



No. 2(119)/2021-Chair NCHR
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
5th Floor Evacuee Trust Complex, F-5/1,
Agha Khan Road, Islamabad.



Islamabad, the 8th February, 2023

Subject: BAN ON PUBLIC DISCOURSE REGARDING THE INCIDENT OF RAPE IN FATIMA JINNAH PARK, F-9 ISLAMABAD.

Dear *Mr Muhammad Saleem Baig,* *Salaam.*

The National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) is a statutory body set up under the NCHR Act XVI of 2012. The NCHR Act, 2012 stipulates a broad and overarching mandate for the promotion and protection of human rights, as provided for in Pakistan's Constitution, domestic law and international treaties.

2. NCHR is alarmed by the blanket ban on public discourse regarding the harrowing incident of rape in Fatima Jinnah Park, F-9. With the perpetrators of the horrific crime still unidentified, a ban on speaking about the incident will prevent the case from receiving due notice and attention from the general public and the media.

3. If any channel or person violates the privacy of a victim they must face individual legal action instead of imposing an umbrella ban on coverage of the incident. Lack of reporting of sexual harassment undermines the gravity of the case and silences discourse on a major issue facing the country

4. Furthermore, the Commission has seen a drastic increase in the number of complaints regarding gender-based violence in its complaint cells/offices across Pakistan. Public safety for Pakistani women in major cities is an urgent matter for consideration. According to a survey by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), "In Karachi, Pakistan, 78% of the respondents had felt harassed or uncomfortable at some point while using public transportation in the previous year."

5. In this regard NCHR urges PEMRA to review its decision. We, as a country cannot afford to be left behind the rest of the world in terms of awareness and public discourse on serious issues of women rights— PEMRA must act swiftly to overturn the ban and ensure protection of citizen's right to freedom of information.

Yours Sincerely,
Rabiya Javeri
Rabiya Javeri Agha
Chairperson (NCHR)

Mr. Muhammad Saleem Baig,
Chairman PEMRA,
Islamabad.