

Date: 22 Oct, 2024

The Honorable Ms. Maryam Nawaz Sharif,  
Chief Minister of Punjab

**Subject: Urgent Inquiry into Large Scale Alleged Corruption and Bribery in Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA). Refer to PRA orders No. 0/30/2024/AHG/1, 0/30/2024/AHG/2, & 0/30/2024/AHG/3 (all of them dated 22 April 2024)**

Honorable Ms. Maryam Nawaz Sharif,

It is with great concern and urgency that I bring to your attention serious allegations of corruption and bribery within the Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA). As per the above referred orders (attached), the PRA, after a thorough investigation, imposed a substantial fine of more than **PKR 3.3 billion** on Baskin Robbins, a multinational ice cream company operating in Pakistan, for GST & Tax evasion and other illicit activities.

However, it is now alleged that instead of this fine of PKR 3.3 billion being deposited into the national treasury, corrupt officials within the PRA, including Appeals Commissioner Zaigham Abbass, are accepting bribes amounting to crores of rupees. This illicit activity is not only depriving the nation of much-needed revenue but also eroding public trust in government institutions.

2 of the 3 above referred orders were annulled by the Appeals Commissioner Zaigham Abbass. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> order the fine was reduced to a fraction of the actual amount.

**It is interesting to note that the same pattern is recently observed in the Appeals Commissioner Zaigham Abbass office. Recently, orders worth more than PKR 15 billion were annulled or reversed by the Appeals Commissioner Zaigham Abbass.**

- If the Appeals Commissioner's decisions on the orders were correct then PRA should have modified its operations to avoid annulment of new cases/orders in future.
- On the other hand, if the Appeals Commissioner's decisions on the orders were incorrect then PRA should have appealed.

But neither PRA appealed against the Appeals Commissions' decision nor it changed its procedures. This indicate a large scale corruption ring-operation in PRA through which PRA first issues large fines on tax evaders and then annuls the same orders by allegedly accepting large bribes from the concerned tax evaders – thus depriving the national treasury of its revenue.

In light of these grave allegations, I humbly request the following:



- 1. Formation of a High-Level Inquiry Committee:** The immediate establishment of a high-level inquiry committee comprising individuals of impeccable integrity to thoroughly investigate these allegations. This committee should be empowered to summon any official, access all relevant records, and conduct a transparent investigation.
- 2. Swift Action Against Corrupt Officials:** If the allegations are proven true, the committee should recommend immediate termination and arrest of all involved officials, including Appeals Commissioner Zaigham Abbas. They should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law to serve as a deterrent to others.
- 3. Recovery of Misappropriated Funds:** All misappropriated funds should be recovered and deposited into the national treasury.
- 4. Strengthening PRA's Internal Controls:** The committee should also recommend measures to strengthen PRA's internal controls and prevent future instances of such corruption.

The people of Punjab have placed their trust in your leadership. I urge you to take swift and decisive action to address this matter and ensure that those responsible for this egregious breach of trust are held accountable.

Sincerely,



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(corporate whistle-blower)  
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