

Sept 6 reminds us
 unmatched bravery
 of armed forces...



Saudi Arabia has always supported Pakistan and
 we need to bring out the positive aspects of us. We
 have no shortage of talent in Pakistan

Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Fahd bin Saud Al-Mulki

DAILY LEAD PAKISTAN PESHAWAR MONDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 2020

Editorial & Opinion

Ombudsmen conference

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President Dr. Arif Alvi is the first President of Pakistan who takes keen interest to reinforce the strength of the Quasi Judicial Institutions by enhancing their services at the doorstep of the general public by using all modern media tools. The Ombudsmen Institutional set up is a very useful instrument through which the government can streamline systemic issues of public service departments and lesser the burden of judicial administrative cases by using the efficacy of Ombudsmen system. The President Dr. Arif Alvi has rightly focused it, called an Ombudsmen Conference in the President Secretariat three weeks back. The Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan, Banking, Insurance and Ombudsperson for Harassment at Workplace attended this conference. The Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan is the key institution which deals maladministration against all federal government institutions.

The Honourable President Dr. Arif Alvi while speaking to the Conference appreciated performance and special initiatives of Federal Ombudsman and expressed his hope that the Federal Ombudsman would continue his efforts to help the people against administrative injustices. The President also stressed on the need of provision of speedy and free of cost justice at the doorstep of the common man by extending its services to maximum number of people.

During this conference, the Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan Syed Tahir Shahbaz highlighted the performance of his institution and said that more than 75,000 cases had been disposed of during 2019 while 97% of his decisions got implemented. He said that 1039 cases review petitions were filed to the Wafaqi Mohtasib while in 317 cases; appeals had been filed to the President which constituted 0.4% of total number of cases. He said that President upheld 90% decisions of the Federal Ombudsman.

He informed the President that the year 2019 was observed as the year of awareness; therefore, a comprehensive public awareness campaign was run through electronic, print and social media. Due to this campaign, considerable increase in number of cases has been recorded in Balochistan, South Punjab and Abbotabad. He said that awareness seminars were also conducted in different Universities and remote areas of Balochistan, Bahawalpur, Multan, Lahore, Peshawar and Abbotabad. The Speaker National Assembly, Chairman Senate, Governors of Punjab, Sind, KP and members of Parliament were also briefed about the role of Wafaqi Mohtasib.

He said that to improve the redressal mechanism, the officers of 10 regional offices of WMS made 370 visits to 72 districts and Sub distt under Outreach Complaint Resolution Programme. He

briefed the President that every finding was decided within a period of 60 days and the review petition within 45 days. He further briefed that 188 Federal Agencies were on board; their focal persons had been nominated who were bound to decide a complaint in 30 days within the department. In case the Agency did not decide the case within 30 days the same transferred automatically to the portal of WMS and registered as fresh complaint under Integrated Complaint Resolution (ICR) Mechanism.

Syed Tahir Shahbaz, the Federal Ombudsman of Pakistan also presented the first 06 month's Report from January to June, 2020 and said that more than 47,000 cases had been registered which showed 38% increase than the previous year and decided more than 41,000 cases. He said that major portion of these complaints were against Electricity and Gas distribution companies. He said that although corona pandemic had affected the performance of most of the institutions but this has not affected the process of registration of complaints in the Wafaqi Mohtasib Office, because 60 per cent of the complaints were registered through online registration system.

The report also highlighted different initiatives taken by the Federal Ombudsman, especially efforts to improve the living conditions of prisoners in jails as per directions of Supreme Court of

Pakistan under Jails Reforms. The focus of Wafaqi Mohtasib office was to improve jail conditions by removing irritants of criminal administration justice system. Report speaks that presence of a Psychiatrist and a Doctor had been ensured in every jail of the country. Mentally sick and addict prisoners had been got segregated from other prisoners in all jails. As per report, 06 quarterly progress reports to the Supreme Court in this regard after holding 12 meetings with the provincial chief secretaries and other stakeholders. The WMS has also taken number of initiatives for the welfare of Overseas Pakistanis. One Window Facilitation Desks had been established at 08 international airports of Pakistan where officers of 12 departments remain present round the clock to help the overseas Pakistanis. The Overseas Pakistanis having Pakistan Origin Card have been facilitated to use all services of banking system and other institutions being Pakistanis. The CDNS(National Savings) have also been asked to provide its services to Senior Citizens, Widows and Pensioners as per banking standards and transfer profits against their saving certificates into their personal accounts in scheduled banks.

The imitative of the President to hold Ombudsman Conference is really appreciable who is struggling with kind heart in provision of justice at the doorstep of a common man.