



Dated: March 29, 2019

**DR. MUHAMMAD RAHEEM AWAN**  
SECRETARY  
LAW & JUSTICE COMMISSION of PAKISTAN  
GOVERNMENT of PAKISTAN

### **PRESS RELEASE**

A delegation of representatives of the Bar Councils/Bar Associations from all over the country met the Hon'ble Mr. Justice Asif Saeed Khan Khosa, Chief Justice of Pakistan at the Supreme Court building, Islamabad, on 28-3-2019. The meeting was also attended by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Manzoor Ahmad Malik, Judge Supreme Court of Pakistan and Dr. Muhammad Raheem Awan, Secretary, National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee (NJPMC). The delegation discussed a number of issues with the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan including establishment of Model Courts at District level and entertainment of applications of aggrieved persons by the Sessions Judges as Ex-officio Justices of Peace under section 22-A Cr.P.C after approaching designated Superintendent of Police (Complaints). The delegation expressed their concern that the complaint redressal mechanism appears to have been made cumbersome for the general public who would now first have to approach the SHO concerned, then the Superintendent of Police (Complaints) and lastly the Ex-officio Justices of Peace/Sessions Judges.

Though, the Secretariat of the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, through its press release dated 15-3-2019 has already clarified the NJPMC policy directive regarding jurisdiction of a Justice of the Peace under section 22-A(6), Cr.P.C and the jurisdiction of a High Court under Article 199 of the Constitution, yet it is once again clarified that the statutory provisions i.e. sections 22-A and 22-B of the Cr.P.C have not been altered or amended and still hold the field and the Justices of Peace still enjoy statutory powers and can issue directions for redressal of complaints regarding non-registration of FIR and grievances against police. The new police redressal mechanism just provides an alternative to the three tiers police redressal complaint system as enunciated in judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan reported as PLD 2016 SC 581, in which it is held that for redressal of grievances, the complainant has to approach the SHO, DPO/SSP and RPO/DIG. Therefore, under the NJPMC policy directive (dated March 11, 2019), the complaint redressal mechanism has been simplified by providing a single forum for redressal of grievances and also in-turn creating an internal accountability mechanism in the police department. Moreover, a specific time period of seven days has been provided in which the complaint has to be decided/disposed and after the expiry of specified period the complainant will be at liberty to invoke the jurisdiction of the ex-officio justices of peace/Sessions Judges and as such there is no embargo upon their jurisdiction to entertain such applications.

The delegation of lawyers made some suggestions regarding the complaint redressal mechanism, upon which the Honorable Chief Justice of Pakistan said that the same will be placed in the next meeting of the NJPMC for deliberations. It was also agreed that for better coordination between bar and bench monthly meetings may be arranged/conducted.

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(Dr. Muhammad Raheem Awan)  
Secretary