

PRESS RELEASE

PUBLIC STATEMENT - REGARDING (ALLEGED) HARASSMENT CASE

June 30, 2025: The Institute of Business Administration, Karachi (IBA Karachi) is an institution of excellence where the welfare of the faculty, staff and the students is of foremost importance. Amongst its mission and core values, non-discrimination and gender empowerment are those of which the IBA is profoundly committed towards and have been widely recognized and acknowledged.

It is inevitable for disputes to arise, however, at IBA we adopt the policy to deal with all disputes in a non-acrimonious and professional manner which is in consonance with our core value to have the ability and willingness to accept and coexist with other opinions and behaviors. Moreover, IBA respects all legal and quasi-judicial authorities and is committed to, subject to its rights, to challenge any decision, complying with the decisions of all such authorities.

In the year, 2023, a complaint was filed by one of the former lecturers, of the IBA, namely Ms Zahra Sabri [‘Complainant’], against the Registrar, IBA, which was placed before an Inquiry Committee established under the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010. In its opinion, the Inquiry Committee, which is a merely recommendatory body, exonerated the Registrar, IBA, but issued certain recommendations, to the Competent Authority, against the administration of IBA such as issuing a letter of apology and compensating the Complainant in the sum of PKR 300,000. However, since the complaint was not against the administration of IBA, therefore, the Competent Authority did not approve the recommendations of the Inquiry Committee.

The decision of the Competent Authority was challenged by the Complainant before the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh. The recent verdict of the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh does not affirm the recommendations of the Inquiry Committee but has only allowed the appeal of the Complainant, by directing the appointment of a new Competent Authority to implement the recommendations, on the technical ground that the Competent Authority had no power to review and/or disagree with the recommendations of the Inquiry Committee and that such recommendations of the Inquiry Committee, followed by the decision of the Competent Authority, can only be challenged before the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh.

IBA has challenged the decision of the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh before the Honorable Sindh High Court because, based on legal advice, IBA is of the opinion that the powers of the Competent Authority have been wrongly interpreted. The Honorable Sindh High Court, vide its Order dated: 26-06-2025, has been pleased to direct the newly designated Competent Authority that the letter of apology and the cheque of PKR 300,000 shall not be handed over to the Complainant till the decision of the case by the Honorable Sindh High Court. As the case is pending, IBA reiterates that no Judicial forum or Quasi-Judicial forum has affirmed the recommendations of the Inquiry Committee and that the issue as to whether the recommendations of the Inquiry Committee were legal and valid is still to be decided by the Honorable Sindh High Court and in future proceedings before the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh.

In the end, we expect that till the issue is finally decided by the abovementioned forums, no person pre-judges and formulates opinions on the basis of the statements issued by any particular party or on the basis of misinformation, false narratives and false allegations being spread on social media.