

REGISTERED



GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

ORDER OF INQUIRY

No. SO(ESTT.)10-509/13: WHEREAS, Deputy Director (Admn), Directorate General of Special Education, Lahore vide letter dated 25.07.2024 has forwarded a visit report conducted by District Education Officer (Special Education), D.G Khan wherein it has been informed that he visited Government Special Education Centre, Alipur on 03.07.2024 at 0840 hours and found that **Ms. Sonia Barkat**, Senior Special Education Teacher (Visually Impaired Field / BS-17), previously posted as Incharge Headmistress, Government Special Education Centre, Alipur presently under suspension and reported to department ('**accused officer**') was absent from duty since 02.07.2024 without any prior information or approval. She arrived at the Centre at 0930 hours when informed by the school staff. However, her absence had already been marked by him and shared in the DGSE Picture Activities group. Since the clerk was also absent on 03.07.2024, the Incharge failed to provide any record or produce physical store items purchased in June 2024 for verification. Further investigation of record, revealed the irregularities over budget spending, uniform distribution record, and biometric attendance data. Upon examination serious rules violations, mis-procurement in uniforms and other articles, non-availability of store items was found and unjustified large amounts parked in the school / DDO bank account without any breakup or reconciliation. Given the severity of the matter, her explanation was immediately called for via letter No. DEO (Spl.Edu.)DGK/712 dated 05.07.2024. In light of the gravity of the allegations and the unsatisfactory/vague response submitted by the accused officer. It has been requested to initiate formal departmental inquiry proceedings against her under the PEEDA Act 2006 on the charges of inefficiency, misconduct, and corruption.

2. **AND WHEREAS**, in view of the facts and circumstances involved in the case and keeping in view the seriousness of the allegation contained in the probe report, the undersigned being the Competent Authority, under the Punjab Employees Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability Act, 2006 ('**Act**'), in due consideration of the facts of the case, is of the opinion that there are sufficient grounds to proceed against, **Ms. Sonia Barkat**, Senior Special Education Teacher (Visually Impaired Field / BS-17), previously posted as Incharge Headmistress, Government Special Education Centre, Alipur presently under suspension and reported to department ('**accused officer**') on the charges of inefficiency, misconduct and corruption, under section 5 read with Section 9 of the Act *ibid*. I, therefore, orders initiation of disciplinary proceedings through a regular inquiry against the accused officer and under the Act *ibid* by appointing **Mr. Muhammad Sharif, Headmaster (BS-18), Govt. (Middle) Special Education Centre, Hasilpur** as Inquiry Officer to proceed against the accused officer in terms of Section 5 read with Section 9 of the Act *ibid*.

3. The Inquiry Officer will proceed against the accused officer on the following charges of inefficiency, misconduct and corruption:

1. The accused officer, Ms. Sonia Barkat, was absent from duty on July 2 and 3, 2024, without prior intimation or approval from the

District Education Officer. During the visit of DEO on 03.07.2024, she presented an unsigned OPD slip (OPD No. 1022) dated July 2, 2024, as justification, which lacks any recommendation for medical leave or hospital admission, suggesting possible falsification. Her failure to seek permission for leave, coupled with presenting unverified medical documentation, constitutes a clear case of inefficiency, misconduct, and deceit, demonstrating an intent to mislead her reporting authorities.

2. The accused officer failed to uphold punctuality and discipline among her teaching staff, as evidenced by the frequent late arrivals of teachers under her supervision (Ms. Javeria Zia, Ms. Khalida Ghaffar, and Ms. Rabia Barkat) according to biometric attendance records. Despite her general claim of issuing office orders, her neglect to issue targeted warnings or explanations contributed to persistent late comings among her team, reflecting inefficiency in leadership and supervision.
3. The accused officer herself exhibited frequent late arrivals, as recorded in the school's biometric system. Biometric attendance data from the month of February 2024 shows that, in the month of February, she arrived late on the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, and 28th. In March, the dates were 1st, 7th, 8th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 22nd, and 28th. In April, she arrived late on the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 6th, 8th, 16th, 22nd, 24th, and 29th. In May, the dates were 3rd, 4th, 6th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th. In June, she was late on the 7th, 13th, and 25th. This lack of punctuality from the officer in charge undermines her role as a leader and disrupts school discipline, as she failed to serve as a positive example for her staff, adversely affecting the school's operational standards.
4. During the visit of DEO on July 3, 2024, the Centre clerk was found absent without a documented leave application. The accused officer failed to produce any record justifying this absence, suggesting an attempt to shield the absent staff member from disciplinary action. Her failure to hold her staff accountable demonstrates inefficiency and misconduct, as she did not enforce attendance policies in alignment with departmental standards.
5. Despite being allocated a budget for Centre relocation, the accused officer continued to operate in an unsafe, century-old building. Her negligence in relocating the Centre to a safer facility shows inefficiency in her duties, jeopardizing the safety and well-being of students and staff, and failing to fulfil her fiduciary responsibility to safeguard departmental resources and stakeholders.
6. A sum exceeding Rs. 1.4 million remains unreconciled in the Centre's bank account under the supervision of the accused officer.

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Her inability to account for or manage these funds effectively demonstrates inefficiency in her fiscal responsibilities, compromising transparency and accountability in her role as the Centre in-charge.

7. In her capacity as chair of the Bid Evaluation Committee, the accused officer breached financial regulations and General Financial Rules by failing to invite committee members for the physical count of uniforms. She issued a technical inspection certificate and distributed uniforms without proper verification, raising suspicions of mis-procurement and irregularities in distribution.
8. The accused officer failed to follow established procurement principles during the uniform procurement process, issuing inconsistent and inaccurate supply orders on January 16, 2024, to M/s Ideal Enterprises and M/s Nadeem Brothers that did not match actual demand. Despite both vendors failing to fulfil orders, the accused officer neither blacklisted the firms nor extended the validity period of the procurement process as required. Moreover, the accused officer also failed to obtain a performance guarantee from M/s Nadeem Brothers. Uniforms were not delivered to special students on time, resulting in a delayed disbursement two days before school closure.
9. The accused officer uploaded the tender on October 3, 2023, with a deadline for October 18, 2023, yet failed to complete the procurement within the bid validity period, which expired two months after bid opening on November 17, 2024. The accused officer did not initiate re-tendering but continued with the expired tender, contrary to Clause 1(f) of the PPRA Rules, 2014.
10. The necessary performance guarantee was not obtained, and show-cause notices to the non-compliant bidders were not issued as required by Clause 21 of PPRA Rules 2014.
11. A supply order issued to M/s Nadeem Brothers on January 16, 2024, was valued at Rs. 654,122 instead of correct Rs. 409,300, *(the supply order was with mismatch totals that did not align with record)* resulting in discrepancies that do not align with actual uniform demand.
12. A subsequent supply order was issued to M/s Nadeem Brothers on April 18, 2024, despite prior non-compliance by the said firm.
13. The technical inspection certificate dated May 22, 2024, was issued without lab testing, contrary to Clause 7(a)-(d) of the tender document requirements. No committee members other than the accused officer signed the Technical Inspection Report. The certificate of conformity was issued before lab test results, raising concerns about the transparency and validity of the process.

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14. You failed to ensure proper sizing specifications for uniforms prior to supply, leading to suspected manipulation of uniform sizes with an inflated demand for larger sizes. The enrolment data indicates a discrepancy between the ordered and actual demand by size category, leading to potential embezzlement.
15. Supply records, including the uniform disbursement register, lack necessary information and signatures, raising doubts regarding record authenticity. The requirement to maintain proper documentation and oversight of the procurement process was not met, leading to accountability issues.
16. The accused officer incurred an expenditure of Rs. 557,817 under various heads of accounts in the last quarter of 2023, excluding uniforms, petrol, and stipends, with a significant portion spent after the summer vacation period. When requested to provide records or documentation for items purchased, the accused officer failed to present any. A substantial number of items remain unaccounted for, suggesting misappropriation of funds without any requisitions from relevant staff.
17. As per Bill No. 334 dated February 23, 2024, the accused officer authorized the purchase of two uniforms for the Centre driver, including trousers, a shirt, and a cap. The cost of black shoes was inflated to Rs. 5,000, which is not justified. The accused officer also purchased a Peshawari Chappal for the driver at Rs. 5,500, which does not conform to the Centre dress code and suggests misappropriation of funds.
18. The accused officer authorized the purchase of two tires for the Centre bus under Bill Nos. 392 and 393 dated April 15, 2024, each for Rs. 49,914, without prior inspection by the Motor Vehicle Examination or a requisition from the driver.
19. The logbook and vehicle history sheet also lack details on the mileage covered by the old tires, raising suspicion regarding the necessity of these purchases and potential misuse of public funds through bill splitting.
20. A total of Rs. 44,250 was withdrawn under Object Code A9201 for computer hardware, with unsupported bills for items that do not qualify as hardware, such as consumable printer cartridges. No cartridges are recorded as available despite claims of use. Furthermore, repeated purchases of keyboards and mouse, despite having only one computer, lack justification and suggest potential embezzlement.
21. The accused officer withdrew Rs. 60,000 for furniture repairs through three bills of Rs. 20,000 each, citing work descriptions for polishing benches that were not validated by requisitions or school staff. Cross-verification with school staff confirmed no such repairs

were performed, indicating that these claims were fabricated and funds misappropriated.

22. Bill No. 21 dated December 14, 2023, authorized purchases of flashcards, worksheets, and colour pencils totalling Rs. 44,840, yet these items were not available during inspection, despite their entry in stock records.
23. A separate purchase of five decorative plants for Rs. 35,400 under Bill No. 344 dated April 4, 2024, also yielded no physical items during inspection. Additional consumable items under Bill Nos. 344, 407, and 408 reflect misclassification and misappropriation totalling Rs. 115,805 across multiple accounts.

4. The accused officer is directed to submit her written defence to the Inquiry Officer, within **07** days of the receipt of this order. If she fails to submit her written defence within the prescribed period, it shall be presumed that either she has no defence to offer or she has declined to offer the same and she has accepted the charges.

5. **Deputy District Education Officer (Special Education), D.G Khan** is appointed as Departmental Representative in terms of Section 9(1)(c) read with Section 12 of the Act *ibid*.

6. In case, the accused officer desires to consult any record on which the aforesaid charges are based or is relevant to the aforesaid charges, she may do so with prior arrangement with the Departmental Representative within **03** days of the receipt of this Order.

7. The Inquiry Officer will submit report and recommendations to the undersigned within sixty days (**60 days**) of the initiation of inquiry in terms of Section 10(6) of the Act *ibid*.

Saima Saheed
(SAIMA SAEED)

SECRETARY to
GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB
SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT /
COMPETENT AUTHORITY

Dated Lahore the

November, 28 /2024

NO. & DATE EVEN

A copy is forwarded to: -

1. The Director General, Special Education Punjab, Lahore.
2. The District Education Officer (Special Education), DG Khan to ensure delivery of this order to the accused officer through all possible means.

3. **Mr. Muhammad Sharif**, Headmaster (BS-18), Govt. (Middle) Special Education Centre, Hasilpur / **Inquiry Officer** to conduct the inquiry as per mandate of PEEDA Act, 2006 and record statements of all concerned and provide right of cross examination to the accused officer.
4. **Deputy District Education Officer (Special Education), D.G Khan / Departmental Representative** is directed to ensure delivery of this order to the accused officer through all possible means, provide complete relevant record to the Inquiry Officer and to the accused officer, *if so requested by them*, and assist the Inquiry Officer on each and every date of hearing proceedings.
5. **Headmaster / Headmistress**, Government Special Education Centre, Alipur.
6. **Accused Officer / Ms. Sonia Barkat**, Senior Special Education Teacher (Visually Impaired Field / BS-17), previously posted as Incharge Headmistress, Government Special Education Centre, Alipur presently under suspension and reported to department.
7. PS to Secretary Special Education Department.


SECTION OFFICER (ESTT.-I)
SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT