



# FEDERAL OMBUDSPERSON SECRETARIAT FOR PROTECTION AGAINST HARASSMENT FOSPAH

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2024  
ISSUE NO. 01



# NEWSLETTER

Empowered  
Women  
=  
Empowered  
Societies



I'm excited to launch FOSPAH's first online Newsletter, highlighting our progress, challenges, and successes in 2024, with a focus on the third quarter. This quarter, FOSPAH received 236 new cases and achieved a resolution rate of over 54%, demonstrating our dedication to timely justice. Encouragingly, more individuals are coming forward to report harassment.

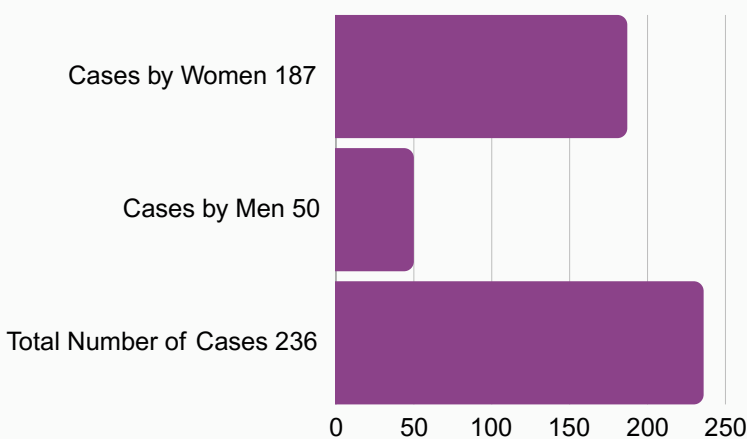
We expanded outreach by partnering with educational institutions like NED University Karachi and Government Girls High School Islamabad, and organizations such as Schlumberger, FBR, and Bank of AJK. These awareness sessions are crucial to ensuring both employees and employers are informed about their rights and responsibilities.

Administrative efficiency was also a key focus, with significant progress in upgrading our online database for better information management and accessibility. We restructured our teams for improved coordination and hired a dedicated Media and Outreach Specialist to enhance our communications, along with additional staff for our Transport section and Lahore office. Looking ahead to the final quarter, we are excited to launch nationwide training sessions in schools, focusing on educating students—one of our most vulnerable demographics—on recognizing and preventing harassment. We've also introduced comprehensive workplace training programs to address harassment and gender-based discrimination. These programs provide practical strategies for identifying inappropriate behavior and foster a culture of respect. As always, our commitment to creating harassment-free workplaces remains unwavering. Together, we continue to work towards a Pakistan where every individual can work in a safe and respectful environment.

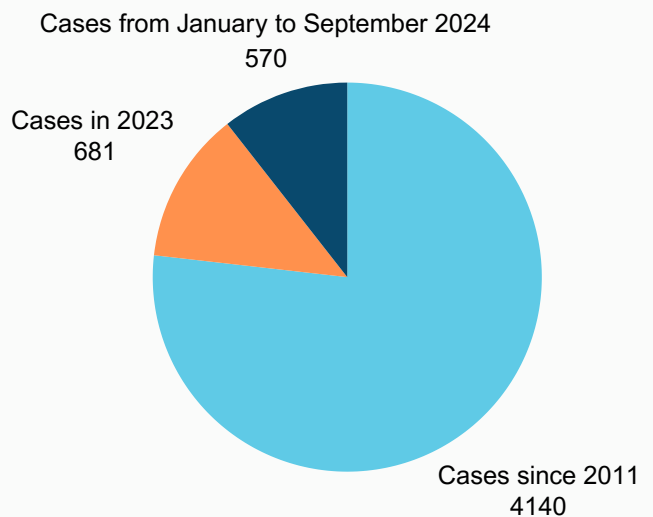


From the Ombudsperson's Desk

**Gender Wise Case Statistics:  
July to September 2024**



**Overall Cases Statistics:  
2011 to 2024**





### FOSPAH Presents Annual Report to Hon'able President Asif Ali Zardari

On July 22, 2024, Ms. Fauzia Viqar, the Federal Ombudsperson, presented the Annual Report for the Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection Against Harassment (FOSPAH) for the fiscal year 2022-23 to President Asif Ali Zardari during a meeting at Aiwan-i-Sadr. The report outlined FOSPAH's key achievements, challenges, and future initiatives aimed at promoting a safe and equitable work environment. President Zardari commended FOSPAH's efforts in combating workplace harassment and ensuring the property rights of women in Islamabad Capital Territory.

### Gender Diversity Awards, jointly organized by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Pakistan Business Council (PBC)



Employer of Choice Gender Diversity Awards focused on celebrating organizations committed to promoting gender equality in the workplace. Packages Limited was named the Employer of Choice, with National Foods and Bank Alfalah taking second and third place, respectively, for their exceptional efforts in advancing workplace diversity and inclusion.

The event's highlight was a parliamentary style debate, "Should Corporations, Not Governments, Lead the Charge for Gender Diversity in the Workplace?" The debate was chaired by Ms. Fauzia Viqar, and in her opening remarks, she said that workplace harassment is one of the leading reasons women leave their jobs. She stressed that organizations that fail to address harassment risk losing talented women, hindering progress toward inclusive and equitable workplaces.

## Ms. Fauzia Viqar Champions Women's Marriage Rights at An International Conference



Musawi, in partnership with the American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI), hosted the International Conference on Women's Marriage Rights (ICWMR), held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which focused on developing regional linkages and fostering peer learning between key stakeholders and practitioners of Muslim Family Law across Asia, focusing on advancing women's marriage rights. In her keynote session titled "Situating Women's Rights in Muslim Family Laws in Asia: Evolution and Impact" Ms. Fauzia Viqar highlighted the significant strides made in women's rights advocacy across the region while identifying persistent gaps in recognizing and implementing these rights within family law.

## MoU Between Islamic Relief Pakistan and FOSPAH



FOSPAH and Islamic Relief Pakistan formalized their collaboration through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by Mr. Arif Karim, Secretary of FOSPAH, and Mr. Asif Ali Sherazi, Country Director of Islamic Relief Pakistan. This partnership aims to enhance outreach efforts among marginalized groups, including women, transgender persons, and individuals with disabilities, by conducting awareness sessions and distributing Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials.

## Shlumberger Pakistan (Slb) Organised an Awareness Session on "Sexual Harassment at the Workplace"

Schlumberger's awareness session on "Sexual Harassment at the Workplace" on 28 August 2024 was attended widely by the employees of SLB working at the Head Office in Islamabad and other regions in Pakistan and abroad. The Managing Director of SLB, Mr. Zuaraye Tarique, informed the Federal Ombudsperson, Ms. Fauzia Viqar, who was the Chief Guest, about robust measures available at SLB and the zero-tolerance policy against harassment. Ms. Viqar stressed that engineering in Pakistan is perceived as a male-dominated field, and women are seldom able to make their place. Therefore, for the development of the nation, it is essential that equal employment opportunities be provided to women with a special focus on their retention in employment.



## Awareness Session at Government Girls School in Sohan, Islamabad



**FOSPAH Increases Awareness of the Masses With 45 Outreach Activities in the Third Quarter**

## FOSPAH's Training Session for Community Officers of Islamic Relief Pakistan

The training session was conducted by Ms. Meher Jamy, Law Officer FOSPAH, and Mr. Waqar Ahmed, Assistant Registrar FOSPAH. Islamic Relief is a faith-based humanitarian relief and development organization. The session was largely focused on the scope of workplace harassment, the law regarding the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, and the role of FOSPAH in addressing grievances.



## FOSPAH Successfully Resolves Sexual Harassment Complaint, Protects Workplace Rights

On July 24, 2024, Ms. Shafia Yasmin bravely stepped forward to file a sexual harassment complaint against her supervisors, Major Muhammad Aslam Khan, Muhammad Siddique, and Mumtaz Hussain at MSM Security Guards. She accused the trio of demanding sexual favors, attempting to manipulate her duty hours for exploitation, and threatening her job when she refused. FOSPAH acted swiftly, ensuring a fair investigation where all parties were heard. In a thorough mediation, a mutual agreement was reached between Ms. Yasmin and the accused individuals. By August 28, 2024, Ms. Yasmin, satisfied with the resolution, withdrew her complaint. The case was dismissed, marking a successful expeditious resolution and restoring peace at Ms. Yasmin's workplace.

## The Hon'ble Waqafi Mohtasib Visited the FOSPAH Head Office, Islamabad

The Waqafi Mohtasib, Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, visited the FOSPAH Head Office on August 21, 2024. Both Mr. Qureshi and Ms. Viqar discussed ways to enhance 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 cooperate with one another for the benefit of all.

## Bank of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Partners with FOSPAH to Combat Workplace Harassment

The Bank of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) has partnered with the Federal Ombudsperson Secretariat for Protection against Harassment (FOSPAH) to foster a safe and harassment-free workplace. To date, FOSPAH has successfully conducted four comprehensive training sessions, reaching over half of the bank's 600+ employees, including key personnel such as branch and area managers, HR representatives, and IT staff. These sessions provided an in-depth understanding of the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, equipping participants with the knowledge to handle harassment cases with sensitivity and confidentiality. Building on this progress, FOSPAH is committed to continuing its efforts by organizing additional training sessions for all of Bank AJK's branches in the coming months.



**Meeting with The Rt. Rev. Fredrick John, Archbishop of Sindh and Balochistan, and Reverend Cornelius**



The meeting underscored the critical need to raise awareness and protect minority rights, particularly in the workplace. FOSPAH is dedicated to cultivating safe, inclusive, and respectful environments for individuals of all faiths. In alignment with this mission, upcoming seminars will be held within Christian communities to educate and empower individuals about their legal protections against harassment, ensuring that every member of the society is both informed and supported.

**Awareness session at the Collectorate of Customs, Torkham Border**

FOSPAH team in Peshawar visited the Collectorate of Customs at the Torkham Border, where they discussed the Harassment Act, 2010, and educated participants on behaviors that constitute harassment, as well as the legal recourse available to both men and women. The session concluded with a commitment from Omar Jan, Assistant Collector Customs (Appraisalment) Torkham, and Ms. Saiqa Abbas, Deputy Collector Torkham, to ensure a respectful and dignified working environment for all employees.



September 29, 2024: FOSPAH Lahore Office conducted an awareness session at the State Bank of Pakistan in collaboration with the National Institute of Banking and Finance

September 24, 2024: FOSPAH Lahore Office held an awareness seminar to educate the staff of State Bank about the key provisions of the Harassment Act of 2010.

## Deprived Sister Secures Legal Entitlement to Inherited Property

Justice has finally prevailed for three sisters, Ms. Haseeba, Ms. Mufida, and Ms. Faiza, who have been locked in a legal battle against their brothers. The complainant filed a complaint in 2020 claiming they were denied their inheritance from their deceased father, Mr. Haji Muhammad Raheem. Their brothers claimed the women had already received their share of inheritance in the form of marriage gifts. The properties in dispute included land and a house in Islamabad. In 2021, an order under Section 5 of the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act (EWPR) was issued by FOSPAH, directing that the sisters receive their legal shares. Yet, despite multiple attempts to enforce the ruling, including failed auctions and case delays, the brothers remained uncooperative. Ultimately FOSPAH handed over possession of the house to the sisters.

## Woman's Property Restored: FOSPAH Orders Eviction of the Illegal Occupant

In a pivotal case under the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act, 2020, Ms. Rabia Bibi successfully secured her ownership rights over a disputed property shared with the respondent, Mr. Mahram Khan, her brother-in-law. Following a settlement in which Ms. Rabia Bibi agreed to pay Rs. 3 lac for construction costs on the first storey, the respondent committed to vacating the property within three months. Despite initial delays and avoidance of notices, Mr. Khan ultimately agreed to the terms. With the payment made and a receipt executed, Ms. Rabia Bibi's ownership was affirmed, with the assurance she could refile if the respondent failed to vacate as promised.

## Sister Reclaims Possession of Her Entitled Share

Ms. Saima Bibi has won a critical legal battle under the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act, 2020, to reclaim her share of the property, which was in the possession of her brother, Mr. Qadeer Hussain, following their father's death. After hearing, the Deputy Commissioner's office confirmed the complainant's entitlement to her rightful share, per inheritance law. The Federal Ombudsman issued a final order, directing the Deputy Commissioner to ensure that possession of the property is handed over to Ms. Saima Bibi, marking a significant victory for women's property rights.

## PIA Employee's Reinstatement By FOSPAH After Her Unjust Termination

On February 22, 2024, Ms. Sumera Ghaffar turned to FOSPAH after being wrongfully terminated from her position at Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). She sought reinstatement, asserting that her removal violated her rights as an employee.

FOSPAH immediately took action, conducting a thorough review of the case and ensuring both Ms. Ghaffar and PIA received a fair hearing. Through careful mediation and legal guidance, FOSPAH championed her case, pushing for her reinstatement in line with workplace regulations. Thanks to FOSPAH's intervention, Ms. Ghaffar was reinstated to her role at PIA, with all her employment rights fully restored.



**FOSPAH's Awareness and Community Outreach Programs in Q3 of 2024**



**August 20, 2024: FOSPAH Karachi, in collaboration with NICVD, held a session on the Workplace Harassment Act 2010**



**August 01, 2024: FOSPAH Peshawar conducted a detailed session in collaboration with the Civil Aviation Authority at Bacha Khan International Airport, Peshawar**



**August 28, 2024: FOSPAH Regional Office in Karachi held a seminar at Bakhtawar Cadet College for Girls, Shaheed Benazirabad**



**September 10, 2024: FOSPAH Karachi held a seminar at Quaid-e-Azam University of Engineering, Sciences & Technology, Nawabshah.**



**August 16, 2024: FOSPAH Regional Office Lahore, in collaboration with the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), organized a comprehensive session on harassment and gender discrimination at the IRS Academy, Lahore.**



**10th September 2024: Regional Office Karachi, in collaboration with NED University, conducted an insightful seminar on the pivotal role of FOSPAH**

**FOSPAH's Awareness and Community Outreach Programs in Q3 of 2024**



**9th September 2024: The FOSPAH Karachi team held an important seminar at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University**



**25th July 2024: FOSPAH organized a training session at Saudi Bank for its senior and middle management**



**August 23, 2024: FOSPAH Regional Office, Karachi organized a seminar at PNSC**



**July 01, 2024: Training of Inquiry Committee at PTW Peshawar Centre**



**September 20, 2024: FOSPAH's Regional Office in Lahore organized an informative session at the Pakistan Environmental Protection Agency**



**September 04, 2024: FOSPAH Regional Office Peshawar conducted an interactive awareness session at the Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees, Peshawar**

**FOR LODGING HARASSMENT AND WOMEN'S PROPERTY RIGHTS  
COMPLAINTS, CONTACT US AT:**

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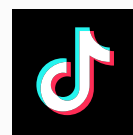
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