

Our Correspondent

IBA launches Dispute Resolution Forum

The Centre for Executive Education (CEE) of the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi, launched the IBA Dispute Resolution Forum (DRF) at the City Campus to promote services such as mediation, arbitration and conciliation as effective means of resolving disputes especially in the civil commercial space.

The IBA DRF is inspired by the Harvard Negotiation Project, a project created at the Harvard University, which deals with issues of negotiations and conflict resolution. The IBA-CEE has launched this forum to support the business community, especially owners of family businesses, to take advantage of available alternative dispute mechanisms such as mediation for cost-effective and expeditious dispute resolution. The DRF will seek to implement non-court based practices of dispute resolution and negotiation by working on real-world disputes, improving conflict intervention methods, providing education and training, writing and disseminating conflict resolution techniques and practices.

The forum will provide services of a panel of experts in dispute resolution for commercial disputes and negotiations. The forum is spearheaded by an Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) team, comprising Advocate of the High Courts of Pakistan and Chair ICC Mediation Commission Navin Merchant; General Consul, Company Secretary and Head Corporate Communications ICI Pakistan Limited Nausheen Ahmad, Advocate and Assistant Professor IBA Karachi Mohammad Sohaib Saleem, and Barrister at law Ijaz Ahmed and Associates, Hardwicke Chambers in Lincoln's Inn, London and Advocate High Court, Altaf Qureshi.

Addressing the audience, chief guest CEO Pakistan Business Council Ehsan Malik highlighted the issues faced by businesses in Pakistan. He stated, "Dispute resolution processes in Pakistan are lengthy and rarely conclusive, which stifles growth and innovation, impedes investment and results in red tape. Pakistan has been ranked 136 out of 190 countries for ease of doing business by the World Bank and on the index of enforcing contracts, the country was ranked 156."

In his opening remarks, Executive Director IBA Dr Farrukh Iqbal said that, "Through forums such as the IBA Dispute Resolution Forum, we can offer business expeditious and cost-effective means for dispute resolution, therefore increasing confidence and removing impediments."

Furthermore, Associate Dean Faculty of Business Administration IBA Dr Huma Baqai said, "Mediation is a very effective tool to assist businesses to get speedy enforcement of contracts and also to resolve their disputes amicably."