



**DECISION OF THE DISCIPLINARY & ETHICS COMMITTEE OF
PAKISTAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION**

Passed on Tuesday 7th of January, 2025

PAKISTAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE

COMPOSED OF

ACTING CHAIRPERSON	MR. AZEEM AKRAM
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON	MR. MUHAMMAD ALI
MEMBERS:	MR. ZARAK ZAMAN KHAN
	MR. MALIK MAQSOOD KHOKHAR

**PAKISTAN NAVY SPORTS CONTROL COMMITTEE & OTHERS VERSUS
PAKISTAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION**

Complaint/Appeal No:

- Pakistan Navy Sports Control Committee vs Pakistan Football Federation in
Complaint/Appeal No.016/A/2024
- Pakistan Airforce Sports Control Committee vs Pakistan Football Federation in
Complaint/Appeal No.016/B/2024
- Pakistan Railways Sports Control Board vs Pakistan Football Federation in
Complaint/Appeal No.016/C/2024
- Pakistan Police Sports Control Board vs Pakistan Football Federation in
Complaint/Appeal No. 016/D/2024

Regarding: **APPEAL AGAINST DECLARING THE APPELLANTS INELIGIBLE FOR
PFF CONGRESS.**

PAKISTAN FOOTBALL FEDERATION

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📍 PFF Secretariat, Football House, Opposite Punjab Stadium, Ferozepur Road, Lahore, Pakistan. Postal Code. 54660

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Brief Facts:

1. In this case, we have multiple Complaints/appeals from different service organizations that have been consolidated into a single set of appeals due to the fact that they all involve the same issue - the interpretation of Article 16 and Article 24(3) of the Pakistan Football Federation Constitution (2014) (hereinafter referred as to the "PFF Constitution"). Rather than addressing each appeal individually, it is more efficient to consider them collectively as "Connected Complaints/ Appeals".
2. The background of each appeal involves a contentious issue that arose during the PFF Extraordinary Congress meeting on November 19, 2024. Five service organizations, who were deemed to be Congress Members under Article 23 and 24 of the PFF Constitution, objected to their suspension from voting rights in the said Congress. Specifically, Complainants/Appellants No.1 to 3 (Pakistan Navy Sports Control Committee, and Pakistan Airforce Sports Control Committee and Pakistan Police Sports Control Board) raised objections regarding their suspension while Complainants/Appellant No.4 (Pakistan Railways Sports Control Board) objected to not receiving an invitation to attend the PFF Extraordinary Congress Meeting via email on November 18, 2024.
3. The Executive Committee of the PFF along with officials from FIFA and AFC, jointly decided to refer the complaints from a total number of five service organizations to the PFF's internal bodies, specifically the PFF Disciplinary Committee. The Appellants did not object to this decision, which is confirmed by a letter from FIFA dated December 16, 2024. A relevant excerpt from this letter states:

"In addition to the above, the Bureau took note that, on 19 November 2024, just before the first Extraordinary PFF Congress could begin, the representatives of six departmental associations that had been excluded from the PFF Congress for failing to comply with statutory requirements requested to participate and vote at the congress. To ensure due process and to avoid risking the rejection of the proposed constitutional changes, it was decided not to allow their participation and, instead, that their request for inclusion would be referred to the PFF's internal bodies for appeal, in accordance with the established procedure. As a result, the members of the PFF were informed on the same day that the PFF



Congress would reconvene before 15 December 2024 to adopt the new PFF Constitution once the appeal had been resolved.

Moreover, the Bureau was made aware that, from 24 to 27 November 2024, massive political rallies in Islamabad led to the closure by the government of highways and public transportation throughout Punjab, making it impossible for the PFF administration to deal with the appeal process relating to the departmental associations. As a result, the normalisation committee was unable to convene the Extraordinary PFF Congress as previously agreed with FIFA and the AFC.”

4. It is important to highlight that the PFF Secretariat took steps to protect the fundamental rights of each department by sending multiple reminders for them to submit their respective appeals.
5. Each reminder was sent through a separate email, and a summary of the content from each email is included here for reference:

Sr. No	Service Organization/Department Name	Reminders to file an Appeal as communicated to the Departments by PFF Secretariat	Appeal Filed On
1.	Pakistan Navy Sports Control Committee	26.11.2024, 29.11.2024, 3.12.2024, 4.12.2024, 9.12.2024, 10.12.2024, 11.12.2024	12 th of December, 2024
2.	Pakistan Airforce Sports Control Committee	26.11.2024, 29.11.2024, 3.12.2024, 4.12.2024	6 th of December, 2024
3.	Pakistan Railways Sports Control Board	26.11.2024, 29.11.2024, 3.12.2024, 4.12.2024	11 th of December, 2024
4.	Pakistan Police Sports Control Board	26.11.2024, 29.11.2024, 3.12.2024, 4.12.2024, 9.12.2024, 10.12.2024, 13.12.2024, 16.12.2024 and 21.12.2024	21 st of December, 2024 followed by another brief on 23 rd of December, 2024
5.	PIA	26.11.2024, 29.11.2024, 3.12.2024, 4.12.2024, 9.12.2024, 10.12.2024, 13.12.2024, 16.12.2024 and 21.12.2024	N/A



6. The information provided in Para No.5 shows that each department was given the opportunity to file an appeal to protect their fundamental rights as outlined in the PFF Constitution. However, it is important to note that Pakistan International Airlines (PIA Sports Directorate), despite being given a fair chance to submit their Complaint/appeal to the PFF Secretariat, chose not to do so and expressed their lack of interest, nor exists any proof that they have participated in any of the mentioned events. As a result, the PFF Disciplinary & Ethics Committee decided to move forward with the appeals submitted by Appellants No. 1 to 4 based on the reasons presented in their appeals.

A. Complainant/Appellant No.1 (Pakistan Navy Sports Control Committee) case:

7. The representative of Complainant/Appellant No. 1, Mr. Muhammad Kamran, attended the meeting of the PFF Disciplinary Committee on behalf of the Complainant/Appellant department as he was authorized by the department to represent them accordingly, as confirmed in an email dated December 23, 2024.
8. The representative of the Complainant/Appellant supported the contents of the appeal submitted to the committee and argued that the Appellant is an active member of the PFF Congress and regularly participates in events and tournaments organized by the PFF. He provided a list of events attended by the Appellant between 2008 and 2023.
9. The Appellant argued that only the Congress has the authority to decide on suspending or expelling its members, as stated in Article 16(4), 17, and 36 of the PFF Constitution. During the hearing, the Appellant claimed that Article 24(3) of the Constitution does not require Congress members to participate in three consecutive championships or sports activities. Therefore, the letter sent by the PFF Legal Department on November 18, 2024, rejecting the Appellant's right to participate and vote in the PFF Congress is invalid and against the spirit of the Constitution. The Appellant requested their appeal to be accepted.

B. Complainant/Appellant No.2 (Pakistan Airforce Sports Control Committee) Case:



10. The Appellant's/Complainant authorized representative, Mr. Shahzad Anwar, appeared before the PFF Disciplinary Committee on 23rd of December, 2024, along with Squadron Leader Mr. Mohsin Choudhary, Officer Commanding SPF, and the intimation was sent to PFF in this regard. They expressed their support for the appeal submitted by the Appellant.

11. Mr. Shahzad Anwar argued that the Pakistan Air Force Sports Control Committee has played a crucial role in the development of football in Pakistan. He noted that the PAF won the National Challenge Cup in 2014 and 2018 and has contributed to the national team by serving as the Head Coach. He also pointed out that he is a professional FIFA A-Licensed Coach and was also a member of the AFC Coach Education Panel from 2015 to 2018. Additionally, he acknowledged the efforts of the Normalisation Committee, which is the Executive Committee of PFF, in reviving football in Pakistan.

12. The Appellant further discussed Articles 16 (4), 24(3), 32 (1)(d), and 17 of the PFF Constitution. He focused on the interpretation of Article 24(3) and argued that the explanation given by the PFF Legal Department in their letter dated November 18, 2024, was unclear and misinterpreted. They insisted that they have not failed to participate in three consecutive championships or major sports activities, and there is no obligation stated in the Constitution on how this rule should be enforced.

13. The Appellant also argued that only Congress has the authority to interpret the Constitution, and no one else does. Lastly, the Appellant requested that their appeal be accepted.

C. Complainant/Appellant No.3 (Pakistan Railways Sports Control Committee):

14. The Appellants, through an email dated December 22, 2024, authorized Mr. Syed Zeeshan Ali Zaidi, Chief Organizer of the Pakistan Railways Football Team, to represent them instead of their Secretary General, Mr. Muhammad Ismail of the PRSB, due to unforeseen circumstances.



15. The Appellants reaffirmed the points made in their earlier appeal submitted via email on December 11, 2024. They stated that their department has the right to be a member of the PFF Congress, as outlined in Article 23(a) and Article 24(1) of the PFF Constitution. They emphasized that they have consistently participated in PFF events. Additionally, they maintained that only the Congress has the power to add or remove members. Lastly, they argued that the PFF's interpretation of Article 24(3) is not in line with the true meaning of the PFF Constitution.

D. Complainant/Appellant No.4 (Pakistan Police Sports Control Board) Case:

16. The Appellant Department initially designated Mr. Jawad Ahmed Dogar, Addl: IGP of the Pakistan Police, as their authorized representative and requested a Zoom link for the meeting, as he was in the USA at that point in time. However, due to connection issues with the Zoom link, he was unable to attend the meeting. Instead, Mr. Abdullah Jan, Secretary of the Pakistan Police Sports Control Board, appeared before the committee to represent the Appellant's case.
17. The Appellant agreed with the arguments made by Appellants No. 1 to 3 regarding constitutional matters. However, he pointed out that "National Games" should have been included in the eligibility criteria for Congress members, as it is a significant sporting event in Pakistan. He noted that the rules for this event were developed by the PFF itself and brought to the committee's attention that the Competition Rules 2023 had been signed by Mr. Qamar Qureshi, the PFF Competition Manager.

E. The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) Case:

18. Mr. Ali Akram, the legal representative of the PFF, provided representation for the Federation and endorsed the interpretation made by the Secretariat.
19. The representative argued that the central issue in the Appellants' case pertains solely to Article 24(3) of the PFF Constitution, and contended that the interpretation adopted is correct. He stated that the PFF has not acted in bad faith in its interpretation of this



article. The Respondent Federation asserted that, under Article 24(3), it can be understood that a Unit, League, or Member must participate in three consecutive championships, premier leagues, or major sports activities to maintain eligibility for the PFF Congress. He further explained that the term "Consecutive," as defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, means:

"Following one after the other in order."

In interpreting Article 24(3) of the PFF Constitution, he argued that if an organization or department fails to participate in even one championship, premier league, or major sports activity, the Appellants (as departments) could face suspension from voting in the PFF Congress. He emphasized that in order to establish the Congress, it is essential to comply with the PFF Constitution in both its letter and spirit, which the PFF Secretariat has appropriately done.

20. According to the Respondent's representative, only three departments –namely, the Pakistan Army Sports Control Directorate, the Higher Education Sports Control Directorate, and the Pakistan WAPDA Sports Control Board – satisfy the requirements to be part of the PFF Congress after a thorough review of all documents in accordance with the checklist that was communicated to both these departments and the Appellants. The Respondent's representative argued that the Police Sports Control Board (Complainant/Appellant No. 4) indicated their participation in the National Challenge Cup in 2023 and 2020, but their women's team has only recently been established. On the other hand, the Pakistan Railways Sports Board (Complainant/Appellant No. 3) reported participation only in the National Challenge Cup 2023, leaving out participation in both the National Women's Football Championship and the National Challenge Cup 2020.

21. Furthermore, the Respondent's representative contended that several departments and service organizations did not respond to official communications or submit the required documentation within the specified time frame. They submitted their documents on October 31, 2024, and indicated their non-participation in the National Women's Football Championship: specifically, the Pakistan Air Force Sports Control Committee (Complainant/Appellant No. 2) and the Pakistan Navy Sports Control



Committee (Complainant/ Appellant No. 1). Additionally, the Pakistan International Airlines (PIA Sports Directorate) has neither responded to communications nor submitted any documentation within the time allowed; while they did communicate via WhatsApp, they never filed an appeal or submitted any documents and have remained unresponsive.

22. The legal representative of the PFF distinguished between Article 16(4) and Article 24(3) of the PFF Constitution, noting that Article 16(4) refers to the phrase "Any Sports Activities," while Article 24(3) specifically imposes an obligation on each member department to participate in the PFF Congress. Therefore, these two articles should be interpreted differently.

23. In conclusion, the legal representative of the PFF requested that the Appeals submitted by the Appellants be dismissed.

F. Maintainability of the Appeal:

24. Before proceeding with the instant case, it is necessary to determine whether the disciplinary committee has jurisdiction to adjudicate upon such a matter. We would like to place emphasis on Article 3 of the PFF Disciplinary Code:

"The Question is that whether the Disciplinary Committee is competent to adjudicate upon the matter?" In order to resolve this controversy it is necessary to reproduce the Art. 02 and Art. 03 of PFF's Disciplinary Code.

Article 2-Scope of Application:

'Material Law this code applies to every match and competitions organized by PFF. Beyond this scope, it also applies if a match official is harmed and, more generally, if the statutory objectives of PFF are breached, especially with regard to forgery, corruption and doping.'

Article 3: Scope of Application:

"Natural and Legal persons the following are subject to this code:

- a. PFF member associations;***
- b. Members of these associations, in particular the clubs***
- c. Officials;***
- d. Players;***
- e. Match officials;***
- f. Anyone with an authorization from PFF, in particular with regard to a match, competition or other events organized by PFF; Spectators".***

Moreover, Second Title. Organisation and Procedure Chapter-II-Procedure Section 2 Disciplinary Committee; Article 113-Commencement of Proceedings;

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“(2) Any person or authority may report conduct that he or it considers incompatible with the regulations of PFF to the judicial bodies via the secretariat. Complaints may not be made orally.”

25. Furthermore, the Article 4, 21(1) of PFF Constitution is reproduced as follows:

Article 4: JURISDICTION:

“The jurisdiction of Pakistan Football Federation shall extend throughout Pakistan including AJ & K, GBFA, FATA and Islamabad Capital Territory.”

Article 21: BODIES OF THE FEDERATION:

“(1). The Federation shall consist of Provincial Football Association, services organization, Pakistan Football Referees Association AJK, ICT Islamabad, FATA and GBFA and any other Football body approved by the Congress from time to time.”

26. However, in addition to referencing the aforementioned law, it is important to highlight the letter from the FIFA Bureau dated December 16, 2024, which explicitly states that this matter has been referred to the internal bodies of the PFF for adjudication. Therefore, the committee is confident in affirming its jurisdiction to address this case. Furthermore, the Appellants have raised no objections regarding the composition or jurisdiction of this committee as the appropriate authority to resolve their grievances.

G. Finding And Decision of the Panel:

27. The panel acknowledged that the Appellants were not issued a letter to participate in the PFF Extra-Ordinary Congress because they did not meet the criteria outlined in Article 24(3) of the PFF Constitution, which is reproduced below for ease of reference:

“3. Any Unit/League/Member that fails to participate in three consecutive championships/premier leagues/major sports activities shall be suspended from voting at the Congress, and its Members shall not be elected or appointed until it has completed all formalities and obligations in this regard.”

In evaluating the position of the Appellants, it is essential to recognize that this article may have two possible interpretations. One interpretation suggests:



- i. That the Appellants have indeed failed to participate in three consecutive championships (i.e., three in a row).
- ii. Conversely, a closer examination may indicate that the Appellants missed participation in even one of the three specified events

28. The committee noted that none of the departments of the Appellants indicated their participation in the events listed in the checklist. The relevant section is reproduced below:

"The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) is in the process of forming the Congress of the Pakistan Football Federation. In furtherance to this, PFF has achieved the successful completion of elections for the District Football Association (DFA) and Provincial Football Association (PFA), conducted in accordance with the PFF Constitution.

The PFF Constitution, copy attached, defines the members of the Congress and the requirements for said members and bodies of the Federation. As such you are requested to:

- i. ***Nominate a representative as per Article 23(g);***
- ii. ***Provide evidence of participation in the last three (03) consecutive Championships/Premier Leagues/major sports activities as per Article 24 (3);***
 - a. ***For ease of reference please tick appropriate box:***

Event Name	Participation	
	Yes	No
National Challenge Cup, 2023		
National Women's Football Championship, 2021		
National Challenge Cup, 2020		

- iii. ***Provide evidence of participation/attendance at the PFF Congress meetings for the past two (02) years prior to the initiation of the Normalization Committee."***

29. The Appellants No. 1, 2, and 4 stated that they do not have an official women's team. When questioned about this, it was pointed out that the lack of a women's team contradicts the definition of women's representation in the PFF Constitution, which does specifically references Article 24(o). This article indicates the existence of an event named the ***Women's Champion Football Club***, in which they had the opportunity to participate in 2021. The Appellants admitted that they have not established a women's



team for the past 74 years and argued that there was no obligation for them to do so, nor did the PFF issue any letters or circulars mandating the formation of women's teams. Furthermore, they argued that the Constitution does not state that the absence of a women's team would result in a loss of their right to participate in or vote at the PFF Congress. The committee acknowledges the vital importance of establishing women's teams not only at the departmental level but also across provincial levels, as this initiative plays a crucial role in fostering the growth and interest of youth in football. In light of this, the committee finds it difficult to accept the rationale provided by the Complainants/Appellants regarding their failure to form women's teams. The establishment of women's teams is a recognized standard at the international level and is essential for promoting gender equality in sports.

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30. Furthermore, the development of youth teams is equally crucial for ensuring a robust pipeline of talent for the sport. By investing in both women's, youth football and establishing club culture considering FIFA and AFC statutes, we can cultivate a more inclusive and dynamic football environment that encourages participation and engagement at all levels. It is imperative that the Appellants comply with these expectations, as they have themselves acknowledged the need for such developments. Thus, proactive measures must be taken to not only form women's teams but also to promote youth participation in football to secure a brighter future for the sport as per the PFF, FIFA and AFC Statutes.
31. Furthermore, the Appellant No. 3 indicated that they did not receive an official invitation from the PFF Congress to participate in the Women's Club Championship in 2021. It can also be inferred that the PRSB participated in only one event, which was the National Challenge Cup in 2023.

H. The Primary issue for determination:

32. The primary issue for determination is the meaning of "consecutive" in this context, particularly regarding a member who has participated in two events but missed one or in case participated in one and missed two, and the implications of this participation pattern. The Literal Meaning of "Consecutive": In a straightforward sense, "consecutive" refers to a sequence of events that occur one after another without



interruption. To trigger the consequences outlined in Article 24(3), a member must fail to participate in three events in a continuous sequence. It is necessary to consider a situation where the PFF holds three events:

Event 1: The member participates.

Event 2: The member participates.

Event 3: The member does not participate.

33. The scenario adopted in Para No. 32, the member has missed one event but attended two. While they have not reached the threshold of missing three consecutive events, the absence from the third event raises questions about their commitment to ongoing participation. Although the article explicitly states that missing three consecutive events leads to penalties such as non-election or appointments of its members, the spirit of the rule emphasizes consistent participation. Missing even one event – after attending two – can suggest a lack of dedication, which may warrant further scrutiny regarding the member's engagement in the league's activities.
34. While Article 24(3) clearly indicates that penalties apply after failing to participate in three consecutive events, it is important to recognize that missing one event can still reflect poorly on a member's commitment. Such an absence may indicate a potential pattern of disengagement that the member must address to maintain the integrity and active participation standards within the PFF.
35. The Committee acknowledges that a member who participates in two events but misses one does not automatically incur the penalties stipulated for three consecutive absences. However, this absence should be considered seriously in evaluating the member's overall commitment to participation. The governing body retains the authority to take appropriate actions based on engagement levels to uphold the standards expected from all members.
36. The Courts often apply principles to interpret statutes, including the plain meaning rule, legislative intent, and the purpose of the law. When a statute is ambiguous, the courts may look at the specific circumstances surrounding its enactment, its legislative history, and the consequences of different interpretations. While *contra proferentem* is



not directly applied, an ambiguous statute may be interpreted in favor of the rights or benefits of individuals (such as defendants in criminal cases). Courts may also consider the implications of ambiguity for individual liberties or rights, potentially leaning toward interpretations that protect those rights.

37. Since there are two conflicting interpretations, therefore, the committee feels to adopt the interpretation that benefits and protects the rights of the Appellants.

38. During the deliberative proceedings held on January 3, 2025, the committee noted that Complainant/ Appellants No. 1 and 2 failed to provide the requisite documentation in response to the letters dated October 21, 2024, referenced as PFF/LEG/10-24/21-004 and PFF/LEG/10-24/21-003, which explicitly required a response by the deadline of October 28, 2024. It was observed that the Appellant Departments/Service Organization submitted the requested information on October 30 and October 31, 2024, both of which were beyond the established deadline. Consequently, the Legal Department was instructed to obtain a written response from the Complainants/Appellants No.1 and 2. This response was duly received by the committee via email dated 6th of January, 2025, in which Appellants No. 1 and 2 contended that the delay in submission was neither intentional nor wilful but resulted from internal organizational processes that necessitated additional time for preparation. They also asserted that it is their entitlement, as per Article 24 of the PFF Constitution, to membership in the PFF Congress. Ultimately, they expressed their respect for the PFF Constitution and its timelines, requesting the committee to condone the delay in the submission of the required documents past the stipulated deadline of October 28, 2024, and assuring their commitment to adhere to the PFF Constitution in both letter and spirit.

39. After reviewing the details of the response submitted by Appellants No. 1 and 2, the committee finds it necessary to consider the position of each appellant, as the issue of limitation may be subject to leniency in light of the specific technical circumstances of this case. A thorough examination of the PFF Constitution and the Disciplinary & Ethics Code reveals no explicit provisions regarding the outcomes for cases involving these particular issues. Nonetheless, it remains imperative for every individual, department, player, and club to honor and respect the decisions rendered by the



relevant authority, which, in this instance, is the FIFA Appointed Normalisation (Executive Committee) for PFF. The delay in submitting documentation within the prescribed timeframe raises questions about each party's commitment to the authority and may adversely affect their case. However, the committee recognizes that disqualifying Complainants/Appellants No. 1 and 2 on this purely technical basis would not be just, considering that the delay was not substantial enough to obstruct the overall process leading up to the issuance of the ineligibility letter by the PFF on November 18, 2024. Therefore, the committee has determined that the delay in submission may be condoned, taking into account the aforementioned considerations.

I. Terms And the Decision:

Considering the contents of the Appeals and hearing the arguments of both the parties, the Complaints/ Appeals are allowed on the following terms:

- I. The Complainants/Departments are required to abide by the terms of the PFF Constitution and shall ensure their participation in future events.
- II. The Complainants shall ensure the compliance of the PFF Constitution in its letter and spirit and will not raise objections that are contrary to the principles of FIFA, AFC, and PFF.
- III. The competent authority of PFF shall issue the invitation letters to the Complainants/Appellants no.1 to 4 departments for their eligibility to participate in the PFF Congress as per the PFF Constitution (2014).

Let the copy of this order (each page signed by Chairman of Disciplinary committee) be communicated to PFF secretariat.

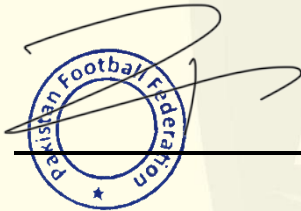
Let the copy of this order be communicated to all the affiliated units of PFF and each Department. Moreover, the PFF is also directed to ensure the compliance of this order.



Let the copy of this decision be communicated to the FIFA and AFC immediately after the signing of this decision.

The PFF Secretariat, if it deems appropriate, can announce and publish this decision (wholly or the relevant portion of the judgment) to the general public, on its official website or social media pages.

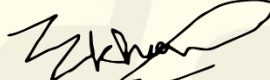
The PFF Secretariat is directed to submit the compliance report before the Disciplinary Committee.



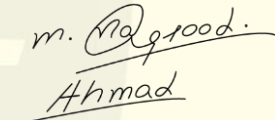
Azeem Akram
(Chairman)
Disciplinary Committee
Pakistan Football
Federation



Mohammad Ali
(Deputy Chairman)
Disciplinary Committee
Pakistan Football
Federation



Zarak Zaman Khan
(Member)
Disciplinary Committee
Pakistan Football
Federation



Malik Maqsood
Khokhar
(Member)
Disciplinary Committee
Pakistan Football Federation