

THE FEDERAL TAX OMBUDSMAN ISLAMABAD

Complaint No.17249/KHI/Cust/2026

Dated: 29/09/2026 *R.O. Karachi

Mr. Muhammad Sadiq,

K-762, Street 4, Al Khizra Society,
Gulshan e Behar, Sector 16/A, Orangi Town,
Karachi.

... Complainant

Versus

The Secretary,
Revenue Division,
Islamabad.

... Respondent

Dealing Officer

: Mr. Gul Rehman, Advisor

Authorized Representative

: Complainant in person

Departmental Representative

: Ms. Asiya Syed, AC Customs
CoC (Airports), Karachi

Date of hearing(s)

: 13.10.2026

FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The above mentioned complaint was filed on 29.09.2026 against the Collector, Collectorate of Customs (Airports), Karachi under Section 10(1) of the Federal Tax Ombudsman Ordinance, 2000 (FTO Ordinance) regarding mistreatment of the Complainant by the Customs staff while travelling abroad through SriLankan Airlines Flight No.UL-152.

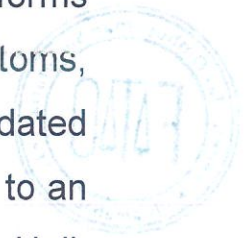


2. In summary, the Complainant has agitated that he alongwith his wife Ms. Parveen Sadiq and son Sheikh Abdul Hadi, were departing from Karachi to Dhaka via Colombo on SriLankan Airlines flight UL-152 on 28 September 2026. During checking of his luggage by Customs official Mr. Rizwan Raza, Preventive Officer retained his luggage and asked him to go. When Complainant questioned detention of his luggage, the said official instead of giving any clear

* Date of Registration with FTO Secretariat

reason, behaved rudely and discourteously with him. Subsequently, Mr. Rizwan Raza took Complainant to a room, where he started beating him severely. Complainant was extremely frightened and bewildered as to why he was being beaten and started screaming. During this time, another person namely Zohaib was also present there. Both Mr. Rizwan Raza and Zohaib together started beating the Complainant. Mr. Rizwan Raza forcibly told Zohaib to lock the door and not let anyone go outside. Somehow, with great difficulty, Complainant escaped from there and reached the examination area, he was covered in blood and in a state of severe mental shock. Seeing his condition, some plainclothes people present there asked the Complainant about the happening and recorded a detailed video of his wounds and marks of violence on his body. After that, officials from FIA, ASF, and IB also recorded detailed video, and Complainant narrated the entire incident in front of them as well. Later, he was allowed to board his Flight for Dhaka.

3. The complaint was forwarded to the Secretary, Revenue Division for comments under Section 10(4) of the FTO Ordinance and Section 9(1) of the Federal Ombudsmen Institutional Reforms Act, 2013. In response thereto, the Collectorate of Customs, Airports, Karachi submitted comments through letter dated 09.10.2026, wherein it was stated that the complaint pertains to an incident dated 28.09.2026 at the International Departure Hall, Jinnah International Airport (JIAP), Karachi, involving Mr. Muhammad Sadiq, Passport No.KW5468343, who was travelling abroad through SriLankan Airlines Flight No.UL-152. Upon receipt of the complaint, the matter was examined at the departmental level, including scrutiny of the available CCTV footage and relevant Customs record. As per the available CCTV footage, the complainant arrived at the International Departure Hall at



approximately 04:13 hours. During routine security screening, the Airport Security Force (ASF) staff observed contents in his baggage apparently of a commercial nature. Consequently, the passenger and his baggage were referred to the Joint Search Counter for detailed examination. Following examination by the concerned security personnel, the passenger was referred to the Customs Counter at approximately 04:57 hours for further scrutiny of the goods. Upon examination by Customs staff, the passenger was found carrying various goods, including 10 cartridges of Humulin 70/30 insulin, 100 injections of Recormon (Epoetin Beta), 16 sleeves of ESSE cigarettes, assorted medicines, cosmetics, clothing, footwear, food products and household appliances, including a rice cooker and an air fryer. Considering the nature, quantity and assortment of these articles, the examining staff formed a prima facie view that the goods were of a commercial nature and required further scrutiny under the applicable Customs laws and regulations. Accordingly, the goods were detained under the prescribed procedure. During the examination proceedings, the complainant was also taken to a separate area for personal search. Subsequent examination of the available CCTV footage raised concerns regarding the manner in which the search was undertaken, particularly the absence of fellow officers or witnesses and adherence to the prescribed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The Collectorate took cognizance of this procedural irregularity, notwithstanding the commercial nature of the goods recovered from the passenger's baggage. Consequently, an Explanation Memo dated 08.10.2026 was issued to Preventive Officer Mr. Rizwan Raza, requiring him to explain the deviation from the Standard Procedures. The officer was directed to submit his written explanation within three days. Meanwhile, he has been



removed immediately from his place of posting. Thus, the Collectorate has already initiated administrative measures in response to the procedural concerns identified during examination of the complaint.



4. During the hearing on 13.10.2026, Mr. Muhammad Sadiq (Complainant) reiterated the contents of the complaint and pressed for initiating disciplinary proceedings against customs staff. Ms. Asiya Syed, Assistant Collector (DR), on the other hand argued that the contents of the complaint regarding interception and examination of the passenger's baggage are acknowledged to the extent that the complainant was subjected to security screening and subsequent Customs examination. Nevertheless, the examination was initiated following the detection of suspicious contents during ASF screening and the subsequent examination by the customs staff led to the recovery of various goods in commercial quantity including 10 cartridges of Humulin 70/30 insulin, 100 injections of Recormon (Epoetin Beta), 16 sleeves of ESSE cigarettes, assorted medicines, cosmetics, clothing, footwear, food products and household appliances, including a rice cooker and an air fryer. Accordingly, the goods were detained under the prescribed procedure. The allegations of harassment, intimidation and inappropriate conduct have been examined in the light of the available departmental record and CCTV footage. While the record establishes that the passenger underwent detailed examination and that heated arguments were exchanged between the passenger who is a Frequently Travelling Passenger (FTP) and the examining staff. The footage reviewed did not disclose any visible incident of physical assault by Customs officials in the areas covered by the cameras. Nevertheless, the observations are confined to the material available for examination and do not constitute an



independent determination of events, if any, occurring outside CCTV coverage. Nevertheless, the Collectorate has not disregarded the complaint and has independently examined the conduct of the concerned officer namely Mr. Rizwan Raza, Preventive Officer particularly with reference to compliance with the prescribed procedures. The circumstances surrounding the search, particularly its conduct without the presence of fellow officers or independent witnesses, raised concerns regarding compliance with the prescribed SOPs. DR further elaborated that the role of concerned Customs officials has been examined independently, and the procedural concerns identified during the process have been duly taken cognizance of. The Collectorate recognizes the importance of ensuring that Customs examination and enforcement activities are carried out strictly in accordance with the law and prescribed SOPs, while safeguarding the dignity and lawful rights of passengers. In the instant case, although the nature and quantity of the goods justified detailed Customs scrutiny, the manner of conducting the personal search raised procedural concerns. Accordingly, an Explanation Memo was issued to the officer concerned, and he was subsequently removed from International Departures through notification dated 08.10.2026. These measures demonstrate that the matter has been taken seriously and that appropriate administrative steps have already been initiated.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

5. In view of the supra, FBR to direct:

- (i) the Collector of Customs (Airports), Karachi to personally conduct a fact-finding inquiry regarding alleged mistreatment of the complainant by the Customs staff, *inter alia*, providing the complainant a sufficient



opportunity of hearing and initiate appropriate proceedings, in light of the findings of the fact finding inquiry, under the Government Servants (Efficiency & Discipline) Rules against the officials found responsible, strictly in accordance with law; and

- (ii) report compliance within 30 days.



Dated: 22 OCT 2026

(M. Zafar ul Haq Hijazi)

Federal Tax Ombudsman