTIONS: AN IMPORTANT MECHANISM TO SUPPORT ADMINISTRATIVE AND LEGAL REFORM

In various comparative systems, Mediators and Ombudsmans are vested with the power to influence the human rights landscape and public service-oriented policies, which give a special character to such institutions, as an alternative mechanism within the institutional system likely to defend fundamental rights and freedoms, to spread legal culture and raise legal awareness, as well as a supportive tool for deep-rooting the principles of justice and equity and embodying the sovereignty of the rule of law.

To this end, Mediators and Ombudsmans dispose of a myriad of intervention possibilities that allow them not only to defend public-service rights, but more importantly, enable them to influence administrative procedures, legal provisions, and typical attitudes of common occurrences within public service bodies. Henceforth, they have a power of proposal contributing to administrative and legislative reform.



In this context, the topic, “The Power of Proposal in the Action of Ombudsman Institutions: An Important Mechanism to Support Administrative and Legal Reform,” was the title of an international webinar held by the Institution of the Mediator of the Kingdom of Morocco in cooperation with the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) on Wednesday, November 15, 2023, with the participation of Mediators and Ombudsmans from various African, European, Asian, and American continents in their capacity as

Members of the IOI as well as members of other regional networks: the Association of Francophone Ombudsmans and Mediators (AOMF), the Association of Mediterranean Ombudsmans (AOM) and the Association of Ombudsmans of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OICOA). It was also an opportunity to share experiences, opinions, and viewpoints, to raise debate on a topic that contributes to supporting the effectiveness of citizens’ rights, and to consider the power of proposal as a central element that lays great importance on the action of mediators and reflects the strength of their intervention’s mechanisms to back up administrative and legislative reforms. Rather, it was meant to bring about positive systemic change, enhance the principles of good governance, and strengthen justice and the rule of law, while hinging on the



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

international referential portrayed by the UN Resolution on: The role of Ombudsman institutions and Mediators in promoting and protecting human rights, good governance, and the rule of law.” “In this context, the interventions made reflected the standpoints, experiences and good practices of a group of mediation institutions concerning the path and outcome of enacting such power in these institutions, while calling to mind the legal framework that governs their intervention mechanisms and vests them with the power to propose. Such interventions inspired many guiding ideas for good and effective use of the proposal power mechanism.

Important and fruitful outcomes were issued by this webinar, which underscored the importance of the power of proposal in supporting the Mediators’ values around the globe through circulating a commonly believed message, for the sake of offering a high standing to the citizens and human being as well as deep-rooting the principles of justice and equity, while bearing in mind that the secret of its success hinges chiefly on professionalism, realism, neutrality and clear vision.

Among the most important of these outputs, we may mention the following:

Raising the mechanism of the power of proposal of Mediators and Ombudsman as a topic for debate constitutes an opportunity to set light on the available alternatives to serve the effectiveness of rights, an issue at stake that calls on Mediators to produce innovative and renewed preconceptions that support joint action and elaborate an intersectional view while transcending the traditional oversight of the public service, and establishing an accompanying work characterized by daring and new proposals. The power of proposal, alongside other mechanisms, is a unique tool for the autonomous presence of Ombudsman institutions within the composition of rights and freedoms’ defenders. The power of proposal, as a soft power, contributes to the actual active participation of the mediators’ missions in creating an impact while providing public-service-oriented rights through submitting proposals concerning administrative procedures, legislative requirements, and administrative procedures and amend the latter if they do not bring about justice for the public-service users.

The issue should be tackled not only from the angle of pushing the administration to implement the law but rather to influence the public human rights arena within the State and having, on the onset, an administration that abides by the principles of justice and equity in the public service practices. It is only through resorting to this mechanism that the role of Ombudsman institutions in achieving and embodying the rule of law can be asserted. It should be recalled that own initiative (own motion) intervention is viewed as one of the important mechanisms for backing up the power of proposal, and therefore, emphasis shall be put on its proper use. The legal framework of such power grants prerogatives to submit proposals in the administrative and legislative field in order to modernize public facilities. Moreover, professional practice also requires that focus be made on the conclusions of the power of proposal, the requirements for its implementation, and how to interact with it. In a nutshell, this webinar stood, par excellence, for an intellectual breeding grounds, in which Mediators and Ombudsmans expressed ideas and introduced constructive proposal initiatives to develop their missions and prerogatives through engaging in societal reform, on the whole, and in various endeavors that aim at moralizing the public service to deal with new as well as potential challenges and expectations.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

IRAN

EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES OF THE GENERAL INSPECTION ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN WITH ITS SINGAPOREAN COUNTERPART

The Office of Investigation and Prosecution of Administrative Corrupt Practices of Singapore welcomes the holding of a joint meeting with the General Inspection Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to the public relations report of the General Inspection Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the first online meeting of the inspection organization's experience exchange with the Office of Investigation and Prosecution of Administrative Corrupt Practices of the Republic of Singapore, both sides presented their experiences in the field of fighting corruption. At the beginning of this meeting, the Singaporean side presented discussions about the history of the structure, powers and achievements of their organization.

In the continuation of this meeting, the General Inspection Organization of Iran also presented materials regarding the foundations of the structure, legal powers and the main work axes of the General Inspection Organization.

In the continuation of this bilateral meeting, both sides expressed their questions and doubts regarding the topics raised, and the areas of similarity and difference between the activities of the two institutions were examined and clarified in a more transparent manner.



At the end of this meeting, the Singaporean side, while honoring the activities of the General Inspection Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, noted that the scope and depth of its activities are much greater and deeper than that of the Office of Investigation and Prosecution of Administrative Corrupt Practices of the Republic of Singapore, and continued communication with the Inspection Organization in various fields is useful. They knew and declared their readiness to continue these communications and meetings under the leadership of the Foreign Ministry of the two countries.

Also, the General Inspection Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran praised the achievements of the Singaporean side, pointing to the favorable position of this country in the global transparency statistics, and considered it to be the result of actions that were partly organized by the Office of Investigation and Prosecution of Administrative Corrupt Practices of the Republic of Singapore.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

In conclusion, it was emphasized on the continuation of these meetings, especially in the field of exchange of experiences and cooperation in scientific and educational fields. Unveiling the Strategic Information Technology Project of Inspection (Sahba), the President of the General Inspection Organization of the Islamic Republic of IRAN: inspections must be smart.

According to the public relations report of the General Inspection Organization of IRAN, Justice Dr. KHODAEIAN in the unveiling ceremony of the strategic information technology project of the General Inspection Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran, mentioned serving the people as one of the blessings of God Almighty. The President of the General Inspection Organization of IRAN said that the supervision of the organization should be such that if there is a malfunction in any part of the country, the system will immediately warn.

Dr. KHODAEIAN mentioned the information technology center of each device as the intelligent brain of that device and demanded to attract the most elite forces in these fields. In this ceremony, the strategic deputy and resource management of the organization, the director general of the office of technology and information analysis, the director general of the office of the directorate of public relations and international cooperation and employees of the technology field were present. During this ceremony, the strategic information technology project of the General Inspection Organization known as Sahba was unveiled.





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

BAHRAIN

INTERIOR MINISTER RECEIVES OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, received Ghada Hamid Habib Secretary-General of Ombudsman. The minister received a copy of the Ombudsman's annual report. He directed the Interior Ministry authorities concerned to respond to the ministry-related points in the report to promote community partnership and cooperation with all national organisations and NGOs. The minister commended the Ombudsmen's commitment to professionalism through objectivity and impartiality to reinforce justice.

He emphasised Bahrain's efforts to develop the community and humanitarian initiatives to promote human rights and criminal justice, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, supported by Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

The minister highlighted the significance of promoting transparency and accountability principles and constructive interaction with regulatory authorities within the state of organisations and law.



In the presence of His Excellency Sheikh Khalid bin Rashid Al Khalifa, the Director General of the General Directorate of Verdict Enforcement and Alternative Sentencing at the Ministry of Interior; Ambassador Dr. Yousif Abdul Kareem Bucheeri, the Director General of Legal Affairs and Human Rights at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Engineer Ali Ahmed Al Derazi, the head of the National Institution for Human Rights, Mr. Mohammed Khalid Al Haza'a, Acting Attorney General and Head of the Special Investigations Unit, and Colonel Wael Al Saleh from the Ministry of Interior. In where, Her Excellency Ambassador Dr. Arwa Hassan Al Sayed, Head of the Human Rights Affairs Sector at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs moderated the session.

During the seminar, Her Excellency the Ombudswoman highlighted the main competencies and the dynamic roles conducted by the Independent Ombudsman Office within the mechanisms of national redress for the purpose of respecting, promoting, and protecting Human Rights. Additionally, Her Excellency have also emphasized the recent achievements accomplished by the Independent Ombudsman Office.



OMBUDSMAN OFFICE OF THE TURKISH REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN CYPRUS MS. VAROL ADDRESSED CONFERENCE ENTITLED " ROLE OF OMBUDSMAN IN PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON RELIGIOUS RIGHTS" IN DUBAI

Ms. Varol addressed the role of the Ombudsman in protecting religious rights with a focus on combating discrimination. Ombudsmen serve as vital independent public institutions or individuals in many countries with the purpose of safeguarding the rights and interests of citizens and society. Religious rights hold a significant FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI among these rights, and Ombudsmen FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI a crucial role in their protection.

First of all, what are religious rights and why are they so important? Religious rights include the freedom of individuals to worship according to their beliefs, perform religious rituals, change their faith, or express their beliefs. These rights are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international documents. Freedom of religion and belief is cornerstone of democratic societies, allowing people to freely practice their faith. Ombudsmen FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI a significant role in protecting these religious rights because they are independent and impartial. In cases where people's religious rights are violated, Ombudsmen can examine and investigate comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints, and ensure the protection of these rights. They also FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI an effective role in combating discrimination.

Discrimination is often associated with the violation of religious rights. Ombudsmen listen to the comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints of individuals who have experienced discrimination and evaluate these comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-



VIints. If discrimination exists, they identify it and take the necessary steps. They provide support to those who have experienced discrimination and work to uphold the principle of equality, thus contributing to a fair society based on the principle of equality.

Regarding the contribution of the Ombudsman in the context of our main topic, the Ombudsman Law contains the



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

following regulation that enables the Ombudsman to take action: Article 15, Paragraph 1 of the Ombudsman Law states:

"The Ombudsman can initiate an investigation on their own motion as a result of news published in the press, information obtained, and observations made as well as upon a personal submission of somebody who claims to have been subjected to injustice."

It is clear that anyone can submit their



complaint without any discrimination, and the sufferings of individuals who have been subjected to violations are resolved through the work undertaken.

Another regulation related to this issue can be found in Article 9 of the Ombudsman Law:

"The Ombudsman is authorized to review, investigate, and report on the conformity with the current legislation and the appropriateness of the services provided by government agencies, institutions, and public bodies that have executive powers in the TRNC, and to warn the relevant authorities."

As can be seen from these regulations, every single violation complaint is accepted without any discrimination and necessary action is being taken. Upon the completion of the necessary procedure, the authorities are warned and measures are taken to rectify violations if any are identified.

In conclusion, Ombudsmen play a crucial role in protecting religious rights and combating discrimination. Their independence, impartiality, and competence to empower are of great importance for the protection of religious rights and the establishment of social justice. Therefore, we should support the work of Ombudsmen and ensure the protection of religious rights for all.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

OIC OMBUDSMAN FROM PAKISTAN

FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN

FCCI members briefed about Federal Ombudsman's performance

Numbers of complaints filed with the office of Federal Ombudsman have recorded a phenomenal increase due to the confidence of people enjoyed by this institution, said Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, Federal Ombudsman.

Addressing a meeting in Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he said that during last year the federal ombudsman office resolved as many as 194,000



[Read More on Page 39](#)

FEDERAL TAX OMBUDSMAN

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Intention Drive Took FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI at Federal Tax Ombudsman of Pakistan

In a significant display of unity and collaboration, delegations from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Ombudsman Association (OICOA) participated in a FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Intention drive at the Federal Tax Ombudsman Secretariat in Islamabad, Pakistan. This event not only highlighted the association's commitment to environmental stewardship but also served as a precursor to the 10th Board of Directors' Meeting.



[Read More on Page 40](#)

FOSP AH

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CREATING SAFE & INCLUSIVE CAMPUSES

"Inviolability of dignity of a person is enshrined in Article 14 of the Constitution of Pakistan and harassment being a violation of a person's dignity, must be eliminated from all organisations". Federal Ombudsman against Harassment, Ms. Fauzia Viqar, emphasized this fundamental right as Chief Guest at the International Conference on 'Creating Safe and Inclusive



[Read More on Page 41](#)



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

BANKING OMBUDSMAN

PRESIDENT DIRECTS BANKS TO REFUND LOST AMOUNT TO VICTIMS OF ONLINE SCAMS

President asks Banking Mohtasib to take up matter of banking frauds with State Bank of Pakistan Rejecting the representations of two private banks, President Dr Arif Alvi Sunday directed them to pay the lost amount to the victims of online scams.



[Read More on Page 42](#)

INSURANCE OMBUDSMAN

FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN FOR INSURANCE ORGANIZES NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Federal Ombudsman for Insurance organized a two-day 4th annual national conference at its regional office, focusing on reviewing the department's performance over the previous and current years.

The conference also included a briefing on the redressal of public complaints related to insurance companies. The event was attended by all regional heads of the department, advisors, consultants, and CEOs of insurance companies, says a press release issued here on Friday.



[Read More on Page 44](#)

FEDERAL TAX OMBUDSMAN

FTO DECIDES RS 17,742.16 MILLION REFUND CLAIMS IN 2023

The Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) has addressed the grievances of the taxpayers by processing 8,963 cases with an implementation status of 94.07% during 2023 as compared to 73.29% last year. Likewise, requests for refund claims were decided to the tune of Rs. 17,742.16 million in 2023 and the due amount was paid to the aggrieved taxpayers by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). This was highlighted by the Federal Tax Ombudsman Asif Mahmood Jah, who called on President Dr. Arif Alvi.



[Read More on Page 45](#)



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

AZAD JAMMU AND KASHMIR OMBUDSMAN

THE OMBUDSMAN OF AZAD JAMMU AND KASHMIR CHAUDHRY MUHAMMAD NASEEM REACHED LAHORE

The Ombudsman of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Muhammad Naseem reached Lahore to participate in the 29th FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Inning meeting held in the Ombudsman Secretariat Punjab, Lahore on January 03, 2023 regarding the upcoming 10th OICOA Board of Directors meeting which will be organized by Forum of Pakistan in the last week of January 2024.



[Read More on Page 46](#)

PUNJAB OMBUDSMAN

PENDING EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS OF RS. 31 LAC THOUSAND PAID TO 70 STUDENTS ON THE DIRECTIONS OF PUNJAB OMBUDSMAN

On the orders of the Punjab Ombudsman Major Azam Suleman Khan (R) pending educational scholarships of Rs. 31 lac thousand were paid to 70 students. While 14 applicants were paid Rs. One crore 78 lacs towards their pending OSD post arrears and OSD posts were provided through the diligent efforts of the Ombudsman Punjab, the Punjab Government servants Benevolent Fund Board, the Administrative Officer of the Provincial Welfare Fund Punjab, the Deputy Commissioner of Toba Tek Singh, and the Secretary of the Punjab Workers Welfare Fund, educational scholarships totaling 31 lac 8 thousand rupees have been disbursed to 70 deserving students.



[Read More on Page 47](#)

PUNJAB OMBUDSPERSON

PUNJAB OMBUDSPERSON CONDUCTED REGULAR AWARENESS SESSIONS TO CURB HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORK FEB 2024, VOLUME-L, ISSUE-VI

February in Punjab proved to be a month brimming with awareness, action, and education on a crucial topic: preventing harassment in the workFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI and upholding women's property rights. At the forefront of these initiatives was Ms. Nabila Khan, the esteemed Ombudsperson Punjab. Ms. Nabila Khan FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI played a pivotal role in amplifying awareness and promoting action against workFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI harassment.



[Read More on Page 48](#)



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

SINDH OMBUDSMAN

MILLIONS OF RUPEES WERE DISBURSED TO EFFECTED EMPLOYEES OF SINDH ON THE DIRECTIONS OF SINDH OMBUDSMAN.

Mr. Ghulam Nabi Mallah, retired Malaria Supervisor approached this Secretariat in February 2022 stating that he retired from service on 22.07.2021 but still waiting for payment of service dues viz G.P. Fund, Gratuity & Leave Encashment etc. from District Accounts Officer Naushahro Feroze. On constant persuasion by this Secretariat, he received his dues amounting to Rs. 1,163,510/.



[Read More on Page 49](#)

OMBUDSPERSON, KPK

TWO-DAY TRAINING SESSION CONDUCTED AT KPK OMBUDSPERSON SECRETARIAT

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Protection of Women against Harassment at the WorkFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Act, 2010 is a crucial piece of legislation that aims to create a safer and more respectful work environment for women in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, its effectiveness depends on comprehensive awareness campaigns, robust enforcement, and a commitment from all stakeholders



[Read More on Page 50](#)

SINDH OMBUDSPERSON

EMPOWERING WOMEN AND ENSURING SAFETY STRESSED BY PHWW HONORABLE SHAHNAWAZ TARIQ

In a recent event on March 8, Justice (R) Shah Nawaz Tariq, the Provincial Ombudsman of Protection Against Harassment of Women At WorkFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI" along with PHWW Director Saeed Ahmed Sheikh, and the Coordinator of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan Sindh, Farzana Abbasi, to highlight the urgent need for empowering women and ensuring their safety in the workFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI across all sectors.



[Read More on Page 51](#)



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

OICOA IN MEDIA



Gaza report dispatched worldwide by Turkiye's Ombudsman Institution

As Israel's deadly offensive on the Gaza Strip enters its sixth month, an official report from Turkiye on the situation in the Palestinian enclave has been dispatched worldwide, aiming to serve as evidence in the prosecution of those responsible for "massacre, war crimes, and genocide", according to the country's chief Ombudsman, Anadolu Agency reports. The document, titled "Gaza: A Special Report on the Catastrophe of Humanity", was prepared by Turkiye's Ombudsman Institution and introduced at the Turkish Parliament last week. It has now been sent to other legislatures, as well as international institutions and organisations including the UN Security Council, European Parliament, Council of Europe, Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the International Criminal Court (ICC). Speaking to Anadolu Chief Ombudsman, Serif Malkoc, underlined the importance of the report documenting the "genocide" that Israel has waged in Gaza since 7 October, adding that copies had been distributed to the representatives of nearly 200 countries at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum (ADF) on 1-3 March. "I believe that this report will be used as evidence in courts where those responsible for the massacre, war crimes, and genocide in Gaza will be tried," Malkoc said.

'World's largest child cemetery'

Since the report was made public, ambassadors from many countries have asked for appointments to discuss its contents. Malkoc noted, "South Africa's ambassador said they would forward the report to their President to be sent to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). In addition, a team headed by our Ombudsman, Fatma Benli Yalcin, sent the report electronically to all human rights defenders, ombuds, human rights commissions in countries' parliaments and judgment institutions worldwide. "Since 7 October, Gaza has turned into the world's largest children's cemetery," the official lamented. There is no other example in the world of the massacre unfolding in Gaza, he said, adding, "They dropped bombs on Gaza three times more powerful than the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki." "Nearly 70,000 tons of bombs," he stressed. Criticising the US and many European nations for maintaining their support for Israel, Malkoc also pointed out that millions around the world "who have a conscience and value human dignity are taking to the streets" to protest Israel's onslaught. With the events in Gaza, the international system set up by Europe and the US after World War II has collapsed, along with all their theories and jurisprudence on human rights, he asserted. Arguing that the world needs a new breath of fresh air on human rights thinking, Malkoc said, "Our President's (Recep Tayyip Erdogan) statement that, 'The world is bigger than five', and the fact that it is gaining attention all over the world is the most concrete indicator of this." He was referring to Erdogan's oft-repeated slogan for UN reform, "The world is bigger than five", pointing to the unrepresentative nature of the UN Security Council's five permanent, veto-wielding members. "After 7 October the law on human rights in Gaza, Palestine and the world will be reconsidered," said Malkoc. "In Turkiye human rights institutions like us have great responsibility. We have prepared this report to fulfil this responsibility."

'Being a woman in Gaza'

Calling attention to the suffering of women and children in Gaza since 7 October, Ombudswoman Yalcin also underlined that Israel has been committing genocide in Gaza over the past five months. Speaking to Anadolu, she noted that according to the UN Population Fund, pregnant women face the risk of miscarriage at rates of up to 300 per cent as they have no access to hospital care. Yalcin pointed out that the 50,000 women who were pregnant in Gaza on 7 October could not "give birth in a healthy way" amid the lack of food and clean water, with many among the 2 million displaced since the offensive began. The official further said, "That is why there are so many child deaths. There are even many reports of women going through c-sections without anaesthesia," said the official. "Things are getting much worse for women in Gaza," she warned. "This 8 March, we need to proclaim this to the whole world." Yalcin emphasised that the number of women killed in Gaza has exceeded 7,500 and urged women's organisations around the world to raise their voices on International Women's Day to say, "Stop the massacre of women and children in Gaza." "We have prepared a brochure on what being a woman is like in Gaza and we will present it at the Commission on the Status of Women to be held at the UN," she said, adding that the Turkish Parliament's Committee on Equal Opportunity for Women and Men would also take part in this presentation. Stating that women and children have been targeted and killed by Israeli snipers in Gaza, she said the Ombudsman Institution's report document this and other aspects of the situation in the besieged Territory. Yalcin also underlined that what is happening in Gaza is the result of Israel's impunity. "If the world does not oppose this with a louder voice, if Palestine is not recognised as an independent State in the UN, if an immediate ceasefire is not achieved, all the rights violations taking place in the world will become crimes in which Governments worldwide are complicit," she warned.

She said only "existing cases" had been used in the report to document the genocide Yalcin pointed out that more than a thousand children had their arms and legs amputated in Gaza, mentioning that children were operated on without anaesthesia due to Israeli attacks on hospitals. "Every day in Gaza, 10 children's arms and legs are amputated without anaesthesia," she said. "On 8 March, everyone who thinks about Gaza should ask themselves the question, 'What would I do if I were the mother of that child?' Israel has waged a deadly military offensive on the Gaza Strip since a 7 October, 2023 Hamas attack which Tel Aviv said killed nearly 1,200 people. However, since then, it has been revealed by Haaretz that helicopters and tanks of the Israeli army had, in fact, killed many of the 1,139 soldiers and civilians claimed by Israel to have been killed by the Palestinian Resistance.

More than 30,700 Palestinians have since been killed and over 72,000 others injured amid mass destruction and shortages of necessities. Israel has also imposed a crippling blockade on the Gaza Strip, leaving its population, particularly residents of northern Gaza, on the verge of starvation. The Israeli war has pushed 85 per cent of Gaza's population into internal displacement amid acute shortages of food, clean water and medicine, while 60 per cent of the enclave's infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed, according to the UN. Israel stands accused of genocide at the International Court of Justice. An interim ruling in January ordered Tel Aviv to stop genocidal acts and take measures to guarantee that humanitarian assistance is provided to civilians in Gaza.



Ombudsman asks Commission about respect for fundamental rights in EU agreement with Tunisia

The Ombudsman is asking whether the Commission conducted a human rights impact assessment before signing the agreement, if periodic reviews will be conducted during implementation, and if there are criteria for suspending funding in case of human rights violations.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the EU and Tunisia was signed in July and it includes provisions related to combating irregular migration as well as EU financial support for improving Tunisia's management of its borders. Under the MoU, the EU will provide EUR 105 million to support the Tunisian coastguard and border management.

As concerns have been raised about the agreement, the Ombudsman has asked the European Commission how it plans to ensure respect for human rights in migration-related actions resulting from this recent agreement. The Ombudsman has asked the Commission to reply by 13 December 2023.



The Ombudsman of the Kingdom, Mohamed Benailiou, held talks on Tuesday in Rabat with his Mozambican counterpart, Isaque Chande, currently leading an official delegation on a visit to Morocco. This meeting is part of the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two institutions on August 7, 2017, states a press release from the Ombudsman of the Kingdom's Institution, adding that Benailiou expressed his satisfaction with the level of cooperation between the two institutions. After reviewing the results of the three previous visits made by the Mozambican Ombudsman and the delegation accompanying him to the Institution's headquarters, Benailiou gave an overview of the attributions, missions and working mechanisms of the Institution, which works to promote administrative management based on good governance and transparency and to lay the foundations of a modern administration at the service of the citizen, the same source stresses.

The meeting also offered an opportunity to address the delegation's questions and provide information about the Institution's operation, as well as its main achievements in terms of digitizing services for citizens, addressing complaints, and implementing recommendations and proposals. The press release notes that the Kingdom's ombudsman also discussed the actions taken to enhance the Institution's presence in the media and promote its image among the general public. In his turn, the Mozambique Ombudsman explained the responsibilities and working methods of his institution, which are similar to those of the Kingdom's, inviting by the same occasion Benailiou to visit Mozambique.

Both parties expressed satisfaction with the quality of their cooperation relations and their determination to further develop and strengthen them, adds the same source, highlighting their aim to elevate their partnership to the level of the friendship that exists between Morocco and Mozambique. As part of his visit, Mozambique's Defender of Justice (Ombudsman) will visit several governance bodies in order to learn about Morocco's experience and achievements in this field, the press release concludes.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

THE LIBYA
OBSERVER
When you need to know

Administrative Control Authority suspends head of Rapid Transport Company from work

The Chairman of the Administrative Control Authority, Abdullah Qadrbuh, decided on Tuesday to suspend the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the General Rapid Transport Company from work. The decision attributed the suspension to public interest reasons and requirements, pursuant to the provisions of Article 31 of Law No. 20 of 2013 AD establishing the Administrative Control Authority, its amendments, and its executive regulations, without clarifying further details.

Since the beginning of 2024, the Administrative Control Authority has issued suspension decisions against the Chargé d'Affaires of the Libyan Embassy in Niger, the Assistant Director of the Office of the Islamic Dawa Society in Niger, the Chargé d'Affaires of the Libyan Embassy in Syria, and three employees of the Ministry of Economy.



Interior Minister receives Ombudsman annual report

Manama, Mar. 11 (BNA): General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Minister of Interior, received Ghada Hamid Habib Secretary-General of Ombudsman. The minister received a copy of the Ombudsman's annual report. He directed the Interior Ministry authorities concerned to respond to the ministry-related points in the report to promote community partnership and cooperation with all national organisations and NGOs.

The minister commended the Ombudsmen's commitment to professionalism through objectivity and impartiality to reinforce justice. He emphasised Bahrain's efforts to develop the community and humanitarian initiatives to promote human rights and criminal justice, led by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, supported by Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister. The minister highlighted the significance of promoting transparency and accountability principles and constructive interaction with regulatory authorities within the state of organisations and law. General Shaikh Rashid bin Abdullah noted the development of regulatory authorities' work mechanisms to enhance performance and services. The Ombudsmen's Secretary-General thanked the minister for his keenness to further enhance cooperation.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

AZERNEWS

Human Rights Commissioner: Last year, 29,411 appeals received by ombudsman

In 2023, 29,411 appeals were received by the Azerbaijani ombudsman. These appeals were reviewed and answered in accordance with constitutional law, Azernews reports, citing Sabina Aliyeva, the human rights commissioner (ombudsman) of the Azerbaijani Republic, as she said in an interview with journalists. "In February of this year, under the Constitutional law, the report of the human rights commissioner (ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan on human rights activities conducted last year was submitted to the head of state. I will present that report in the Milli Majlis (Parliament) today," Sabina Aliyeva said. She said that 76 proposals and recommendations were mentioned in the report. These proposals and recommendations effectively ensure and reliably protect the rights of various population groups.

ARAB NEWS

Kingdom opens first court to enforce rulings on corruption in govt bodies

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Board of Grievances has opened the first court in Riyadh tasked solely with enforcing judicial rulings on tackling corruption in government bodies. Khalid bin Mohammed Al-Yousef, the president of the Board of Grievances and chairman of the Saudi Administrative Judicial Council, inaugurated the court in Riyadh on Monday.

The event took place in the presence of several ministers and members of the judiciary, the Saudi Press Agency reported. Al-Yousef said: "The existence and activation of the enforcement system concerning court rulings and administrative documents achieve judicial security." He added that the court would ensure the protection of the country's investment environment and economy, which would contribute to a "prosperous life for the Kingdom's citizens and residents."

Those public officials who fail to implement the rulings of the court could be fined or imprisoned, he added. The inauguration ceremony showcased the workings of the court including various digital platforms being used to ensure the speedy resolution of cases.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

OICOA AT GLANCE





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

FCCI MEMBERS BRIEFED ABOUT FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN'S PERFORMANCE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

He said that earlier this office was receiving only 20,000 comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints while its members have now jumped to 194,000 which are expected to cross the limit of 2-2.5 lacs within the next year.

He said that these comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints are positively resolved within 60 days while the percentage of resolved comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints is 99.9. He said that 9 million expatriates are sending precious foreign exchange of \$30 billion per annum and hence efforts have been made to solve their problems on top priority basis. He said that 1.5 lac comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints are also included in the total comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints resolved by this office.

He said that appeals against the decisions of the federal ombudsman could be lodged with the President of Pakistan but their percentage is hardly 0.4. He said that article 34 is being exploited to resolve the comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints which could not fall within the purview of the federal ombudsman. "In this connection Alternate Dispute Resolution mechanism has been evolved", he said and added that the consent of both parties is imperative for this system. He said that five sector specific ombudsmen are working in Pakistan but their total comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints are far less than those received by the federal ombudsman. He said that this office provided much needed relief regarding 180 federal departments and divisions of the country.

He said that he has been elected as President of Asian Ombudsman Association (AOA) because of the excellent performance of this office. He expressed satisfaction that the federal ombudsman office was working without any political interference and his election as President AOA is a privilege for Pakistan. He appreciated the

contribution of the business community and said that he wants to digitize this system to facilitate businessmen. Earlier Dr Sajjad Arshad Acting President FCCI welcomed the guests and introduced Faisalabad and FCCI. He said that Faisalabad is the second largest industrial hub of Pakistan which is contributing 60% toward textile exports of the country in addition to providing jobs to the 40% workforce.

About FCCI, he said that it has 9300 members who belong to 118 different sectors and sub sectors of the economy. He said that chamber tries to resolve the problems of the business community at district, provincial and federal level.





OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

He said that FCCI members are also contributing their role in social welfare and very recently they built the damaged houses of the flood victims. He said that Faisalabad has renowned research institutions including UAF, NIBGE, NIAB and AARI which are FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI, playing a key role in the uplift of the agriculture sector.

He also congratulated Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi on his election as President AOA and hoped that he would FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI, play his dynamic role in smashing the idols of the departmental tyranny.

Former President Sheikh Ashfaq Ahmad, Rana Sikandar Azam, former President FWCCI Madam Nighat Shahid, Sanaullah Khan Niazi, Muhammad Azhar Chaudhry, Malik Amin, Farooq Dogar and Dr Jaffar Hasan Mubarak participated in the question-answer session.

Later Vice President Haji Muhammad Aslam Bhalli offered vote of thanks while Dr Sajjad Arshad presented FCCI memento to Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi Federal Ombudsman. Qureshi also presented an insignia of Federal Ombudsman to Dr Sajjad Arshad Acting President FCCI. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi also recorded his impression in FCCI visitor's book. He also addressed the media persons before leaving the FCCI.

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI INTRODUCTION DRIVE TOOK FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI AT FEDERAL TAX OMBUDSMAN OF PAKISTAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

During this environmental initiative, the OICOA showcased its dedication to not just governance and human rights issues but also to contributing positively to the global challenge of climate change. The FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Introduction drive symbolized a commitment to sustainability and environmental protection, aligning with the broader objectives of promoting good governance and human rights across member countries. President Seref Malkov of the OIC Ombudsman Association highlighted the significance of such collaborative efforts.

He reiterated the association's aim to expand its membership and strengthen its resolve in combating human rights violations, which are prevalent across Muslim countries. Through initiatives like the FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Introduction drive, the OICOA fosters a sense of unity and shared responsibility among its members.

The Secretary General of the Ombudsman of the Ministry of Interior Bahrain, Gada Hameed, and Mediator Mohammed Benalolou of the Kingdom of Morocco, both emphasized the importance of these meetings in strengthening good governance among Muslim nations.

They noted that activities such as the FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Introduction drive enhance solidarity and cooperation, vital in the collective fight against maladministration and human rights abuses.

Human Rights Commissioner for Azerbaijan, Sabina Aliyeva, stressed the importance of fortifying the concept of ombudsmanship through regular meetings and collaborative projects like the FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Introduction initiative. These efforts provide a FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI platform for exchanging ideas and best practices for better governance across the OIC member states.



CONTINUATION

In conclusion, the FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Intation drive by the OICOA delegations in Islamabad served as a meaningful gesture towards environmental conservation and highlighted the association's broader goals of promoting human rights and good governance. The OIC Ombudsman Association continues to be a beacon of collaboration and support for its member countries, striving for just and rights-focused governance through shared knowledge and collective action.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CREATING SAFE & INCLUSIVE CAMPUSES

“Inviolability of dignity of a person is enshrined in Article 14 of the Constitution of Pakistan and harassment being a violation of a person’s dignity, must be eliminated from all organisations”. Federal Ombudsperson against Harassment, Ms. Fauzia Viqar, emphasized this fundamental right as Chief Guest at the International Conference on ‘Creating Safe and Inclusive Campuses in Pakistan’ held at Quaid-i-Azam University. The Conference was organised by the team of Safe and Inclusive Campuses project of the QAU in collaboration with the British Council Pakistan.

At the Conference, Ms. Viqar spoke about the importance of providing a conducive learning environment to the students of Pakistan and elaborated on the collaboration between the Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection against

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24



Harassment and the Higher Education Commission for creating and maintaining a safe and thriving environment for faculty members and students. Ms. Viqar expressed hope that the QAU-British Council initiative would strengthen protections for students and raise awareness amongst them regarding the prevailing issue of harassment at University Campuses. She urged the students to report harassment if experienced by them or if seen by them.

President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday stressed improving the status of women by providing them with an enabling work environment to increase their economic participation. The president highlighted that following the rights granted by Islam, it was the responsibility of the society to give them their due share and create a safer society for them. He expressed these views while chairing a meeting during his visit to the Federal Ombudsman Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment at Work FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI (FOSPAH) Head Office, in Islamabad.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION



Federal Ombudsperson for Protection Against Harassment at Work FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Vice Fauzia Viqar, Secretary FOSPAH Arif Karim, advisers and officials of FOSPAH attended the meeting. President Alvi called for taking appropriate legislative measures at the federal and provincial levels to ensure the protection of women's property rights, besides discouraging the transfer of property by women to their family members due to pressures. He said that he was conducting personal hearings of the

ombudspersons' cases to expedite the process of justice. He stated that highlighting important decisions of FOSPAH in harassment and women's property cases through media would help increase awareness about the role of the Ombudsman. The president said that police at the local level needed to improve their response to women's complaints in property cases, adding that police officials should be educated about the provisions of the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act, 2020. He urged FOSPAH to further increase its outreach and efficiency to provide speedy justice to women in harassment and property cases at their doorsteps. He also advised FOSPAH to enhance its linkages with NGOs and women's rights organizations in Pakistan to seek suggestions for improving women's status. The president said that providing a harassment-free and enabling environment to women in both the public and private sectors was essential for their economic and social empowerment. He underlined the need for increased engagements with the business community, particularly the chambers of commerce and industries, to provide employment to women as well as sensitize them about the importance and provisions of the Protection against Harassment at Work Act, 2010. The president appreciated FOSPAH for its role in providing speedy justice to women, adding that women-led institutions like FOSPAH were critical in addressing the challenges being faced by women at work as well as in acquiring their due property rights.

PRESIDENT DIRECTS BANKS TO REFUND LOST AMOUNT TO VICTIMS OF ONLINE SCAMS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

President asks Banking Mohtasib to take up matter of banking frauds with State Bank of Pakistan. Rejecting the representations of two private banks, President Dr Arif Alvi Sunday directed them to pay the lost amount to the victims of online scams. The president asked Banking Mohtasib to take up the matter of banking frauds with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to get the essential standard operating procedures (SOPs) issued, so that the proven fraudulent persons' CNICs could be blacklisted,



CONTINUATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI at the central negative list, besides ensuring that no banking facility could be extended to them by the banking industry.

He directed the banks to pay Rs1.9 million and Rs0.744 million respectively to their customers who fell victim to online banking fraud at the hands of fraudsters, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a statement. As per the details, Qaiser Mehmood who was holding an account with a private bank received a call from a number resembling the bank's helpline and the caller advised him to activate his disabled digital banking app. Mehmood activated his app, after which Rs2 million were transferred from his account through multiple transactions. Similarly, Brigadier (retd) Muhammad Arif Shaikh received a call from fraudsters asking him for his banking credentials to remove some technical flaws from his account. Later, an amount of Rs 994,000 was transferred from his account through 19 transactions.

They had asked their respective banks to refund their money but to no avail. Feeling aggrieved, they separately approached the Banking Ombudsman to get relief. The Ombudsman directed the banks to refund the lost amounts to the customers. The banks, then, separately filed representations against the Ombudsman's decisions with the President.

The president held personal hearing of the cases, and having listened to the parties and going



through the available record, decided the cases in the comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIinants' favour. He observed that the banks were found non-compliant with the SBP's directives regarding the implementation of monitoring systems to detect fraudulent transactions. He said that multiple consecutive transactions were conducted but it did not raise alerts and allowed the money to pass through the system. He noted that the banks also failed to establish the legitimacy of transactions in terms of Section 41 of the Payment System and Electronic Fund Transfers Act, 2007.

The president said that the banks failed to submit any proof of compliance with the directions of SBP despite being given ample opportunity and concluded that malpractice and maladministration stood established on the part of the banks and they were liable to make good the financial loss of the comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIinants. President Alvi, therefore, rejected the representations of the private banks and directed them to pay Rs1,998,500 and Rs744,000 to the comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIinants.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

FEDERAL OMBUDSMAN FOR INSURANCE ORGANIZES NATIONAL CONFERENCE

CONTINUEU FROM PAGE 25

The Federal Ombudsman for Insurance organized a two-day 4th annual national conference at its regional office, focusing on reviewing the department's performance over the previous and current years. The conference also included a briefing on the redressal of public comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints related to insurance companies. The event was attended by all regional heads of the department, advisors, consultants, and CEOs of insurance companies, says a press release issued here on Friday. Chaired by the Federal Ombudsman for Insurance Dr. Khawar Jameel and hosted by Regional Advisor in-charge



Lahore Abdul Basit Khan, the conference emphasized the need to expedite measures for providing quick and efficient justice to comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIinants regarding insurance companies. Abdul Basit Khan highlighted that the Federal Ombudsman for Insurance is ensuring relief within 60 days by addressing comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints from the business community and other comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIinants. Special efforts are being made to raise public awareness in this regard, he added.

Dr. Khawar Jameel and Abdul Basit Khan revealed that 5736 comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints were registered with the Federal Ombudsman for Insurance in the last year, with 5017 comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints being immediately resolved. They also noted that comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIinants received relief amounting to 2.73 billion rupees during the year. Abdul Basit Khan pointed out that comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints related to insurance companies have increased due to the public awareness campaigns of the Federal Ombudsman for Insurance. He mentioned that last year, 4740 comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints were registered, while this year the number has risen to 5736, indicating increased public awareness.

Dr. Khawar Jameel and Abdul Basit Khan stressed the gradual creation and enhancement of awareness among insurance policyholders. Abdul Basit Khan and other Regional Advisor-in-charges of the Federal Ombudsman reiterated their commitment to ensuring the swift delivery of justice to consumers. The conference also discussed the possibility of increasing the number of regional offices from 7 and establishing them in more cities for the benefit of more customers. Honorary shields were awarded to officers of the Federal Ombudsman for Insurance and representatives of insurance companies.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

FTO DECIDES RS 17,742.16 MILLION REFUND CLAIMS IN 2023

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

The Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) has addressed the grievances of the taxpayers by processing 8,963 cases with an implementation status of 94.07% during 2023 as compared to 73.29% last year. Likewise,

requests for refund claims of Rs. 17,742.16 million in paid to the aggrieved Board of Revenue (FBR). Federal Tax Ombudsman Asif President Dr Arif Alvi and Report 2023 at Aiwan-e-Sadr

The Federal Tax Ombudsman FTO's overall performance facilitate taxpayers and grievances against officials.



were also decided to the tune 2023 and the due amount was taxpayers by the Federal This was highlighted by the Mehmood Jah, who called on presented FTO's Annual on Wednesday.

briefed the president about and its key initiatives to expeditiously address their maladministration of tax

He stated that concerted efforts were undertaken to enhance FTO's outreach by launching awareness campaigns and opening up regional offices in the country. He informed that Honorary Advisors had also been appointed abroad to facilitate overseas Pakistanis in the USA, Canada, Sweden, UAE, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

He added that FTO had appointed leading businessmen as Honorary Advisors from various Chambers of Commerce and Industries to facilitate the business community. "To ensure prompt response against the maladministration of tax authorities, a mobile App has been developed enabling aggrieved comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIinants to lodge comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints and check their status using mobile/smart devices", he stated. He apprised that highly informative training sessions had also been conducted to enhance the professional skills and expertise of Ombudsman institutions in the country.

While appreciating the performance of FTO, the president said that FTO had done an excellent job by processing a record number of cases and providing refunds worth Rs Rs17,742.16 million to taxpayers. He remarked that the institution of FTO needed to be further strengthened as it was providing free-of-cost and prompt justice to aggrieved taxpayers. He called for using the latest technology for seamless service delivery and timely disposal of taxpayers' comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints to improve the country's tax regime. He said that FTO had effectively contributed to promoting good governance in the country. It is worth stating that the FTO is a quasi-judicial forum, mandated to diagnose, investigate, redress and rectify any injustice or maladministration done to a person by the functionaries administering federal tax laws. It aims at enhancing the overall satisfaction of the taxpayers and strengthening their trust in the system.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

THE OMBUDSMAN OF AZAD JAMMU AND KAHMIR CHAUDHRY MUHAMMAD NASEEM REACHED LAHORE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

The Ombudsman of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Muhammad Naseem reached Lahore to participate in the 29th FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI meeting held in the Ombudsman Secretariat Punjab, Lahore on January 03, 2023 regarding the upcoming 10th OICOA Board of Directors meeting which will be organized by Forum of Pakistan in the last week of January 2024.



The Ombudsman Azad Jammu and Kashmir Chaudhry Muhammad Naseem visited District Mirpur AJK and heard the public complaints against Development Authority Mirpur at Industrial Rest House Mirpur AJK on January 05, 2024.

The Ombudsman of Azad Jammu and Kashmir visited Lahore and heard public complaints at Kashmir Colony Ferozewala, Lahore. Cite visit and record inspection were also done.



CONTINUATION

Pending Educational Scholarships of Rs. 31 Lac Thousand paid to 70 Students on the Directions of Punjab Ombudsman

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

On the orders of the Punjab Ombudsman Major Azam Suleman Khan (R) pending educational scholarships of Rs. 31 lac thousand were paid to 70 students. While 14 applicants were paid Rs. One crore 78 lacs towards their pending OSD post arrears and OSD posts were provided

Through the diligent efforts of the Ombudsman Punjab, the Punjab Government Servants Benevolent Fund Board, the Administrative Officer of the Provincial Welfare Fund Punjab, the Deputy Commissioner of Toba Tek Singh, and the Secretary of the Punjab Workers Welfare Fund, educational scholarships totaling 31 lac 8 thousand rupees have been disbursed to 70 deserving students.



On the orders of the Punjab Ombudsman Major Azam Suleman Khan (R) pending educational scholarships of Rs. 31 lac thousand were paid to 70 students. While 14 applicants were paid Rs. One crore 78 lacs towards their pending OSD post arrears and OSD posts were provided. Through the diligent efforts of the Ombudsman Punjab, the Punjab Government Servants Benevolent Fund Board, the Administrative Officer of the Provincial Welfare Fund Punjab, the Deputy Commissioner of Toba Tek Singh, and the Secretary of the Punjab Workers Welfare Fund, educational scholarships totaling 31 lac 8 thousand rupees have been disbursed to 70 deserving students. In this regard, The Ombudsman Punjab, Major Azam Suleman Khan (R), facilitated the disbursement of

educational scholarships totaling 31 lacs 8 thousand rupees to 70 students.

Responding to applicants from various districts who faced delays in receiving scholarships, the Ombudsman intervened and directed relevant institutions to promptly release the pending funds. Additionally, under Major Azam Suleman Khan's guidance, various provincial departments disbursed I crore 78 lacs rupees to 14 applicants for overdue arrears on OSD posts. Jobs on OSD posts were also secured for them, ensuring the protection of their legal rights. Grateful petitioners from different districts expressed appreciation for the Ombudsman's effective resolution of their grievances.

- On the orders of Ombudsman Punjab, pending pension dues, farewell grant, dues, financial aid, burial grant, monthly grant, GP fund and pending dues of 5 crore 54 lacs 66 thousand 117 rupees were paid to 40 comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints.

According to The Details, On The Order Of The Ombudsman Punjab Major Azam Suleman Khan (R), The Punjab Government Servants Fund Board, Secretary Punjab Workers Welfare Fund, Marriage Grant Punjab Workers Welfare Fund, Education Department Secretary



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

School Education Department, District Health Authority, Local Government And Community Development, Welfare Fund Board, District

lac 8 thousand rupees have been disbursed to 70 deserving students. Health Authority, District Education Authority, GP Fund, District Accounts Officer, Chief Officer, Municipal Corporation and Punjab workers Welfare Board 40 applicants from different district whose cases are pending due to various reasons. They have been provided legal relief of Rs 5 crore 54 lacs 66 thousand 117 in their pending applications. In these cases, relief was provided to the families of deceased government employees by the Office of the Punjab Ombudsman, including payment of arrears of employees' family grant and GP fund as well as pension dues, arrears of monthly assistance from Welfare Fund Board, death grant. Citizens from different district are thankful to Ombudsman Punjab Major Azam Suleman Khan (R) for taking an effective role in resolving their grievances.

PUNJAB OMBUDSPERSON CONDUCTED REGULAR AWARENESS SESSIONS TO CURB HARASSMENT OF WOMEN AT WORKFEB 2024, VOLUME-L, ISSUE-VICE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

February in Punjab proved to be a month brimming with awareness, action, and education on a crucial topic: preventing harassment in the workFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIce and upholding women's property rights. At the forefront of these initiatives was Ms. Nabila Khan, the esteemed Ombudsperson Punjab. Ms. Nabila Khan FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIed a pivotal role in amplifying awareness and promoting action against workFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIce harassment. Her leadership likely spurred a surge in comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIints and cases reaching the Ombudsperson's office. News reports indicate Ms. Khan has addressed and resolved thousands of such cases, ensuring countless women received their rightful due.



Furthermore, Ms. Nabila Khan's efforts seem to have created a more open and accessible environment for women seeking recourse. The Ombudsperson's office, under her guidance, has transformed into a FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIform where women can confidently seek help regarding property rights, a historically challenging issue for many. It is evident that Ms. Nabila Khan's dedication and commitment as the Ombudsperson Punjab significantly contributed to a February marked by progress towards gender equality in the workFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIce and property ownership rights for women.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

MILLIONS OF RUPEES WERE DISBURSED TO EFFECTED EMPLOYEES OF SINDH ON THE DIRECTIONS OF SINDH OMBUDSMAN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

Mr. Ghulam Nabi Mallah, retired Malaria Supervisor approached this Secretariat in February 2022 stating that he retired from service on 22.07.2021 but still waiting for payment of service dues viz G.P. Fund, Gratuity & Leave Encashment etc. from District Accounts Officer Naushahro Feroze. On constant persuasion by this Secretariat, he received his dues amounting to Rs. 1,163,510/-. Mst. Janul Wd/o Ali Muhammad Soomro filed a comFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VIint in August 2023 against District Education Office (E,S&HS) Jacobabad and Deputy Manager, State Life Insurance Corporation, Pakistan for their alleged delay in payment of dues towards group insurance in respect of her husband who expired on 27.04.2019. Due to prompt action by Regional Director, Jacobabad, she received Rs. 2,100,000/- towards group insurance and while acknowledging the efforts made by Ombudsman Office expressed her thankfulness.

A call on meeting with Honourable Governor Sindh was held at Governor House followed by Dinner. During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on working of Provincial Ombudsman Sindh and worldwide Ombudsman-ship.





CONTINUATION

TWO-DAY TRAINING SESSION CONDUCTED AT KPK OMBUDSPERSON SECRETARIAT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Protection of Women against Harassment at the WorkFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI Act, 2010 is a crucial piece of legislation that aims to create a safer and more respectful work environment for women in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. However, its effectiveness depends on comprehensive awareness campaigns, robust enforcement, and a commitment from all stakeholders, including employers, employees, and authorities, to eliminate workFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI harassment and protect the rights and dignity of female workers. It represents a significant stride towards gender equality in the workFEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Apart from that, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Enforcement of Women's Property Act, 2019, represents a crucial milestone in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in the province. However, its effective implementation, coupled with awareness campaigns and efforts to challenge entrenched cultural norms, will be necessary to ensure that women can fully exercise their property rights and reap the benefits of this legislation. It is a significant step forward in the ongoing struggle for gender equality and justice in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region. In this connection, a series of awareness sessions were conducted in different departments, such as Blue Veins, Muslim Hands, CERD, Govt Girls Middle Schools, Zaryab Colony, and Peshawar, to



propagate information about the two acts among the community members of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

A 2-day training workshop on land records for local commissioners of the KP Ombudsperson Secretariat was conducted on December 11 & 12, 2023, by DAI. The trainer briefed the participants about basic terminology in land records and the difference between settlement and revenue.

The Ombudsperson honoured the mega event that was a joint venture of NCA, Khwendo Kor, Elementary and Secondary Education Department, and Ombudsperson, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on December 8, 2023, at Monal, Peshawar. On December 21, 2023, a workshop was arranged by the Legal Aid Society to evaluate the role of the Ombudsperson office in protecting women's property rights under the 2019 law.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

The objective of the workshop was to discuss other connected legislation passed by the province of KP protecting women's property rights, including matrimonial property rights.

More than 35 participants from the Ombudsperson office and local commissioners associated with the Ombudsperson office participated in the workshop. The LAS team was present at the event. Ms. Nuzhat Taskeen (Senior Legal Officer) welcomed the initiative and shared KP Journey towards women property rights through different legislation. The registrar of the Ombudsperson, Mr. Masood Afridi, thanked all the participants and LAS for their active participation. The staff of the Ombudsperson office highlighted challenges encountered during legal proceedings to ensure and protect women's rights to property and suggested measures for improving the prevailing system.

On December 22, 2023, National Working Women Day was celebrated by female staff of the Ombudsperson office. The women working in different departments of Benevolent Fund Building were invited or gathered to celebrate the day and pay tribute to their contribution to boosting the prosperity of society.

EMPOWERING WOMEN AND ENSURING SAFETY STRESSED BY PHWW HONORABLE SHAHNAWAZ TARIQ

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

In a recent event on March 8, Justice (R) Shah Nawaz Tariq, the Provincial Ombudsman of Protection Against Harassment of Women At Work, along with PHWW Director Saeed Ahmed Sheikh, and the Coordinator of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan Sindh, Farzana Abbasi, to highlight the urgent need for empowering women and ensuring their safety in the work, across all sectors.

The distinguished panel emphasized the significance of fostering an environment that encourages women's participation and secures their well-being. They underscored the importance of granting women the permission to work fearlessly while simultaneously addressing the need to make them strong and ensuring timely protection.

Provincial Ombudsman, Saeed Ahmed Sheikh, outlined the institution's commitment to safeguarding the rights of women in Sindh, particularly in cases of harassment. He stressed the pivotal role of the Ombudsman in providing justice to the oppressed and marginalized women of the province.



OICOA

OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION

FEB 2024, VOLUME-I, ISSUE-VI
NEWSLETTER

CONTINUATION

Former Chief Justice Shahnawaz Tariq expressed his confidence in the Ombudsman Institution's ability to deliver justice and protect women's rights effectively. He commended the institution for its dedicated efforts in ensuring a fair and just society for women in Sindh.



Justice Tariq further encouraged women not to fear anything and urged them to approach the Provincial Ombudsman with any complaint related to harassment. He

highlighted the importance of raising their voices and seeking protection against any form of harassment. The event also saw the participation of several other notable figures who shared their perspectives on women's empowerment and safety. The collective sentiment among the speakers was a resolute commitment to creating an environment that not only promotes gender equality but actively protects and empowers women in every facet of society.

