

OIC OMBUDSMAN ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



October 2024



Top news

Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ombudsman and UNDP Jointly Organized International Forum of Ombudsman

An International Forum of Ombudsmen themed "Climate Change and Human Rights: The role of Ombudspersons and National Human Rights Institutions" jointly organized by UNDP Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijan's Commissioner for Human Rights..



Specialized Training on Best Practices of Ombudsmanship for General Secretariat of Ombudsperson of Bahrain Organized by OIC Ombudsman Secretariat

From September 28 to October 4, a delegation from the Bahrain Ombudsman Institution will embark on a significant visit to Pakistan, aimed at enhancing cooperation and knowledge exchange among OICOA member institutions.



Chief Ombudsman Türkiye Honourable Şeref Malkoç Hails Türkiye's Role in Returning of Ukrainian Prisoners of war

Türkiye remains an active mediator in the issue of releasing prisoners of war or hostages. Ankara acts through its Ombudsman, Şeref Malkoç, the Ambassador of Ukraine to Türkiye, Vasyl Bodnar, in an interview with RBC-Ukraine, stated.



What's inside

Message from the President	02
Message from the Secretary General	03
Message from the Executive Secretary	04
International Forum of Ombudsman	05
Bahrainian Delegation	06
Training Session	08
Activities of OICOA Members	10
OIC Ombudsman of Pakistan	18
OICOA in the Media	29
OICOA at a Glance	33

Editorial team

Tauseef Ahmed Qureshi
Abdul Ghani

Designer

Aun Sherazi

Integrity and Anti-Corruption Authority of Jordan Signed MoU with Emirates Accounting Agency in the UAE

The Integrity and Anti-Corruption Authority of Jordan signed today, a memorandum of understanding with the Emirates Accounting Agency in the United Arab Emirates, to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of fighting corruption.



Message From the President

Dear Esteemed Members,

As the President of the OIC Ombudsman Association and Chief Turkish Ombudsman, I recently attended the international conference on "Role of Ombudsman as Defender of Rights" at the invitation of Mr. Marino Fardelli, President of the National Coordination of Italian Ombudsman and Ombudsman of Lazio Region of Italy.

Speaking at the conference, I emphasized that 42 thousand innocent civilians have lost their lives in the Gaza massacres, with 70% of the victims being women and children. Our organization has published a special report, "Gaza: Great Catastrophe for Humanity," which contains evidence of massacres, human rights violations, and crimes against humanity in Gaza. This report has been sent to the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, and all international organizations and Ombudsmen.

These gatherings transcend mere meetings; they represent a convergence of shared visions dedicated to upholding the esteemed principles of Ombudsmanship on a global stage. Our collective ambition is to uphold justice, fairness, accountability, and the protection of human rights.

Furthermore, these meetings will highlight the significant role Islamic states play in strengthening the ethos of Ombudsmanship, sending a powerful message of unity, justice, and



equity worldwide.

Together, let's make these sessions a significant milestone for OICOA, paving the way for a global outreach resonating with the core principles of justice and equity.

Sincerely,
Seref MALKOC
(Chief Ombudsman of
the Republic of Türkiye)
President OICOA

Message From the Secretary General

Dear Esteemed OICOA Members,

I extend my warmest greetings to all members.

Recently, outgoing Palestinian Ambassador to Pakistan, H.E. Jawad Ahmed Rabei, visited OICOA Secretariat, demonstrating goodwill and diplomatic courtesy. I shared our deep concern about the dire situation in Gaza and atrocities committed against innocent Palestinians.

Ambassador Rabei also participated in a symbolic tree-planting ceremony at the OICOA Secretariat.

Dear members, the devastating attacks on Palestinian Muslims have persisted for 300 days, resulting in over 40,000 deaths and 79,061 injuries since October 7. We urge the UN and human rights organizations to bring perpetrators to justice. An immediate ceasefire is crucial, and international NGOs must be allowed to provide rescue, relief, and rehabilitation.

Together, with member countries' support, we can strengthen our association. May our actions be guided by justice, righteousness, and peace.

Sincerely,

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



Message From the Executive Secretary

Dear Members and Colleagues,

I am delighted to share the key highlights from our October newsletter, showcasing the remarkable achievements of OICOA member countries.

I especially extend my heartfelt admiration to Her Excellency Ms. Sabina Aliyeva, Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan, for successfully hosting the International Baku Forum of Ombudsmen. This esteemed event brought together a vast number of Ombudsmen worldwide, fostering valuable discussions on the impact of climate change on our rights.

My sincere gratitude also goes to Mr. Dott Marino Fardelli, President of the National Coordination of Italian Ombudsmen and Ombudsman of Lazio Region, for inviting prominent OIC member countries to the conference held in Casino Italy on "Role of Ombudsman as a Protector of Rights". Participation by the President OICOA Mr. Seref Malkoc and other worthy members reinforces our commitment to promoting dialogue and cooperation among the global Ombudsmen community, amplifying our collective influence worldwide.

I, on behalf of OICOA member countries, wish Mr. Dott Marino Fardelli best of luck for his candidacy as the European Mediator.

I am also proud to announce that a five-member delegation from the Ombudsman Institution of Bahrain recently visited Pakistan as part of OICOA's initiative to share best practices and enhance institutional capacity. This exchange



program has already facilitated successful visits between Morocco, Bahrain, and Pakistan, with reciprocal tours to follow.

Furthermore, OICOA Secretariat, in collaboration with the Federal Tax Ombudsman, successfully concluded a two-month internship program. This program welcomed six Indonesian law students studying in Pakistan, alongside local Pakistani students, promoting cross-cultural learning and exchange.

Warm regards,
Almas Ali Jovindah
Executive Secretary, OICOA

Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ombudsman and UNDP Jointly Organized International Forum of Ombudsman

An International Forum of Ombudsmen themed “Climate Change and Human Rights: The role of Ombudspersons and National Human Rights Institutions” jointly organized by UNDP Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijan's Commissioner for Human Rights Mrs. Sabina Aliyeva was held in Baku.



The event brought together over 60 ombudspersons and representatives from National Human Rights Institutions, state and government officials, representatives of international organizations, public figures, climate change and human rights experts from up to 30 countries to discuss impacts of global climate change in terms of human rights violations and to exchange existing positive experiences in the field.

The consequences of climate change negatively impacting the environment may lead to the emergence of more dangerous environmental problems for humanity and are not limited to the territory of one country or region, noted Mrs. Sabina Aliyeva, the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsperson) of Azerbaijan.



This forum serves as a platform not only for addressing the present challenges but also for nurturing future leaders, emphasized Ms. Alessandra Roccasalvo, the UNDP Resident Representative in Azerbaijan. Talking about the “Climate Change and Human Rights” essay competition organized in collaboration between UNDP and the Ombudsperson’s Office, Ms. Roccasalvo highlighted that energy, creativity, and fresh perspectives of young people remind us that their voices must be at the heart of climate action and the human rights discourse.

During the event, an award ceremony was held for the winners of the essay competition announced by UNDP and the Ombudsperson’s Office for students. At the end, the Declaration of the International Baku Forum of Ombudsmen was adopted.

OICOA's Active Participation in the International Ombudsman Conference on Role of Ombudsman as Defender of Human Rights– Cassino, Italy

Strengthening Ties: Bahrain Ombudsman Institution Delegation's Visit to Pakistan

The International Ombudsman Conference, held in Cassino, Italy, on 12-13 September 2024, proved to be a highly successful and impactful gathering, bringing together over 50 Ombudsmen and human rights defenders from around the world. Under the patronage of Marino Fardelli, President of the National Coordination of Italian Civic Defenders and Civic Defender of the Lazio Region, the conference highlighted Italy's continued commitment to advancing the global role of the Civic Defender and promoting the protection of human rights.



OICOA made its presence strongly felt at this significant conference, portraying its commitment to global cooperation and the safeguarding of citizens' rights. The association's participation was led by its President, Mr. Şeref Malkoç, Chief Ombudsman of the Republic of Türkiye, whose contributions emphasized the pivotal role Ombudsmen play in promoting accountability, justice, and human rights on the global stage. In his speech, Mr. Malkoç expressed his concern on the massacre in Gaza and strong violations of human rights. Mr. Malkoç's involvement not only highlighted the important work of OICOA but also reaffirmed the organization's dedication to strengthening democratic values and transparency in governance worldwide.

Ms. Sabina Aliyeva, Board Member of OICOA and Human Rights Commissioner of the Republic of Azerbaijan, was also a key participant at the conference. Her invaluable insights into the promotion of transparency, the fight against corruption, and the protection of human rights were integral to the discussions, reflecting the progressive role that Ombudsmen can play in advancing good governance.



Additionally, two OICOA Members from Pakistan namely Provincial Ombudsman of Sindh, Mr. Sohail Rajput and Provincial Ombudsman of Balochistan, Mr. Nazar Baloch participated in the conference. Mr. Sohail also presented a powerful presentation on "The Impact of Climate Change", focusing on the devastating 2022 floods in Sindh Province, Pakistan. His insights were well received and sparked important discussions on how Ombudsmen can play a critical role in tackling climate change and ensuring effective response mechanisms.

The active participation of OICOA and its distinguished members at the conference demonstrated the association's ongoing dedication to fostering collaboration among Ombudsmen worldwide. Through engaging in meaningful dialogue and sharing knowledge, OICOA continues to promote justice, fairness, and accountability in governance, while strengthening the international network of Ombudsmen.



Specialized Training on Best Practices of Ombudsmanship for General Secretariat of Ombudsperson of Bahrain Organized by OIC Ombudsman Secretariat

Strengthening Ties: Bahrain Ombudsman Institution Delegation's Visit to Pakistan

From September 28 to October 4, a delegation from the Bahrain Ombudsman Institution will embark on a significant visit to Pakistan, aimed at enhancing cooperation and knowledge exchange among OICOA member institutions. This visit promises to be a pivotal opportunity for fostering closer ties and improving the practices of ombudsman institutions across the region.

The delegation's itinerary includes an extensive training session tailored for officials from ombudsman institutions of OICOA members. These training sessions are designed to facilitate discussions on best practices, innovative approaches to dispute resolution, and effective mechanisms for protecting citizens' rights. By sharing insights and experiences, the participants aim to strengthen their capacities and enhance the effectiveness of their respective institutions.



In addition to the training sessions, the Bahraini delegation will visit various ombudsman institutions across Pakistan, providing an opportunity for direct interaction and collaboration. This exchange is crucial for building a robust network among OICOA members, promoting shared learning, and fostering a spirit of cooperation. Furthermore, the delegation will have the chance to explore some of Pakistan's iconic landmarks, deepening their understanding of the country's rich culture and heritage.

Overall, this visit marks a significant step towards solidifying partnerships among ombudsman institutions within OICOA. By focusing on collaboration and learning, we are paving the way for a more effective and unified approach to addressing the challenges faced by our communities. The engagement between Bahrain and Pakistan during this visit promises to yield lasting benefits for all involved, reinforcing the commitment to uphold justice and protect citizens' rights across our member states.

Training Session

Training Sessions Conducted for Bahrain Delegation at OIC Ombudsman Secretariat

The OIC Ombudsman Institution (OICOA) proudly hosted a delegation from the Bahrain Ombudsman Institution for a series of training sessions aimed at enhancing mutual cooperation and knowledge sharing among member institutions.

The first session was conducted by Dr. Arslam Subuctageen, Director General of Trainings at OICOA and Advisor to the Federal Tax Ombudsman. This session focused on best practices in ombudsman operations and the importance of effective grievance redressal mechanisms. Participants engaged in discussions that highlighted the significance of transparency and accountability in public service.



On October 1, 2024, a second training session was led by Mr. Khaldun ul Haq, Director General at OICOA. Mr. Haq's session emphasized strategic planning and operational excellence within ombudsman institutions, equipping the Bahraini delegates with the necessary skills to enhance their service delivery.



Additionally, an Advisor from the Banking Ombudsman visited the OICOA Secretariat to provide further insights and training tailored to the specific needs of the Bahrain delegation. This collaborative effort underscores the commitment of OICOA to foster a learning environment and to strengthen ties among its member institutions.



The visit from the Bahrain Ombudsman delegation signifies a growing interest in mutual cooperation and coordination within the OICOA framework. By sharing knowledge and experiences, member institutions are better positioned to address the challenges faced in their respective regions.

OICOA remains dedicated to supporting its members in their quest for excellence in public service and looks forward to further collaborative initiatives in the future.

MoU was signed Between General Secretariat of Ombudsman of Kingdom of Bahrain, and Ombudsman of Human Rights Commission of Republic of Azerbaijan

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the General Secretariat of the Ombudsman of the Kingdom of Bahrain, represented by Ms. Ghada Hamid Habib, Secretary-General, and the Ombudsman of the Human Rights Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan, represented by Ms. Sabina Aliyeva, Commissioner for Human Rights. This memorandum aims to enhance professional cooperation between the two parties through several means, such as exchanging expertise, building capacities, organizing workshops, and training

and development programs, in addition to considering grievances received from citizens of each country in the other country according to the jurisdiction of each institution, in addition to developing joint coordination between the two parties within the international and regional frameworks and structures that include



ombudsman bodies and institutions around the world.

On this occasion, Her Excellency Mrs. Ghada Hameed Habib stressed that General Secretariat of Ombudsman is strengthening its presence at all levels, regionally and internationally, which has earned it a prestigious position and great respect among ombudsman institutions, especially within the umbrella organizations of these institutions, such as the International Institute of Ombudsmen and the Ombudsman Association of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OICOA) of which the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Republic of Azerbaijan are members of the Board of Directors. She expressed her confidence in achieving direct benefit from attending such important international events, which in turn enhances the position of the Kingdom of Bahrain at the international level in terms of shedding light on its distinguished and advanced model in the methodology of respecting human rights in all their forms including the establishment of independent institutions and redress bodies that have proven their role in serving the public through integration with the efforts of all other executive bodies within the framework of a general and comprehensive strategy that has placed the Kingdom among the countries that respect human rights in text and application.

This came on the sidelines of the International Ombudsman Forum, which was held on October 2 in the Azerbaijani capital, Baku, under the title "Climate Change and Human Rights: The Role of Ombudsmen and National Human Rights Institutions". A delegation from the General Secretariat of Ombudsmen, headed by the Secretary-General, Her Excellency Mrs. Ghada Hamid Habib, participated in the international forum, which was held at the initiative of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Azerbaijan and was attended by more than 60 guests from about 30 countries, in addition to representatives of ombudsmen, high-level officials, representatives of civil society institutions, and many international organizations.

ACTIVITIES OF OICOA MEMBERS

Türkiye

Chief Ombudsman Türkiye Honourable Şeref Malkoç Hails Türkiye's Role in Returning of Ukrainian Prisoners of war



Türkiye remains an active mediator in the issue of releasing prisoners of war or hostages. Ankara acts through its Ombudsman, Şeref Malkoç, the Ambassador of Ukraine to Türkiye, Vasyl Bodnar, in an interview with RBC-Ukraine, stated. Bodnar explained that the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has established a department for mediation in the full-scale war in Ukraine.

Specifically, there is a multi-level dialogue regarding releasing prisoners and hostages. The key negotiations are between Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, as well as between the heads of the Office of the President, Ukraine's Ministry of Defense, and the MFA, and their Turkish counterparts. The appointment of Andriy Sybiha as head of Ukraine's MFA, who served as the Ambassador of Ukraine to Türkiye from 2016 to 2021, also plays a role. "He (ed.-The Minister) understands the priorities of the strategic partnership between Ukraine and Türkiye, the realities of Turkish politics, and the importance of deepening our cooperation," Bodnar added. Regarding prisoners of war, Türkiye also acts on the level of the Ombudsman. For example, at the end of March, Malkoç visited Ukraine. He met with the families of our prisoners of war and visited the places where Russian prisoners of war are held. "In July, the families of the Azovstal defenders visited Türkiye and met with Mr. Malkoç. He remains in dialogue with the Russian side, coordinating the terms and conditions of his visit to Russia to meet with our prisoners of war and resolve issues of their return," explained the Ambassador.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan Ombudsman Sabina Aliyeva Conducted Awareness Session for First parliamentary Elections held in all Territories of Azerbaijan

For the first time in 30 years, parliamentary elections are being held in all territories of Azerbaijan. Following the positive experience of the past years, the Office of the Ombudsman, under the pre-approved presentation plan, together with the Central Election Commission, organized wide awareness events in the entire territory of Azerbaijan." Sabina Aliyeva, the human rights commissioner (ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan, said these words in her statement to journalists.

"Also, monitoring was carried out, including the territories freed from occupation, and the election preparation process was kept in mind. Webcams and ramps are installed in most polling stations, and ballots printed in Braille are provided for visually impaired citizens," she added.

Meanwhile, the Ombudsman's Western Regional Centre, in collaboration with the Ganja branch of the Society of Disabled Women, organised a legal awareness-raising event on the topic of "The Role of the Ombudsman in Protecting the Rights of Persons with



Disabilities," Azernews reports, citing the Ombudsman office. Approved by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Ombudsman), the event was conducted within the framework of the implementation of the action plan for awareness-raising on the protection and promotion of human rights and freedoms for the year 2024. At the event, Sabuhi Abbasov, the head of the Ombudsman's Western Regional Centre, stated that protecting the rights of persons with disabilities is one of the main areas of the Ombudsman's activities and provided information on the activities carried out in this direction. Recent amendments to the Constitutional Law on the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan (Ombudsman) were also discussed, highlighting the expanded mandate of the Ombudsman in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and several other areas.

Bahrain

Honourable Ghada Hameed Habib met with Elizabeth Hattingh, US Political and Economic Counselor



During the meeting, Hattingh was briefed on the efforts of the Ombudsman's General Secretariat and its role in promoting human rights within correctional and detention centres, in collaboration with relevant authorities. She was also informed about the mechanisms for handling complaints and inquiries received by the general secretariat. The secretary general emphasised that the Ombudsman office adheres to a professional approach that incorporates specific standards in dealing with complaints, relying on evidence and information that is directly verified. She also expressed the secretariat's welcome for purposeful and positive communication with concerned entities and institutions, following the principle of transparency, and in pursuit of enhancing cooperation and the exchange of expertise.

Indonesia

Honourable Mokhammad Najih met with President of National Association of Smallholders Malaysia

Honourable Mokhammad Najih, Chairman of the Indonesian Ombudsman and a key board member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's Ombudsman Association (OICOA), recently met with Adzmi Hassan, President of the National Association of Smallholders Malaysia (Persatuan Kebangsaan Pekebun-Pekubun Kecil Malaysia - PKPKM), to discuss governance and sustainability in the Indonesian palm oil industry.



The high-level meeting took place in Kuala Lumpur, focusing on improving cross-border regulatory frameworks and the economic welfare of small-scale palm oil farmers. The discussion highlighted the need for enhanced cooperation between Indonesia and Malaysia, the two largest palm oil producers globally. Topics covered included governance improvements, sustainable farming practices, and challenges faced by smallholders, such as rising production costs and replanting difficulties. Najih emphasized the importance of transparency, labor rights, and environmental protection in ensuring the long-term viability of the palm oil sector. Adzmi Hassan also raised concerns about similar challenges faced by smallholders in Malaysia, particularly relating to increasing replanting costs and inconsistent pricing. The meeting aimed to align strategies and policies to support the broader goal of sustainable palm oil production across both nations, boosting economic outcomes and promoting better environmental practices.

Meanwhile, OIC Ombudsman Association Board Member and Chairman of Ombudsman of Indonesia, H.E. Mokhamamd Najih signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Local Government in the region of East Kalimantan Province and Central Java on 3rd October 2024 at the RI Ombudsman Office, South Jakarta. The Memorandum of Agreement was signed by the Chairman of Ombudsman of Indonesia with the Regional Heads containing an agreement on cooperation and collaboration to be done in connection with efforts to improve public service in each region.

Iran

The President of the General Inspection Organization of the Islamic Republic of IRAN on the Sidelines of the November 4 demonstration in a Press Gathering



The Exploitative Nature of the U.S. and the Occupying Regime of Israel has been exposed to the world / criticism of the U.S.'s Double Standards on Human Rights

According to the Public Relations Office of the General Inspection Organization, Justice Dr.Khodaeian, the President of GIO, spoke to reporters on the sidelines of the November 4 demonstration, emphasizing that, through the courage and sacrifices of the Resistance Front, the exploitative nature of the U.S. and the occupying regime of Israel has been unveiled for the world to see. He criticized the U.S.'s double standards regarding human rights.

He stated, "Under the eyes of the U.S. and the allies, over 50,000 innocent men, women, the elderly, and children are being massacred in Gaza, Lebanon, and Palestine. Yet, they remain silent while, on the other hand, proclaiming their support for human rights."

The President of the GIO added, "Thanks to the actions of the Resistance Front, their true nature has become clear to the world, and the global exploitation of human rights by imperialism has been exposed."

Libya

Chairman of Administrative Control Authority of Libya Conducted Emergency Meeting to Address Concerns Regarding Provision of Medicines and Supplies for Kidney Centers

An emergency meeting was held by the Chairman of the Administrative Control Authority of Libya, Mr. Abdullah Muhammad Qaderbough (OICOA Member) alongside key officials from the Medical Supply Committee and Financial Management. The purpose of the meeting was to address concerns regarding the provision of medicines and supplies for kidney centers, particularly the critical shortage of dialysis equipment. During the meeting, Mr. Qaderbough raised questions about the procurement process for these supplies and the existing crisis of dwindling stock in the warehouses. While the head of the unit assured that supply operations were functioning smoothly and meeting the demands of kidney centers, it was noted that corrective administrative and financial actions were required. The Chairman concluded by emphasizing the committee's legal responsibility to ensure proper management and compliance with laws and regulations.

Meanwhile, the head of the Administrative Control Authority of Libya, H.E. Abdullah Mohamed Qaderbough, attended the meeting held by the Prime Minister, Mr. Abdul Hamid Al-Dabiba, in the Cabinet Hall to follow up the implementation of the project (launch), aimed at organizing and matching electronic data with paper records. During the meeting, a photo presentation was presented illustrating the



stages that the project has gone through. Hopefully, it will be concluded with the phase of updating the database with the updates obtained after the completion of the insertion, matching and assembling works, and the verification and correction stage, according to the Director of Civil Services, who stated that "the number of offices that have completed the compliance and scanning processes are relative." 257 Civil Affairs Offices throughout Libya. The interest director also noted that "printing one million and eight hundred Libyan families, with a total percentage of up to 97% of the total number of families". On his part, the chairman of the body emphasizes the body's ongoing pursuit to promote integrity and transparency. The step of unifying and verifying data between the two electronic and paper versions would enhance information accuracy and contributes to sound decision-making.

Mozambique

Ombudsman of Mozambique Ms. Rabeca Matimele Visited Voice of Action Committee (CVA) Secretariat

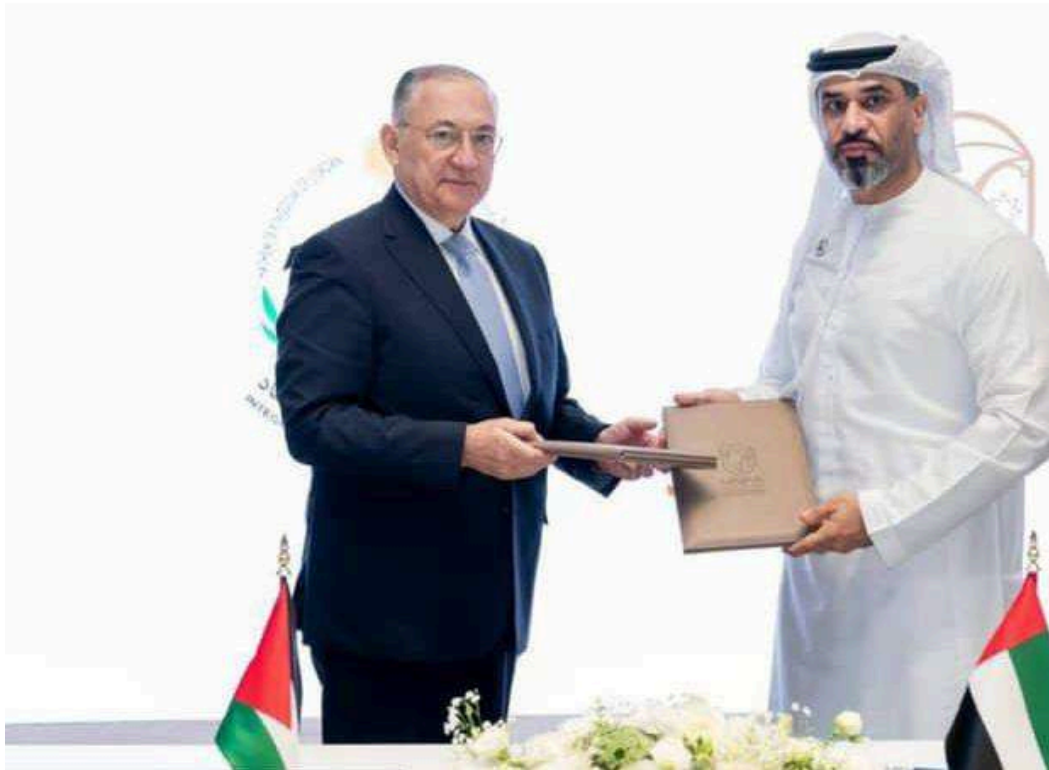
Within the scope of the activities taking place in the Province of Nampula, the Assessor of the Ombudsman of Mozambique (OICOA Member Institution), Ms. Rabeca Matimele visited with the Voice of Action Committee (CVA), guided by the World Vision of Ombudsman Office of Mozambique, with the objectives of hearing the problems faced by Nampula citizens and discussing possible outcomes. In her speech, Rabeca Matimele explained,



thoroughly, about the fact that the Ombudsman mediates conflicts between citizens and the public administration, to then challenge the attendees to overcome the fear of submitting complaints, because if they continue so, their rights will be constantly violated. The members of the CVA were surprised, after all, many even knew about the existence of the Office of Justice, an organ that, according to them, will become a strategic ally in the fight for the fundamental rights of citizens. Meanwhile, a delegation from the OICOA Member Institute, Office of Provider of Justice of Mozambique headed by the Secretary-General, Mario Seuane signed a MoU with the Office of Ombudsman of Angola. Under this agreement, a framework of a cooperation between the Officers of Mozambique and Angola was signed, for the exchange of experiences, sharing of information and knowledge on intervention strategies and administrative procedures and management of the international activity of the Law Officers, for the effective discharge of their role to defend citizens' rights, freedoms and fundamental guarantees. During a visit to South Africa from September 8 to 13, Mozambique's Ombudsman, Isaque Chande, focused on the challenges faced by Mozambicans living abroad, particularly regarding delays in obtaining essential documents like ID cards and passports. In a meeting with Mozambique's High Commissioner, Maria Lucas, in Pretoria, Chande discussed the difficulties that many undocumented Mozambicans face, such as the risk of imprisonment or extradition when approached by South African authorities. Chande met with over sixty Mozambican citizens to hear their concerns, which ranged from document delays to issues back home, such as land loss and infrastructure difficulties. He assured them that their concerns would be relayed to the appropriate authorities. High Commissioner Lucas emphasized the government's ongoing efforts to improve services and reduce processing times for ID documents. The visit underscored Mozambique's commitment to supporting its citizens abroad and addressing their needs, with Chande encouraging open dialogue to resolve their challenges.

Jordan

Integrity and Anti-Corruption Authority of Jordan Signed MoU with Emirates Accounting Agency in UAE



The Integrity and Anti-Corruption Authority of Jordan signed today, a memorandum of understanding with the Emirates Accounting Agency in the United Arab Emirates, to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of fighting corruption. The memorandum, signed by the Chairman of the Board of Integrity and Anti-Corruption, Dr. Mohannad Hijazi, and on the UAE side, the Chairman of the Emirates

Accounting Agency, Hamid Obaid Aboushabs, aims to support joint efforts in promoting transparency, accountability and integrity at all levels of public administration, and to identify areas of cooperation in accordance with the laws and policies implemented by both parties, to exchange experiences and experiences And good practices are related to the specialties of the both sides with regard to corruption prevention and fighting efforts. During the signing ceremony held in the Emirate capital Abu Dhabi and attended by the body, its members Dr. Saad Al-Shahab and Nasser Al-Qadi, and the director of the International Cooperation Unit, Islam Al-Baeena, confirmed that the signing of this memorandum embodies the depth of the brotherly relations that tie Jordan and the Emirates, and renews their joint commitment to promoting a culture of transparency and accountability. Intensifying international cooperation to fight corruption on a global scale, pointing out that the effects of corruption are no longer limited to the local issue but have already grown into a cross-border international phenomenon that negatively affects the economies of countries and communities. The memorandum also states to promote cooperation in the area of the exchange of knowledge and experiences on national best practices and procedures, capacity-building programs, development of innovative investigation tools and techniques, along with participation in studies and research on corruption prevention and combating measures.

OIC OMBUDSMAN OF PAKISTAN

Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan

Wafaqi Mohtasib Resolves 118,012 Complaints During Current Year

The Federal Ombudsman (Wafaqi Mohtasib) has resolved 118,012 complaints out of total 120,158 filed during 2024 against various departments. This was stated by Wafaqi Mohtasib Ejaz Ahmed Qureshi while addressing a meeting of regional officers and press conference here at the Provincial Secretariat on Monday. He said the ratio of filing complaints in the Mohtasib office was increased



13% as compared to the last year while resolution percentage also improved upto 8% this year. The ombudsman stated that compliance by the government departments upon the orders stood at 90 per cent which was a positive sign. Ejaz Qureshi said that the department provided relief more than 2.2 million families since 1983 through resolving their issues. He said the business community would be involved with an aim to resolve their problems regarding the government departments and a seminar would be organized in this regard at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce at the end of this month. He added that

open courts were being arranged in various areas resolved 2500 complaints at the doorstep of the common man. The Mohtasib said that delay in the compliance of the orders would not be tolerated and the investigation officers of the department should ensure timely redressal of complaints. He urged the media to play its due role to create awareness about the Ombudsman office among the public to seek relief.

Banking Ombudsman of Pakistan

Banking Mohtasib Gives Rs681 Million Relief to Customers Amid Rising Complaints in H1 2024

The Banking Mohtasib Pakistan (BMP) has announced substantial relief totaling Rs681.07 million for banking customers during the first half of 2024, resolving 12,568 complaints.

This relief marks an increase of Rs141 million compared to the same period last year, where approximately Rs539.72 million was disbursed to resolve over 12,015 complaints. During the current year, the BMP successfully resolved 96% of complaints amicably, amounting to 12,111 cases.

The remaining 4%, totaling 457 complaints, required formal hearings and orders from the Banking Mohtasib. Despite new measures introduced by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) from January 1, 2024, the number of complaints lodged against commercial banks remains significant. The Banking Mohtasib Office received a total of 14,058 new complaints by June 30, 2024, including 3,457 from the Prime Minister's Portal.

Sirajuddin Aziz, the Banking Mohtasib Pakistan, emphasized the importance of safeguarding personal and financial information, advising customers against sharing such details with third parties. In cases of suspicious calls, customers are urged to immediately contact their bank's branch or helpline for assistance.



Federal Tax Ombudsman of Pakistan

Transformation in Performance of the Tax Ombudsman's Institution

In a significant stride towards enhancing taxpayer's rights and fairness in tax administration, the Office of the Tax Ombudsman has experienced a remarkable transformation under the leadership of Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, the Hon'ble Federal Tax Ombudsman. Mr. Khalid Javed (Registrar to FTO) recently spoke to the media team, highlighting pivotal developments and achievements of the Federal Tax Ombudsman's office.

Established in the year 2000, the Federal Tax Ombudsman's office initially faced challenges with tepid responses and a limited number of complaints. However, the appointment of a seasoned Tax expert as Ombudsman sparked a notable turnaround. Under this new leadership, there has been a substantial increase in both, the institution and resolution of complaints. Notably, Section 33, of the FTO ordinance designed for informal resolutions of disputes, has witnessed a significant rise in its utilization by adopting an all-encompassing approach to addressing taxpayer issues promptly and justly.



In a recent media briefing, Mr. Khalid Javed, Registrar to the FTO, highlighted the remarkable progress made under Dr. Jah's leadership. According to the six-month report, the FTO Secretariat received 5947 complaints, of which 4928 have been disposed of. This is a significant improvement compared to 2023, where 3878 complaints were received, and 3923 were disposed of in the corresponding period.

The intervention of the FTO has been particularly impactful in expediting the settlement of delayed refunds. Over the last six months, a total of Rs 17,317.74 million has been refunded to aggrieved taxpayers, a significant increase from the Rs 6,316.5 million refunded in 2023. This transformation in the performance of the Tax Ombudsman's institution reflects a commitment to upholding taxpayer's rights and improving the efficiency of tax administration, setting a new standard for responsiveness and fairness in the processes.

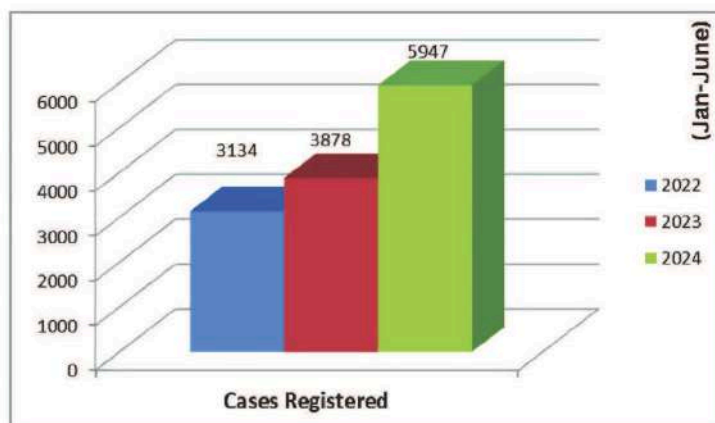
Dr. Jah, the Hon'ble Federal Tax Ombudsman, has adopted proactive measures by initiating all-time high number of own-motion investigations. These investigations target systemic maladministration within the federal tax administration, underscoring a strong commitment to rectify underlying issues affecting taxpayers at larger scale.

Central to this success is the expertise of a dedicated team of seasoned advisors who have played a crucial role in conducting extensive outreach activities. These efforts are aimed at educating taxpayers about their rights and the services provided by the Tax Ombudsman Secretariat thereby fostering greater awareness, trust, and confidence among the taxpayers. The Honorable FTO has been instrumental in spearheading initiatives that enhance taxpayer confidence in the institution. By actively addressing concerns and advocating for fairness in tax administration, the Tax Ombudsman institution has firmly established itself as a reliable premier organization for redressing grievances and ensuring equitable treatment.

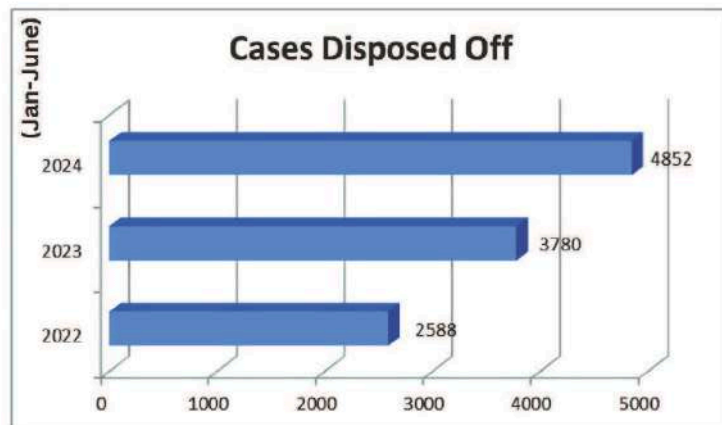
A recent landmark decision exemplifies the Advisors commitment to duty and resolution of tax hardships. Acting on several complaints under Section 10(1) of the Federal Tax Ombudsman Ordinance, the Hon'ble FTO issued recommendations to the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) regarding excessive withholding tax deductions made by the Punjab Council of Arts and Culture. The FTO's findings concluded that these deductions were unjustified as per departmental stance i-e u/s 156 of the ordinance. The recommendations ensured that tax deductions are aligned with the appropriate sections of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001 i-e section 153 (1) (b) and also includes instructions for withholding agents to refrain from withholding taxes in cases below the threshold of Rs. 30,000 thereby alleviating financial burdens on low-income individuals.

These developments underline a growing trust in the Tax Ombudsman’s capability to protect taxpayers’ rights and promote fair tax practices. The FTO Secretariat enhanced performance and expanded mandate underscore its evolving role as a pivotal institution overseeing federal tax practices, ensuring transparency, accountability, and fairness in tax administration. In a significant stride towards enhancing taxpayer’s rights and fairness in tax administration, the Office of the Tax Ombudsman has experienced a remarkable transformation under the leadership of Dr. Asif Mahmood Jah, the Hon’ble Federal Tax Ombudsman. Mr. Khalid Javed (Registrar to FTO) recently spoke to the media team, highlighting pivotal developments and achievements of the Federal Tax Ombudsman’s office.

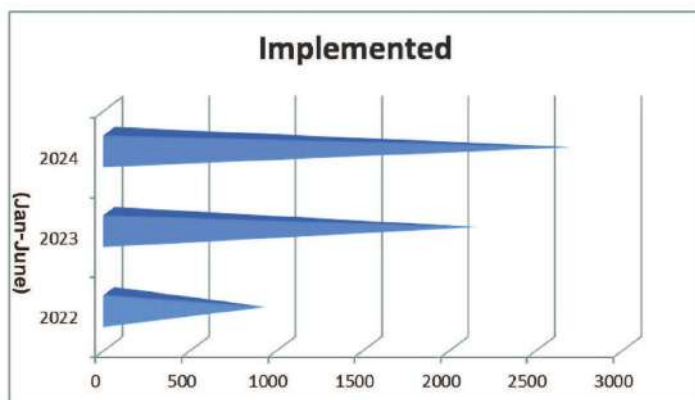
Cases Registered in the first six months of the years 2022-2024 (Jan-June)



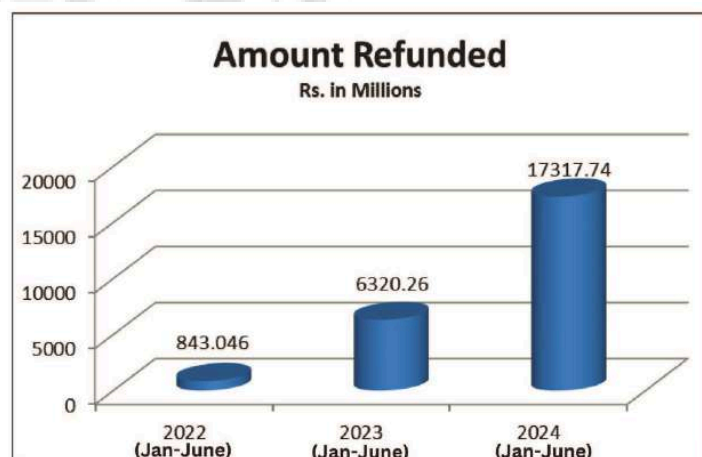
Cases Disposed off in the first six months of the years 2022-2024 (Jan-June)



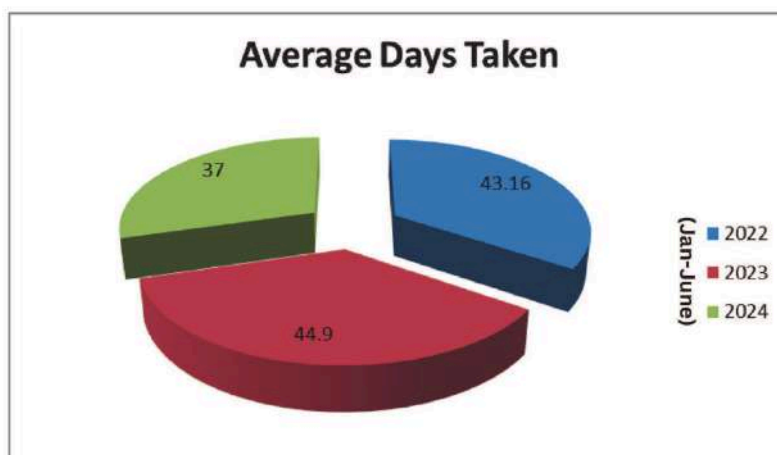
Implementation in the first six months of 2024 in comparison with the previous years of the same period



Amount Refunded
Rs. in Millions



Average Days Taken



FOSPAH

The Waqafi Mohtasib Visited FOSPAH Secretariat, Islamabad

The Waqafi Mohtasib, Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, visited the Federal Ombudsperson against Harassment, Ms. Fauzia Viqar, on 21.08.2024. Both Mr. Qureshi and Ms. Viqar discussed ways for enhancing the effectiveness of the Offices of Federal and Provincial Ombudspersons. It was agreed between them that the priority areas included strengthening digital capacity, implementing robust monitoring mechanisms and launching nationwide awareness campaigns to inform people of the availability of citizen-centric institutions like the Ombudsperson Office. The role of international ombudsman organizations such as the Asian Ombudsman Association, of which Mr. Qureshi is President, was also appreciated for providing a platform to Ombudspersons from across the world to share best practices. Mr. Qureshi and Ms. Viqar expressed a strong commitment to continue working for the rights of the people and to cooperating with



one another for the benefit of all.

Moreover, the awareness session was chaired by the FOSPAH Secretary, Mr. Arif Karim, along with the Registrar, Mr. Rehman Shehzad. A detailed overview of the Harassment Act 2010 was provided by Assistant Registrar, Ms. Amina Rafiq, who elaborated on the types of harassment and the sections of the law. Additionally, Ms. Amina communicated the procedure for filing a complaint and how FOSPAH addresses complaints.

The session concluded with positive remarks from the Civil Aviation Authority, appreciating the efforts of FOSPAH. The Secretary also presented a shield to Mr. Zia Ahmed, APM of the Civil Aviation Authority.

Federal Insurance Ombudsman

Federal Insurance Ombudsman Meets Chief Minister Sindh

Federal Insurance Ombudsman Honourable Syed Mumtaz Shah called on Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and apprised him about the performance of his institutions here at the CM House.

Mumtaz Shah told the CM that the Federal Insurance Ombudsman has headquarters provided relief to policyholders.



The Federal Ombudsman provided transparent, fair, and speedy justice by resolving disputes in 60 days. “We provided relief of Rs 5 billion last year by passing orders in almost 5000 complaints against the companies,” Mumtaz said. The CM appreciated the personal efforts and hardwork of federal Ombudsman Syed Mumtaz Shah. “Mumtaz Shah is a senior most officer, having served as Chief Secretary Sindh,” he said, adding that his abilities and service to the people are appreciated. The chief minister assured the federal Insurance Ombudsman of his support and cooperation. Earlier, the Federal Insurance Ombudsman Honourable Syed Mumtaz Ali Shah on Tuesday visited the shrine of great Sufi saint Hazrat Ali Hajvery.

On this occasion, Administrator Auqaf Tauqeer Mehmood Wattoo presented the bouquet to him. The Federal Ombudsman, along with his wife offered Fateha at the shrine and laid a ‘Chaddar’ of flowers on the grave of Data Ganj Bakhsh, popularly known as ‘Data Darbar’.

Later on, he visited the shrine of Bibi Pak Daman and mausoleum of noted poet and philosopher Allama Iqbal and laid wreaths and offered Fateha.

He prayed for stability of the democracy, economy and prosperity of the country.

Advisor Federal Insurance Munir Ahmad Chishti, Director Aftab Ahmad Shah and others were present.

Punjab Ombudsman

Punjab's First Ombudswoman Ayesha Hamid Takes oath



Ayesha Hamid has made history by taking oath as Punjab's first ombudswoman in a ceremony held at the Governor House. Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan administered the oath, with Implementation and Coordination Secretary Rafaqat Ali Nisawana officially announcing the appointment.

Notable attendees included former provincial ombudsman retired Major Azam Suleman, former Punjab governor Shahid Hamid, former federal minister Zahid Hamid, Principal Secretary to the Governor retired Captain Saqib Zafar, NHA Chairman Shehryar Sultan, and Jahanzaib Khan.

Ms. Ayesha Hamid has been appointed as 9th Ombudsman Punjab. She was the Senior Partner of Hamid Law Associates and became an Advocate of the High Court in 2008 and of the Supreme Court in 2016 and appeared in several cases of constitutional importance reported in the law journals. She also conducted a large number of pro bono public cases for indigent and needy clients, and rendered free legal services to charitable and welfare organizations including the Punjab Girl Guides Association. She also served as an elected independent Director in a multinational company. Before taking up the practice of law she taught at a prominent educational institution.

Punjab Ombudsperson

Ombudsperson Nabila Hakim Ali Khan Advocates for Women's Rights at Women University



In a significant outreach initiative, Ombudsperson Punjab, Nabila Hakim Ali Khan, visited the Women University of Multan to raise awareness about critical legal frameworks that protect women's rights. During the seminar, she discussed the Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010 and the Punjab

Enforcement of Women Property Rights Act 2021, emphasizing the importance of understanding these laws. The event was attended by key university officials, including Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Kulsoom Paratha and Registrar Professor Dr. Memoona Khan. Superintendent Aneela Arshad from the Ombudsperson's office was also present, who provided insights into the complaint registration process and the resources available to female students. Nabila Hakim Ali Khan encouraged the students to be aware of their rights and to speak up against any form of harassment or discrimination. The seminar served as a vital platform for empowering the students and fostering a safe and supportive environment within the university. Overall, the seminar fostered a sense of community among female students, reinforcing the message that they are not alone in their experiences and that support is available. The visit marked a positive step toward raising awareness and empowering young women to stand up for their rights.

We extend our gratitude to the Women University of Multan for hosting this vital seminar and look forward to future collaborations aimed at promoting women's empowerment and legal literacy.

Sindh Ombudsman

Ombudsman Saves Academic Year of University Student

Provincial Ombudsman Dr Muhammad Sohail Rajput has announced a significant decision in favor of Owais Ahmed Bhayo, a student of Shah Abdul Latif University, safeguarding his precious academic year. Owais Ahmed, a second-semester student of Clinical Pharmacy, was declared as having failed



by the university administration, despite his exemplary academic record.

In response to this injustice, Owais Ahmed filed a petition with the provincial ombudsman, prompting a full investigation. The investigation revealed that the university administration had made a grave error in declaring the student as having failed. Following the inquiry, Provincial Ombudsman Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput issued strict instructions to the university administration, including the Controller of Examinations, to rectify the mistake and ensure justice in the matter. Acting on the ombudsman's directives, the university administration reversed its decision and declared Owais Ahmed Bhayo as having passed the Clinical Pharmacy examination, saving him from losing an academic year.

Owais Ahmed expressed his happiness over the decision, thanking the provincial ombudsman and calling it a victory for justice that has allowed him to continue his academic journey. Dr Muhammad Sohail Rajput further instructed the university administration to adopt a fair approach in dealing with students and to ensure the protection of their academic rights to prevent such incidents in the future.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ombudsman

Provincial Ombudsman KPK Hails Recent Constitutional Amendments Way forward to Quick Justice

Provincial Ombudsman Syed Jamal Ud Din Shah has said the recent amendments to the Provincial Ombudsman Act Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have strengthened the office and are expected to improve the working of the government departments.

“The Ombudsman Office, along with regional facilities, is now providing an easier pathway to citizens to seek redress for their grievances,” he said while talking to journalists. Syed Jamal Ud Din Shah praised Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and Minister for Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights Aftab Alam for empowering the Ombudsman Office through the amendments to curb wrong practices in the government departments and institutions.

He said recent amendments to the Ombudsman Act of 2010 reassigned the powers to his office. “We have been granted powers to implement measures and initiate disciplinary proceedings in case of non-compliance,” he explained.

The KP Ombudsman said all departments were required to cooperate with this office. “We have been allowed to conduct research, and establish

additional regional offices at the divisional level to improve accessibility for complainants,” he added. Syed Jamal Ud Din Shah said these changes were aimed at enhancing the institution’s ability to manage citizen complaints and uphold administrative justice.

“These powers seek to strengthen the Ombudsman Office’s independence and effectiveness in resolving issues,” he pointed out. Syed Jamal Ud Din Shah was satisfied with the work his office had done so far as public confidence in the Ombudsman had increased for several reasons. Citing reasons for his satisfaction, he said being independent and impartial, the staff at the Ombudsmen’s Office made decisions based on merit without any external influence.



Ombudsperson Office, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Ombudsperson KPK Participates in Inaugural Ceremony of WFDs in Peshawar

In a significant step towards empowering women in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Women Facilitation Desks (WFDs) were inaugurated today at a ceremony held at the SRSP-HRDC in Peshawar. The initiative, part of the 'Participatory Local Governance Programme,' aims to bridge the gap between women and their rights by providing

them with a dedicated platform to address their concerns and demands for public services.

The ceremony was graced by a range of dignitaries, including the Women Ombudsperson KP, who highlighted the crucial role of these desks in enhancing women's access to services and support. Other notable attendees included the Secretary LGE&RDD KP, Special Secretary and Director LGE&RDD KP, Chief Information Commissioner RTI, Director General Law & Human Rights, and representatives from the Provincial Commission on the



Status of Women. The event also saw the participation of the Head of Programme AV-GIZ, Programme Component Manager GIZ, Additional Deputy Commissioners from Khyber, Kohat, Swat, and Mohmand, as well as the CEO SRSP and numerous community members.

The establishment of the Women Facilitation Desks in Swat and Kohat is a collaborative effort supported by GIZ, the Local Government Elections & Rural Development Department KP (LGE&RDD), and SRSP. These desks are designed to assist women in demanding public services, registering complaints, and receiving support if dissatisfied with local service delivery. This initiative is expected to play a pivotal role in improving the quality of public services and ensuring that women's voices are heard and addressed effectively. The inauguration marks a crucial milestone in the ongoing efforts to enhance women's rights and participation in local governance across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

OICOA in Media

The Jakarta Post

Ombudsman to mediate dispute between Borobudur vendors and operator

The Ombudsman will mediate a dispute between Borobudur vendors and management in the newly constructed Borobudur Art Village.

The Indonesian Ombudsman will mediate a dispute between the Borobudur Crafts and Food Center Association (SKMB) and PT Taman Wisata Candi Borobudur, Prambanan and Ratu Boko (TWC), which manages the Borobudur Arts Village. The move came after allegations that 350 street vendors affiliated with the SKMB were denied their rightful stalls in the newly constructed arts village. The Yogyakarta Legal Aid Institute (LBH), representing the affected vendors, criticized TWC for causing confusion by allegedly involving other vendor groups in past discussions. It insists that the upcoming mediation should include only the SKMB, TWC and the ombudsman to resolve the issue fairly. Meanwhile, ombudsman member Johanes Widiartoro said his office would facilitate a dialogue between the SKMB and TWC in the upcoming week. "We still don't know where [we will hold the dialogue]. It should be in a neutral space," Johanes said after a hearing with the SKMB at the Wanurejo tourist village in Magelang, Central Java, on Tuesday, as quoted by [kompas.com](#).

The ombudsman team also held a meeting with TWC, acting Magelang regent Sepyo Achanto and other leaders in the regency.

The Borobudur Art Village is part of a national strategic project to revitalize the Borobudur tourism complex. The project, funded with a budget of Rp 253.2 billion (US\$16.63 million), will be officially inaugurated by President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo in the second week of October. The village, built on the former Kujon soccer field covering 10.7 hectares, includes a museum, an amphitheater and numerous stalls for vendors. Separately, State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) Minister Erick Thohir visited the art village on Tuesday to inspect the new trading hub for vendors previously selling near Borobudur Temple.

Accompanied by his team, Erick emphasized that the development program would make the area more organized. The minister also mentioned that the entire Borobudur complex would be managed by TWC per Presidential Regulation No. 101/2024, integrating tourism and conservation management. Previously, TWC had the authority over the tourism area. Meanwhile, the Culture Directorate General of the Education, Culture, Research and Technology Ministry managed the conservation area. "[The SOEs Ministry] only helps with infrastructure and services. We do not intend to overstep various ministries. However, [tourism and conservation] need to be integrated," Erick said. The improvements, including the green space and shuttle bus service for visitors, are aimed at elevating Borobudur as a premier historical tourism destination. Erick also noted ongoing efforts to improve international access, such as direct flights from Thailand to Yogyakarta.



Azerbaijani Ombudsperson issues statement on declaration of “Child Rights Month Campaign”

Humay Aghajanova

BAKU, Azerbaijan, October 17. The protection and promotion of children's rights are crucial for their development and well-being, the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsperson) of the Republic of Azerbaijan Sabina Aliyeva said in a statement, [Trend](#) reports.

She noted that the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted by the United Nations (UN) on November 20, 1989.

The international treaty, which has been ratified by numerous countries worldwide, encompasses crucial principles, including the prohibition of discrimination, prioritization of children's interests, the guarantee of the right to life and development, and respect for children's views. In Azerbaijan, as a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, extensive reforms in child rights protection have led to significant improvements in national legislation, the adoption of state programs and strategies, and the establishment of institutional mechanisms to meet contemporary needs.

The Ombudsman regularly promotes and protects children's rights. The Ombudsman designates October 20–November 20 "Children's Rights Month" in the country to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The already customary "Children's Rights Month" strengthens efforts to safeguard and promote children's rights, encourages caring for children, and raises awareness.

Aliyeva noted that this established initiative aims to enhance efforts in safeguarding children's rights, fostering greater attention and care for children, and raising awareness in this vital area. The experience shows that the month-long campaign aroused wide interest from public and self-governing authorities and civil society organizations, and the rate of similar actions has gone up.

The Ombudsperson highlighted the significance of child rights protection, especially in light of Azerbaijan declaring 2024 as “Green World Solidarity Year” and the hosting of the prestigious international event, the 29th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP29) in November. She emphasized that children, as a vulnerable population affected by climate change and its repercussions, require particular attention during this critical time.

"I regret to inform you that ecological crimes and landmines planted in territories under Armenia's long-term occupation endanger the lives and health of civilians, including children, and impede their right to a safe return. Since Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan, mine explosions have caused harm to over 3400 citizens, including 358 children. I firmly believe that international human rights institutions should take decisive action to address this issue and put an end to Armenia's mine terror.

Every state and independent society must prioritize the comprehensive provision of children's needs as a vulnerable category of society, keep them in the spotlight, and ensure their harmonious development and growth as trustworthy personalities.

In light of the aforementioned, I urge state institutions, municipalities, civil society organizations, and other relevant bodies working in the field of child rights to participate in this "Child Rights Month-Long Campaign" and encourage them to support our initiative by taking measures to protect and promote children's rights.

We do hope that the events to be held with the active participation of children within this month-long campaign will further bolster the attention to the protection of children and more effectively ensure their rights and freedoms," the Ombudsperson said.



Chief Ombudsman Malkoç calls for Israel to be removed from world ombudsman associations

Malkoç stated that Israel should be removed from the world's ombudsman unions due to its attacks on the Gaza Strip, and said, "This is the West's double standards and hypocrisy. It is very difficult for the world to make progress with a hypocritical ombudsman."

The 8th International Scientific and Practical Conference on Human Rights in Healthcare was held in Moscow, the capital of Russia. The conference was attended by Russian High Commissioner for Human Rights Tatiyana Moskalkova, Chief Ombudsman Seref Malkoç and representatives from approximately 50 countries. The conference began with Moskalkova's opening speech and was followed by a written message from Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. In his message, Lavrov noted that human rights have recently been used to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign states, adding: "The unilateral sanctions imposed have a detrimental effect, especially on vulnerable groups of people. These sanctions violate the international legal obligations that countries have undertaken."

"Türkiye has made important reforms in the field of health"

In his speech, Chief Ombudsman Malkoç said that the right to health is recognized as a fundamental right in the United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international agreements and constitutions of countries. Drawing attention to the fact that Turkey has made significant reforms in the field of health, Malkoç said, "There are 1 million 452 thousand health workers in Turkey who provide services to 85 million citizens. There is a bed capacity of 270 thousand in hospitals equipped with modern devices. Millions of people are treated in polyclinics. Turkey provides free health services to 85 million citizens."

Malkoç, who pointed out that nearly 60 million tourists visit Turkey every year and that 6-7 million of them are Russian citizens, said that health services are provided to the tourists and 5 million immigrants in Turkey. Malkoç also stated that 2 million people from Europe, Asia, Africa and America come to Turkey for treatment every year, and continued as follows:

"As the Turkish Ombudsman, we monitor access to health services, the quality of services in the health sector, whether preventive health services are provided well, whether patients are treated equally and appropriately, whether good health services are provided to children, women, the elderly, the poor, and refugees. As the Turkish Ombudsman, we conduct inspections and examinations. We work in coordination with the Ministry of Health in this regard."

"Gaza people have no military or defense power"

Recalling that crises had occurred in various parts of the world in the 21st century, Malkoç said that civilian infrastructure, roads and hospitals were destroyed in the Russia-Ukraine War, in various parts of Africa, in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, and especially in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon. Chief Ombudsman Malkoç drew attention to the fact that Israel has been carrying out attacks on the Gaza Strip for a year and noted the following:

"The people of Gaza have no military or defense power. The worst part is that Israel's attacks have turned into genocide and savagery in terms of human rights and international law. The world is watching this. Such a thing cannot happen. This should not happen in terms of human rights. 120 hospitals and health centers were hit in Gaza. War happens between soldiers, armies and states. 250 ambulances were hit. Can an ambulance ever be a military target? In addition, 750 health workers were killed and nearly 1,000 were injured. Nearly 45,000 people died. 70 percent of them are women and children. The world is still watching. We are saddened by this."

Şeref Malkoç pointed out that Russia was criticized for the war in Ukraine and was removed from the Mediterranean Ombudsman Union, and said, "If you are doing this for Russia, why don't you remove Israel from the ombudsman unions in the world? This is especially the double standards and hypocrisy of the West. It is very difficult for the world to make progress with a hypocritical ombudsman."

Stating that they carried out work on human rights during the Russia-Ukraine War, visited camps in Ukraine where Russian soldiers were held captive, and planned to visit Ukrainian soldiers held captive in Russia, Malkoç said that the Turkish Ombudsman was awarded the Peace Prize in Italy for their work on human rights violations during the conflict.

"Russia accepted 5 million immigrants in 2 years"

Russian High Commissioner for Human Rights Tatiyana Moskalkova expressed her gratitude to Chief Ombudsman Malkoç for his work regarding Russian soldiers captured in Ukraine. Sharing information that her country has accepted approximately 5 million immigrants in the last 2 years due to the war in Ukraine, Moskalkova said that they were provided with health support.



IGG Recovered Shs14B from Corrupt Officials in FY 2023/24

Muhammadi Byemboijana

The Inspectorate of Government has revealed that it recovered UGX 14B from the orders issued for recovery in Financial Year 2023/2024.

The IG noted that a cash payment of UGX 6B was deposited into the IG asset recovery account and property worth UGX 8.7B was handed over to the institution in lieu of cash.

Related Stories

Museveni to Attend Nile Basin States Summit in Egypt

Kyambogo VC Prof Katunguka Speaks Out on Suspension of 2024/25 Guild Elections

U.S. Special Envoy Tom Perriello Coming to Uganda over Sudan Crisis

In the same financial year (2023/2024,) the IG received 2377 complaints concerning corruption, Ombudsman and Leadership Code of Conduct.

Of the 2377 complaints, 1260 were registered from the Head Office while 1117 were registered across the 16 IG Regional Offices.

91.8% of these were sanctioned for investigations, 2.7% were referred to other authorities while 0.1% were declined because they did not meet merit in investigable cases.

By the end of the financial year, decisions were yet to be taken on 5.4% of the complaints that had been received during the year.

The Inspector General of Government (IGG), Beti Kamya, said they investigated and concluded 852 corruption-related cases of which 13 were high-profile in nature while 829 were other (not high-profile) corruption cases.

Following the investigations, the IG recommended recovery of UGX17B to the consolidated fund from persons found culpable in various corruption offenses.

"At least 261 administrative sanctions were issued against public officials and 26 of these were to be prosecuted for their involvement in corrupt tendencies," Kamya told the media at the Uganda Media Center.

Prosecution and asset recovery

Under this function, Kamya said 55 cases were prosecuted and concluded, adding, "A total of 26 convictions were realized leading to a conviction rate of 47.3%. Of the 55 concluded cases, 9 were acquitted, 16 withdrawn for various reasons such as settling the matter out of court, while two (02) were dismissed."

She noted that from the withdrawn cases, the affected persons committed to refund UGX 912M to the consolidated fund.

The IG also prosecuted and concluded 28 cases at the Leadership Code Tribunal (LCT), registering 24 convictions (85.7 conviction rate).

The IG conducted a series of sensitization activities and outreach programmes to support Leaders to submit their declarations.

At the end of the declaration period, 26,541 out of an expected 32,617 Leaders had declared, representing a compliance rate of 81.3%.

"The IG sought explanation from those who had not submitted. The process was ongoing by the end of the financial year. During the same period, the IG verified declarations of 574 public officials out of a targeted 600 for the financial year. This represents a success rate of 95.6%," she said.

A total of 213 investigations into breaches of the Leadership Code Act were concluded, of which 190 were related to non-declarations while 23 were false declarations, according to Kamya.

"As a result of the verifications and investigations, 61 public officials were recommended for prosecution at the Leadership Code Tribunal," she said.

Resolution of Ombudsman complaints in public offices

The IG resolved 408 Ombudsman complaints comprising 77 in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and 421 in Local Governments (LGs).

The complaints were majority related to employment disputes, delayed services, non-payment of salaries and pensions and mismanagement among others.

From the Ombudsman investigations, 892 citizens were able to directly access various services including access to payments totaling to UGX4B delayed salaries and pensions.

Kamya also announced the commemoration of the IG Day On September 18, 2024, at Railway Grounds in Kampala. The organization will also commemorate 38 years of existence.

The IG Day will open doors for the public to candidly interact with the institution, appreciate the processes and mandate of the IG and provide feedback to the institution on the delivery of its mandates.

OICOA at Glance



OICOA President and Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye Seref Malkoc attends the International Conference of Ombudsman Organized by Italian Ombudsman



President of OICOA and Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye Seref Malkoc held a Meeting with President of Türkiye at President Complex



President of OICOA and Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye Seref Malkoc Presented Gaza Report



OICOA Board Member and Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan Sabina Aliyeva Attends the Parliamentary Elections of Uzbekistan as an Observer



Outgoing Ambassador of Turkiye to Bahrain Paid a Courtesy Farewell to Bahrain Ombudsperson and Board Member OICOA H.E. Ghada Hameed



OICOA Board Member and Chairman of Indonesian Ombudsman Muhammad Najih held Meeting in Kaula Lumpur to Discuss Palm Oil Industry Matters



Memorandum of Understanding Signed Between Ombudsperson of Bahrain and Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan



Chairman of Ombudsman of Indonesia Attends Meeting in Parliament of Indonesia



Chairman of Administrative Control Authority of H.E. Abdullah Gaderboh Attends the 12th Session of CoP to the UNCTOC



Human Rights Commissioner of Azerbaijan and OICOA Board Member Sabina Aliyeva addresses International Baku Forum of Ombudsman on Climate Change

Highlights of the Visit of Bahrainian Delegation



Highlights of the Visit of Bahrainian Delegation

