



**FEDERAL OMBUDSPERSON SECRETARIAT**  
**for Protection Against Harassment**  
FOSPAH



QUARTERLY

# Newsletter

July - September 2025

# A Message from the Honorable Federal Ombudsperson, Ms. Fauzia Viqar

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Welcome to our third-quarter newsletter. This period, from July to September 2025, has been marked by an ambitious expansion of our outreach and a deepening of our engagement with institutions across Pakistan. From extensive awareness drives in South Punjab to capacity-building sessions in Islamabad, our mission has been to empower every individual with knowledge of their rights and equip every organization



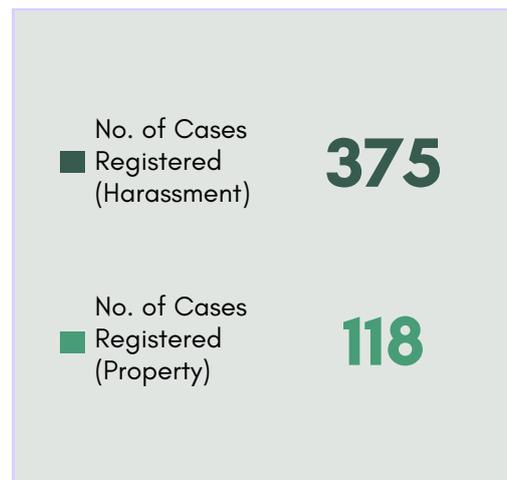
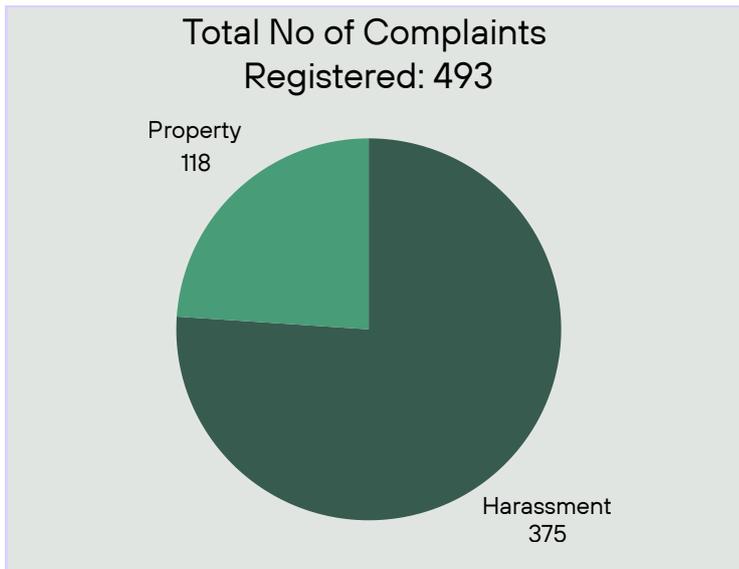
organization with the tools to create safe, harassment-free workplaces. The growing trust in our institution is reflected in the number of complaints we are receiving. In the third quarter, **FOSPAH registered 493 complaints, a significant 30.7% increase** from the 377 complaints filed in the previous quarter. This rise in reporting indicates that more and more individuals feel empowered to come forward, confident that their voices will be heard. I am proud of the progress we have made together in strengthening workplace protections for all, and this newsletter captures the breadth of that crucial work.

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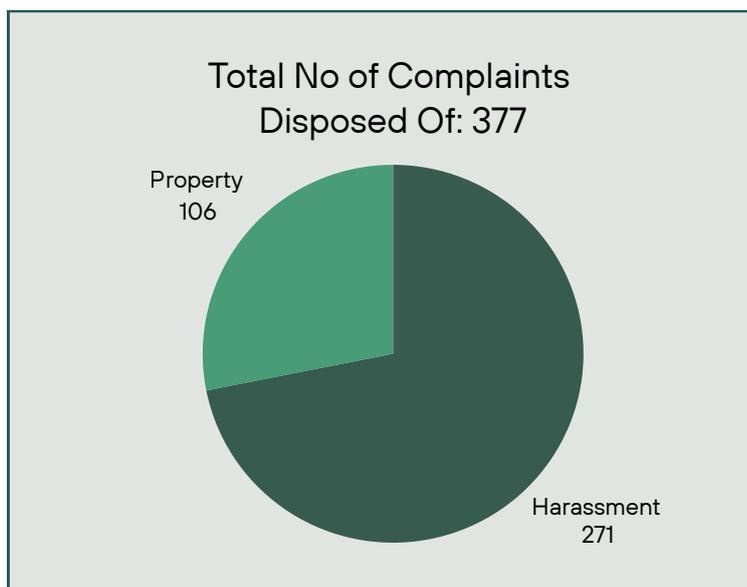
# A STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF THE QUARTER



## Number of Cases Registered (July to September 2025)



## Number of Cases Disposed Of (July to September 2025)



### Capacity Building at the National Police Academy, Islamabad



Ms. Fauzia Viqar, Federal Ombudsperson, addressed under-training Deputy Superintendents of Balochistan Police at the National Police Academy. Speaking on “Gender and Civil Law Enforcement,” she emphasized the need for gender-sensitive approaches to strengthen justice and build public trust.

### Policy Guidance for NUST, Islamabad



FOSPAH’s Legal Advisor, Ms. Mah Rukh Aziz, met with the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST)’s Policy Review Committee. She briefed representatives on the Harassment Act 2010 and shared guidance for its fair and effective implementation.

## Capacity-Building Sessions for Inquiry Committee Members

FOSPAH recently conducted comprehensive training sessions for Inquiry Committee members and senior representatives at two leading institutions – the Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan (CERP) in Lahore and the Petroleum Institute of Pakistan (PIP) in Rawalpindi. Led by Ms. Mah Rukh Aziz (Legal Advisor), the sessions focused on enhancing participants’ capacity to handle workplace harassment cases with sensitivity, procedural clarity, and legal accuracy. Through real-life case insights, interactive discussions, and practical exercises, participants gained a deeper understanding of the inquiry process – ensuring that investigations are carried out with fairness, professionalism, and empathy.



## Awareness Session at the National Highway Authority (NHA)



An awareness session was held at the National Highway Authority (NHA), facilitated by Mr. Mohsin Sheikh (Law Officer). The session covered key legal provisions, the role of Inquiry Committees, and best practices for maintaining safe workplaces. The session concluded with a keynote address by Ms. Fauzia Viqar, Federal Ombudsperson, who highlighted FOSPAH's ongoing efforts to promote accountability and gender equality across institutions.

## FOSPAH's Khuli Kacheris for Women's Property Rights

Beyond its mandate for workplace protection, FOSPAH is committed to upholding the economic rights of women by addressing issues of property and inheritance under the Enforcement of Women's Property Rights Act, 2020. This quarter, FOSPAH organized two Khuli Kacheris (open court sessions) in the Islamabad Capital Territory, providing a direct and accessible platform for women to seek justice. These sessions, held in Sihala and Bara Kahu, were highly effective, resulting in the lodging of over 40 complaints from women who have been denied their rights in their property. This initiative underscores our dedication to ensuring women's property rights are protected and enforced.



## Awareness Drive in South Punjab

With the new sub-office in Multan now fully functional, FOSPAH is intensifying its efforts to raise awareness and strengthen workplace protections across South Punjab. This quarter, Federal Ombudsperson Ms. Fauzia Viqar led a series of high-impact events, engaging a diverse range of sectors in Multan. The drive included seminars at MEPCO, FBR, and the State Bank of Pakistan, and collaboration with regional law enforcement to enhance protections against harassment. The Ombudsperson also visited the Violence Against Women Center to support their crucial work and met with the FBR's Regional Tax Office to discuss strengthening internal inquiry mechanisms, ensuring a comprehensive approach to fostering safer workplaces across the region.



MEPCO



FBR, Multan



Meezan Bank Limited



State Bank of Pakistan Multan



Violence Against Women Center Multan



Meeting with the Additional Inspector General

## Driving Awareness in Quetta

Our Quetta team led a dedicated mission to engage major banks and government offices across the city.

**Banking Sector: Sessions were held at HBL, Bank of Punjab, Faysal Bank, Sindh Bank, Bank Alfalah, Soneri Bank, and Bank Al-Habib.**



Sindh Bank, Quetta



Bank Alfalah, Quetta



Soneri Bank Limited, Quetta



Bank Al-Habib, Quetta

**Public Sector: The team held sessions at the FBR office , National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) Quetta , the Immigration & Passport Office , and collaborated with the Anti-Narcotics Force's Legal Wing.**



NIPA, Quetta



Immigration & Passport Office

## Awareness at Directorate General of Health Peshawar



Our Peshawar team conducted a key awareness session on the Harassment Act 2010 at the Directorate General of Health, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The event brought together senior officials and staff, reinforcing a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and a collective commitment to ensuring a safe and respectful workplace for all.

## Inspiring the Next Generation of Lawyers



FOSPAH was pleased to host law interns from the Ministry of Law and Justice for an in-depth learning session at our Head Office. Our team, including Registrar Mr. Rahman Shahzad and Assistant Registrars Mr. Waqar A. Malik and Ms. Syeda Zainab Sohail, guided the interns through FOSPAH's mandate and provided a practical overview of the complaint-handling process, offering valuable insights to our future legal professionals.

## Awareness Session at Shezan International

Our Karachi Office team, Assistant Registrar Sidra Bhoja and Assistant Law Officer Muhammad Aliyan, joined employees of Shezan International Limited for an interactive session on workplace harassment.



## Session with Pakistan Girls Guide Association

An awareness session was held with the Pakistan Girls Guide Association, focusing on empowering the next generation of leaders with knowledge about their rights.



## Collaboration with Radio Pakistan, Lahore

In Lahore, FOSPAH held an awareness session with the team at Radio Pakistan, highlighting the media's role in promoting safe workplace environments and shaping public discourse.



## Engaging the Banking Sector in Karachi

Our Karachi team led a focused drive with the city's corporate sector, holding awareness and training sessions at major institutions including Bank Alfalah, HBL, Faysal Bank Limited.



Habib Metro Bank Karachi



HBL Karachi



Askari Bank Karachi

## Training at Bank of AJK, Rawlakot



FOSPAH extended its outreach to Azad Jammu & Kashmir with a dedicated training session on workplace harassment for the employees of the Bank of AJK in Rawlakot.

## Session at Bank Al-Habib Peshawar



FOSPAH conducted an awareness session at Bank Al-Habib in Peshawar to educate staff about their rights and responsibilities under the Act, 2010.

## Awareness session at the Provincial Election Commissioner KP, Peshawar



During the session, Joint Provincial Election Commissioner, Mr. Shahid Iqbal, highlighted the importance of collective responsibility, while FOSPAH's Assistant Registrar, Ms. Amina Rafique, provided a detailed briefing on the Act 2010. The engagement strengthened our shared goal of building workplaces where everyone feels safe and valued.

## Partnering with GIZ to Empower Grievance Committees

Under our ongoing MoU with GIZ Pakistan, FOSPAH is delivering expert training sessions as part of their workshops for Grievance Committee Members. This collaboration aims to build capacity across various organizations. Our Regional Advisor, Ms. Lubna Ali, led the first session in Lahore, providing in-depth training on the Harassment Act 2010 and the core responsibilities of Inquiry Committees. Following its success, further sessions have been conducted in Karachi, Faisalabad, and Sialkot.



## Representatives of World Bank Visit FOSPAH Head Office

The Honorable Federal Ombudsperson Ms. Fauzia Viqar welcomed the World Bank delegation led by Ms. Meskerem Brhane, Regional Director for Planet (MENAAP), and Ms. Kamakshi Mubarak, Senior Social Development Specialist. The delegation praised FOSPAH's real impact on women's lives in Pakistan and expressed keen interest in collaborating on capacity building, outreach, and awareness initiatives.

## Awareness Session at EFU Life Insurance, Karachi

The Honorable Federal Ombudsperson Ms. Fauzia Viqar welcomed the World Bank delegation led by Ms. Meskerem Brhane, Regional Director for Planet (MENAAP), and Ms. Kamakshi Mubarak, Senior Social Development Specialist. The delegation praised FOSPAH's real impact on women's lives in Pakistan and expressed keen interest in collaborating on capacity building, outreach, and awareness initiatives.



## Strengthening Provincial Partnerships in Punjab

In a significant collaboration, FOSPAH and the Office of the Ombudsman Punjab joined forces to enhance institutional capacity across the province. A series of comprehensive training sessions on the Harassment Act 2010 were conducted in Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Multan. These hybrid sessions saw active participation from Advisors and Consultants, with representatives from all 39 regional offices across Punjab joining virtually. The initiative concluded with engaging Q&A segments, fostering a rich discussion on practical solutions to create safer workplaces for everyone.



## Engaging the Retail Sector at Ethnic

FOSPAH took its awareness drive to the retail sector with a session at Ethnic by Outfitters in Peshawar. To provide immediate support, a one-day Help Desk was set up, empowering staff with the resources to confidently address their concerns.



## Supporting Humanitarian Efforts in Balochistan

Our Quetta team conducted an awareness session at the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, Balochistan. The session focused on the Act 2010, empowering the staff and volunteers of this vital organization with the knowledge to ensure a safe and respectful environment for everyone.



# VISUAL HIGHLIGHTS



An awareness session at the Pakistan Scientific and Technological Information Center (PASTIC) Islamabad



An awareness session at the Pakistan State Oil (PSO) Karachi, in collaboration with Petroleum Institute of Pakistan (PIP) led by Regional Head Karachi, Ms. Sabika Shah.



Awareness Sessions at the Punjab Masstransit Authority in Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Multan



An awareness session at Faysal Bank Limited Karachi led by Assistant Registrar Ms. Sidra Bhoja



Awareness Session at Impetus Advisory Islamabad led by Assistant Registrar Mr Waqar Ahmed and Legal Coordinator Ms Ayesha Zeb Khan



Ms. Amina Rafiq, Assistant Registrar Peshawar, led an awareness session at the Frontier Corps Peshawar.



Assistant Registrar Mr Waqar Ahmed led an awareness session with home-based workers and widows at Sohan



Ms. Fauzia Viqar, joined the Executive Board and leading members of the Women's Chamber of Commerce & Industry Lahore (WCCIL) for a dialogue on workplace safety



Awareness Session at the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Karachi, led by Assistant Registrar Sidra Bhoja



Ms. Amina Rafiq, Assistant Registrar Peshawar, led an awareness session at the Hayatabad Regional Office of NADRA



Awareness session at Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA)



Awareness session with legal associates and interns from Dahri Law Associates



Awareness Session at the Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) Quetta



Awareness Session at National Highway Authority Karachi



At the Provincial Management Services Academy, Ms. Amina Rafiq, Assistant Registrar, delivered a lecture to Pre-Service Revenue Officers on the Act 2010.



Awareness session with legal associates and interns from Dahri Law Associates



Awareness seminar at the Federal Bureau of Revenue (FBR) Lahore



Awareness Session at the Peshawar Office of the General Post Office



Our Quetta team joined hands with the Anti-Narcotics Force's Legal Wing for a session on workplace harassment.



Awareness session on workplace harassment at UBL Bank Regional Headquarters, Peshawar.

# NOTABLE JUDGMENTS



## **Rs. 1 Million Fine Imposed in Workplace Harassment Case at NIRM**

The Federal Ombudsperson for Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace has imposed a penalty of Rs. 1,000,000 on a senior official of the National Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine (NIRM), Islamabad, after finding him guilty of harassment and gender-based discrimination under the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010.

Relying on *Salman Bukhari v. Nadia Hassan* and exercising powers under Section 4(4)(ii)(e) of the Act, the Ombudsperson ordered that half of the fine be paid as compensation and the remaining half be deposited in the National Exchequer. The order also recommends the transfer of the accused to a post without administrative authority, ensuring a safer workplace environment and preventing further abuse of power.

## **FOSPAH Orders Rs. 1 Million Compensation in Harassment Case Involving Minor Student**

FOSPAH has directed a university professor in Islamabad to pay Rs. 1 million in compensation for harassing a 17-year-old A-Level student during private tutoring sessions.

Following a detailed inquiry, the accused was found guilty under Section 2(h)(i) of the 2010 Harassment Act. The university has been instructed to establish an Inquiry Committee, display the Code of Conduct, and conduct awareness sessions for faculty and students.

This case reinforces that students, including minors, are protected under the Harassment Act, and that accountability extends to all learning spaces.

### **Plot Restored After FOSPAH Intervention**

Ms. Romana Bashir approached FOSPAH after her 7 Marla plot in Bahria Town, Islamabad, was cancelled by the management on the grounds of partial non-payment of additional development charges. Despite her repeated visits to the housing society over four years, the matter remained unresolved.

Upon review, FOSPAH observed that Bahria Town had cancelled the plot without issuing a notice or providing the complainant with an opportunity of hearing—actions contrary to the principles of due process.

FOSPAH directed Bahria Town to restore the complainant’s allotment and hand over possession of a plot of equal value in a developed area. The management complied, and Ms. Bashir has now received her new allotment letter.

This case reaffirms FOSPAH’s commitment to ensuring fairness, transparency, and protection of individual rights in property-related matters.

### **President Upholds FOSPAH’s Decision in Digital Harassment Case**

The President of Pakistan has upheld FOSPAH’s decision in a landmark case of digital sexual harassment at the State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan. The complainant, Ms. Urooj Wahid, reported receiving inappropriate WhatsApp messages from her senior colleague. FOSPAH found the conduct unwelcome and suggestive, constituting harassment under the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, and imposed removal from service with Rs. 250,000 compensation.

Upon appeal, the President upheld the finding of harassment, converted the penalty to compulsory retirement, and enhanced the compensation to Rs. 1,000,000, recognizing the distress and career impact faced by the complainant. The decision reinforces that harassment through digital means is equally punishable under workplace laws and marks another step toward ensuring safe and dignified work environments for women.



# FEDERAL OMBUDSPERSON SECRETARIAT for Protection Against Harassment

FOSPAH



## FROM FILING TO CONCLUSION IN JUST 90 DAYS

For lodging workplace harassment and Women's Property  
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