



## PRESS RELEASE



### Clarification Regarding Selection of Computer-Based Examination Systems

An unsubstantiated and misleading story relating to the computer based examination system being set up by Pakistan Medical Commission has been recently published in some quarters of the media without having properly verified the facts.

The PMC after evaluating the proposals and credentials of 14 companies to set up a computer based examination system in collaboration with the PMC selected SOAR Education (Private) Limited, a company operating the highly innovative STEM Schools for the last some years in Pakistan. The group has further extensive interests in information technology in Pakistan and the USA providing services to the public and private sector in Pakistan. It was also the only party who submitted proposals which agreed to and had the capacity to provide computer based examinations in Pakistan and internationally as required by PMC.

SOAR Education (Private) Limited was required by PMC to set up a special purpose vehicle to enter into the joint venture agreement with PMC to ensure that the joint venture partner would not have any other conflicting business under the joint venture in view of the parent company having other possible business interests in education and information technology. It also ensures that the joint venture special purpose vehicle does not undertake any other business resulting in ring fencing the revenues generated from the testing facilities and providing absolute transparency to PMC at all times. In response to this request SOAR Education (Private) Limited immediately set up SOAR TESTING AND EVALUATION PLATFORM (SMC-Private) Limited as the special purpose vehicle to be the joint venture company. The Joint Venture Agreement was thereafter executed between PMC and SOAR TESTING AND EVALUATION PLATFORM (SMC-Private) Limited and SOAR Education (Private) Limited is specifically referred to as the associated company operating in Pakistan. It is for this reason that the special purpose vehicle company was incorporated after the evaluation had been completed post proposals when SOAR Education (Private) Limited was selected. This joint venture project represents the ability to undertake long term innovation and consistently enhance the computer based examination system including development of a 3D skills examination over the next one year.

Under the joint venture SOAR will be investing the entire capital required to set up 21 independent and exclusive computer based examination centers across Pakistan with over 3,000 terminals and multiple centers internationally corresponding to location of international applicants, using a state of the art examination system. PMC under the joint venture will not be required to invest or pay any amount towards the setting up or operation of the examination centers and systems.





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The system will also provide online results immediately and allow forwarding of results to medical and dental colleges as well as providing mock tests for students to prepare for the exams. PMC requires the examination system on a long term basis to conduct its MDCAT, NLE and NEB exams as well as revalidation exams in the future. It was therefore, necessary to establish independent centers to ensure a controlled environment and absolute security to guarantee the integrity of the exam and flexibility of scheduling, which was not possible in the other proposals received based on sharing for a short period existing facilities such as computer labs at colleges/universities.

The payment made to the joint venture partner was not a payment made by PMC from its funds. It was the first payment representing the joint venture partners share from the fees received from registered students as provided for under the joint venture agreement. In addition all fees received shall be maintained in an escrow bank account for further transparency.

The computer based examination system project being setup by PMC in collaboration with SOAR is a state of the art first time facility in Pakistan and PMC has already offered to the Ministry of Education and HEC the facility for use for other public exams during the period the facility will not be required by PMC examinations for the benefit of students in all areas and not only medicine. PMC shall also receive a share from any revenue generated from other use of these examination centers.

The proposal was evaluated and the joint venture agreement approved by the Medical & Dental Council of the PMC after detailed scrutiny. It is also clarified that no member of the Council, Academic Board or the Authority have any relationship or interest in SOAR TESTING AND EVALUATION PLATFORM (SMC-Private) Limited, SOAR Education (Private) Limited or any of its group companies.

