
NEWSCLIPPINGS

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LAW & ORDERS



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Police arrest gang involved in Karachi's longest heist

Police claim to have arrested four robbers, including a husband and wife, in what is being touted as the longest heist in the city's history. The law enforcers also claimed to have seized Rs15 million worth of stolen gold from their possession.

Central SSP Arif Aslam Rao, who announced the arrest in a press conference on Thursday, said that the accused had carried out a robbery at Ehsan Jewelry Shop in Hyderi Market on the night between the 5th and 6th of June, 2019. The robbers had escaped with 5.5 kilogrammes of gold worth millions of rupees, after which the police had registered a case, 19/130, at Hyderi Police Station.

According to the SSP, the accused had entered the jeweler's shop through a shoe store adjacent to it, by breaking the latter's locks and then breaking the walls between the two shops. The robbers had used small hand tools to break the wall to avoid making noise. Three of them had entered the jeweler's shop, broken the lockers and stolen the gold. The robbery had been carried out on the first day of Eidul Fitr and the robbers had stayed inside for 21 hours.

SSP Rao said that the police reached the spot soon after the incident and started the investigation after gathering evidence, including CCTV footage and forensic samples from the shop. During the course of the investigation, the police learnt that there were at least eight to 10 accused involved in the robbery.

The SSP said that the police had made a breakthrough a days earlier, during the investigation, which had been ongoing for a month. The investigators, aided by technical staff, arrested four accused involved in the robbery and seized stolen gold worth over Rs15 million from their possession.

The arrested accused were identified as Habibur Rehman alias Nadeem Lahori alias Munir, son of Muhammad Bakhsh, his wife Sameera Habib, Adeel Manzoor, son of Manzoor Cheema and Waqar Ahmed.

Modus operandi

SSP Rao said that the accused fled to Punjab immediately after the robbery. Their gang comprises two groups. One of them searches an easy target from Punjab to Karachi and the other plans the robbery once the target is found.

On the day of the robbery, one group breaks the locks and carries out the actual robbery while the other stays on standby, monitoring the area and staying in touch with those inside through mobile phones.

According to the police, the gang group has been involved in similar robberies in the past and several of its members have been sent to prison after getting arrested by Ferozabad Police.

Meanwhile, police are making efforts to arrest the head of the group, Muhammad Shafiq alias Shafiq Ustad alias Shafiq Mota. (By Sajid Rauf The Express Tribune, 04, 05/07/2019)

Report reveals nexus between Sindh police and organised crime

With all the talk about reforms in the Sindh Police department, one would imagine there would be greater scrutiny of officials posted in key posts. The incumbent police chief, Dr Kaleem Imam, has frequently called for greater transparency and vowed to act against corrupt officials. It seems, however, that either his directives are being ignored or the IG himself is simply paying lip service.

A case in point is Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Zahid Hussain, who is currently posted as the DSP of Darakshan Police Station. According to an internal inquiry, conducted in 2018 by then Counter-Terrorism DIG Saqib Ismail Memon, DSP Hussain is associated with organised crime and has close links with bookies, gamblers and those who run gambling dens in various parts of the city.

The report, a copy of which is available with The Express Tribune, found that DSP Hussain and several other police officials or their "beaters" were part of a nexus that aided and abetted organised crime. A "beater" is an informal term used to refer to a low-level thug, who works for senior police officials to collect a cut from illegal activities in their area.

For his part, DSP Hussain claims he has been cleared of all charges after being interrogated by eight senior officials.

The report

In his inquiry report, DIG Memon had pointed to links between DSP Hussain, who was posted in Kharadar at the time, and former ASI Raja Khalid. Based on the call data records of both persons, DIG Memon ascertained that they had spoken to each other at least 20 times over the phone between March 1, 2018 and May 31, 2018. Former ASI Khalid has been dismissed from service for his involvement in criminal activities.

"It has been found that the above mentioned duo (DSP Hussain and former ASI Khalid) is running an organised and systematic network which provides to vice dens and organised crimes like bookies, gambling, bootleggers, prize-bond dealers (akra-parchi) and foreign exchange dealers," states the report.

DIG Memon's report also found that DSP Hussain and Khalid operated "mainly through Kamran Usman (also a cop), who is a known beater, and Inspector Zafar Iqbal, the SHO of Mochko Police." According to the call data record, obtained by DIG Memon

for the inquiry, Khalid had spoken to Inspector Iqbal at least 77 times during the three-month period (March 1, 2018 till May 31, 2018), while DSP Hussain had spoken to him 41 times.

The nexus

DIG Memon's report also states that a bettor, identified as Rizwan Ahmed, is also part of this syndicate and collects money on behalf of the officials from bookies. Faisal alias Buffalo alias Patni, Waqas alias Vicky, Fahad and Ghulam Qadir alias JM are the bookies named in the report.

Former ASI Raja Khalid's two bettors, Sohail and Pasha, also collect money from criminals and they are backed by the DSP Hussain, the report states. "Ex-ASI Raja Khalid is also involved in patronising smuggling of Iranian diesel and smuggling of animals to Afghanistan through Balochistan and in this task, he is being helped by Inspector Zafar Iqbal, SHO Mochko," the report states. It adds that the former ASI is a close associate of notorious Waseem Beater, who fled the country some years ago, and in whose absence, "his affairs are being looked after by Raja Khalid with the support of DSP Zahid Hussain and Zafar Iqbal, Mochko SHO."

Response to allegations

When The Express Tribune reached out to DSP Hussain, he said that he wasn't appointed on any post for four months after this report was revealed. However, eight officials cleared after investigations and he has been appointed as DSP again.

DSP Hussain was recruited in the Sindh Reserve Police in 1987 and was promoted to the rank of DSP in 2017-18. He was posted as Kharadar Police DSP, then Sharae Faisal DSP and is currently serving as DSP of Darakhshan Police Station. (By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 06/07/2019)

'Black book' of 156 notified criminals prepared

For the first time, the Sindh police have prepared a 'black book', featuring names of all the notified criminals/dacoits for whose arrest the provincial government had announced reward money, it emerged on Monday.

This booklet has been sent to all regional additional inspectors general of police to share it with police stations to launch a drive for their arrest.

The crime record of all the notified criminals/dacoits and other necessary information has been provided in the book, a police spokesperson said.

According to the police, there were 156 notified criminals/dacoits for whose arrest the Sindh government had announced reward money ranging from Rs100,000 to Rs4 million. (By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 09/07/2019)

Sindh police compile first ever 'Black Book'

As part of its province-wide campaign against criminals, the Sindh Police have compiled its first 'Black Book' comprising every single detail of notified outlaws involved in heinous offenses.

According to the spokesperson of the Sindh Police, the initiative has been taken on the directives of Sindh Inspector General of Police (IGP) Dr Syed Kaleem Imam.

The book focuses particularly on criminals with head money and includes their details, status, nature of crimes, their background and affiliations and any other relevant information.

Copies of the book have been provided to all regional additional inspectors general of police (AIG) so that the staff at every police station is kept updated.

It will ensure foolproof coordination among the police force and make it easier for the district police to arrest the dacoits in whichever district or city they are hiding.

The move is aimed at streamlining the investigation process and make it easier for law enforcers to apprehend wanted criminals. (By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 09/07/2019)

12th government car stolen from DHA, Clifton this year

In yet another incident of vehicle snatching, armed robbers took away a government-registered car at gunpoint from Defence Housing Authority (DHA) on Monday morning. This was the 12th incident of its kind in the current year, whereby a government vehicle has been stolen from DHA or Clifton area.

According to police, the latest incident involved a 2016-model white Toyota Corolla, bearing registration number GSC 877, and was attached to the services and general administration department of the provincial government. At the time of the robbery, the

vehicle was being driven by Arbab Ali, the brother of a former adviser to the chief minister, Yusuf Mastoi. The incident took place in DHA Phase IV, Commercial Lane 2.

According to Darakshan Police Station SHO Shah Jehan Lashari, at least three armed persons were involved in the robbery.

The SHO, while quoting Ali, said that one of the suspects was wearing a police uniform while the other two were in plainclothes. He added that the police have collected CCTV footage of the incident and have begun investigating the incident.

Déjà vu

The investigations, however, haven't really produced results with only three of the 12 cars, stolen or snatched this year from DHA, having been recovered.

According to police records, a Toyota Corolla bearing registration plates GSC 238 was snatched at gunpoint from the jurisdiction of Darakshan Police in January, while another Toyota Corolla bearing registration plates GSE 706 was snatched from the same jurisdiction on February 7. Yet another car, a Suzuki Cultus bearing registration number GPA 428, was snatched from the same area on March 20, while on July 8, a Toyota Corolla, bearing registration number GSE 877, was snatched at gunpoint.

From the limits of Gizri Police Station, a Toyota Corolla, bearing registration plates GSE 062, was snatched at gunpoint on February 10. Three days later, another Toyota Corolla, GS 653, was snatched from the same area. Then on July 1, a Suzuki Potohar, GS 4939, was stolen from the area.

On January 15, a Suzuki Potohar, bearing registration number GH 809, was stolen from the limits of Jackson Police Station. Another Toyota Corolla, GSB 946, was stolen from the same area on April 24.

On May 2, a Toyota Corolla, GSC 859, was snatched at gunpoint within the remits of Clifton Police Station. In the same area, a Suzuki Potohar, GS 3251, was stolen on May 19. Only three of the above-mentioned cars have been recovered to date.

An uphill task

When The Express Tribune reached out to South DIG Sharjeel Kharal for comment, the official said that the Anti-Vehicle Crime Unit, formerly known as the Anti-Car Lifting Cell, primarily deals with vehicle theft. The district police regularly meet the AVCU's officials to discuss the strategy for curbing vehicle theft.

According to the DIG, youth from Upper Sindh and Balochistan are involved in the incidents. He added that efforts were being made to control the situation, while the SSP has also been changed over the matter.

The new SSP has adopted a strategy under which the district police and AVCU officials carried out snap checking during the month of Ramadan due to which such incidents have decreased.

According to police statistics, a total of 54 cars have been stolen or snatched in the current year in the South zone alone, of which only four have been recovered. Similarly, another 544 motorcycles were stolen from South Zone, out of which only 65 motorcycles were recovered.

(By Sajid Rauf The Express Tribune, 04, 09/07/2019)

Police baton-charge nurses as their protest enters seventh day

Nurses from all government hospitals of Sindh, including Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital, Lyari General Hospital and Sindh Government Hospital, staged a sit-in at the Karachi Press Club (KPC) on Wednesday, as the protest by the Sindh Nurses Alliance entered its seventh day.

It has been a week since the nurses have been staging demonstrations, demanding that government take steps to meet a set of demands they have put forward. As a part of the protest, they have continued the boycott of emergency and Intensive Care Unit wards, demanding the promotion and up-gradation of nursing staff under the four-tier formula, provision of health allowance, increment in the stipend of nursing students to Rs25,000, appointment of 14,000 new nurses and giving nursing school principals powers equivalent to that of DDO.

As the protest gained momentum, Health Additional Secretary Waheed Sheikh and health deputy secretary, along with a five-member delegation, reached KPC to meet the leadership of Sindh Nurses Alliance. Negotiations between both the parties lasted for about half an hour, though they failed to reach a consensus. Following this development, The Sindh Nurses Alliance leadership asked the participants of the protest to begin marching towards to Governor House. Following the directives, protesters marched, holding banners and shouting slogans against the Sindh government, demanding that their demands be met.

Police tried to stop the protesters from advancing towards the Governor House, citing security concerns, however, the nurses kept on moving forward, which aggravated the situation. In a bid to stop them from advancing further, police baton-charged the nurses, some of whom fainted while a few sustained minor injuries. Police also arrested six nurses, who were later released. The injured and the fainted were rushed to Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre.

Sindh Nurses Alliance representative Aijaz Kalairi has said that this has been the third demonstration in a series of protests staged by nurses to urge to government to meet their demands. Last time nurses had staged a protest, two months ago, Sindh

Government had asked for period of 10 days to resolve our issues but no step has been taken to meet the nurses' demands, he added.

"Government has again asked for 10 to 15 days to meet our demands but we will only settle for something substantial, nothing less than a notification," said Kalairi. He also held the provincial government responsible for the inconvenience faced by the patients due the boycott of duties by nurses.

However, Health Secretary Saeed Awan said that the nurses' protest was baseless, adding that the finance department has raised objections to the summary of nurses' demands. Awan elaborated that a new summary will be prepared and sent to the finance department within two days.

He opined that nurses need to act responsibly and consider their duties towards serving the poor before getting involved in such tactics.

In most government hospitals, doctors had to serve out of their duty hours, due to the absence of nurses.
(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 11/07/2019)

Woman killed in 'robbery bid'

'A woman was killed in a firing incident near Maskan Chowrangi, Gulshan-e-Iqbal on Monday. East DIG has said that the incident looked like a robbery bid gone wrong. The deceased was the wife of the chairperson of NED University's Department of Economics and Management Sciences.

Police have collected evidence from the site and started an inquiry into the incident.

Shazia, 40, wife of Dr Ali Raza Khan was travelling in a Cuore, number plate AGL 344, in Block 7 of Gulshan-e-Iqbal when she was shot. She was immediately taken to a private hospital in the area and later shifted to another private hospital at Stadium Road in critical condition.

When the police received news of the firing, East DIG Amir Farooqi, East Investigation SSP Dr Farooq and Gulshan-e-Iqbal SP Shah Nawaz Chahchar reached the spot and immediately summoned the crime scene investigation team which collected the fingerprints from the car, the hook that broke off from the purse and other pieces of evidence.

While talking to the media, Farooqi said the incident was not a case of target killing. The deceased lived on the premises of the varsity and used to visit the area near Maskan Chowrangi daily to buy groceries. She was headed back to the varsity when she was shot. According to the initial investigation, robbers attempted to loot Shazia. When she put up resistance, the robbers shot her.

An empty bullet shell of a 9mm pistol was found at the site. Shazia also suffered a bullet wound on her face. Farooqi said that as far as the robbery was concerned, nothing was clear and the police would only be able to give further information after talking to the family of the deceased.

The East DIG said that the area where the incident occurred was covered by CCTV cameras and efforts were being made to acquire the footage to ascertain how the incident occurred and how many people were involved.

While responding to a question, Farooqi said that a local gang was involved in the firing incident at a hotel in Pehlwan Goth, Gulistan-e-Johar in which two people were killed. It was a case of extortion. The East DIG said that the prime accused has been identified and he has been arrested before on charges of murder. He was released on bail, Farooqi added.

The East DIG said that when the hotel owner received the call for extortion money, he did not inform the police. The gangs which have been active in the area in the past were involved in the incident, added Farooqi.
(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 16/07/2019)

Violence, chaos as nurses, PTI lawmakers protest near CM House

Chaotic scenes were witnessed near CM House on Thursday where police used water cannons and resorted to baton charge to stop a rally of protesting nurses with active participation of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's lawmakers and local leaders.



Murad orders release of detained nurses

Local TV channels filmed the series of events in which nurses and policewomen were also seen engaged in violent quarrels before the rally was finally stopped near the PIDC roundabout.

Later, blaming a "political party" for politicising the nurses' protest, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah asked the police to release those nurses who had been arrested from the scene.

The nurses have been holding a sit-in outside the Karachi Press Club for two weeks boycotting most of the facilities in the government-run hospitals that has dearly affected thousands of patients who cannot afford private health treatment across the province.

The chief minister was referring to certain leaders of the opposition PTI who had been visiting the nurses' camp on half of the street where the KPC is located and a female opposition lawmaker led a rally towards the CM House, saying "politicising the issue related to nurses is a pity".

The rally was baton charged and obstructed with water cannon by the police and a number of protesters were detained.

Mr Shah asked the police authorities to release the detained protesters who had been arrested in chaotic conditions outside CM House. The protesters were demanding raise in salaries and changes in existing service structure.

The Sindh Nurses Alliance office-bearers said they were joined by MPA Tahira Bhutto and other PTI leaders when they started marching towards CM House.

The police had placed barriers near PIDC, where they were stopped and not allowed to proceed further.

A PTI spokesperson claimed that the MPAs that were part of the protest were also hit by the water cannon.

The nurses said the government was not serious in holding negotiations with them, warning that the protest would continue until their demands were met.

Chief Minister Shah said there was no reason to protest after the health secretary had negotiated with the nurses' representatives. Adviser to the Sindh Chief Minister on Information and Law Barrister Murtaza Wahab arrived at the PIDC and spoke with the protesters.

A CM House spokesperson said Mr Shah had also asked health secretary Saeed Awan to settle the issue immediately.

Officials claimed negotiations between the representatives of the government and nurses had been fruitful and a notification encompassing certain demands of the nurses would be issued in a day or two.

However, the nurses' representatives said they would only end their sit-in outside the KPC when their demands were accepted. Meanwhile, officials at various government-run hospitals said the protest by nursing staff was affecting negatively the service delivery in almost all sections of hospitals and dispensaries across Sindh.

They said at various hospitals doctors had themselves assumed the job of paramedics.
(By Hasan Mansoor Dawn, 15, 19/07/2019)

New Karachi police chief vows to change 'thana culture'

In his first meeting with subordinates and later on speaking with the media, newly appointed city police chief Additional IG Ghulam Nabi Memon underlined on Thursday the importance of improving or changing what was described as 'thana culture', bridging the gap between the people and the police, reducing the number of police stations from existing 107 to 45 for effective policing, establishing three model police stations and simultaneously initiating welfare and accountability processes of policemen.

"Despite massive efforts, no perceptible change has been seen in thana culture," admitted the city police chief while addressing DIGs, SSPs and SPs in a meeting held at the office of DIG South.

"Despite [policemen] rendering tremendous sacrifices, the gap between the people and the police still persists," lamented the senior officer.

Number of police stations to be reduced from 107 to 45 for 'betterment'

"Existing process of snap checking would be changed as it was not bringing desirable results," believed Mr Memon while talking to media at Saleem Vahidi Auditorium in Clifton later on.

A senior officer would be present during the snap checking along with cameras while Qaumi Razakars would also be there.

"Small police stations of all three zones of Karachi would be turned into big police stations as per standard practice in the world to avoid significant difficulties, which emerge from lack of sufficient force."

It would be the responsibility of each SHO to promote "social activities" in their respective areas apart from dealing with crimes, the officer added.

"Three model police stations would be set up in the metropolis and if this experiment succeeds, higher authorities and the government would be approached to create more such model stations."

Mr Memon said he would make endeavours to reduce number of police stations from existing 107 to 45 in the city by merging small police stations. "There should not be more than 50 police stations in the city."

After reducing the number of police stations, duty hours of policemen would be reduced from present 12 hours to eight hours in phases. He opined that it was more important to provide "sufficient manpower and resources" to SHOs instead of increasing number of police stations.

The city police chief said upgrading the investigation department was also among his top priorities and promised to provide facilities for fingerprint and DNA sampling.

A proposal to this effect has been submitted to IG Sindh Dr Syed Kaleem Imam who has given his consent to it, he said.

"Providing additional allowance to the thanedars and investigation officers is also among my priorities," said Ghulam Nabi Memon. Number of criminals in city

He revealed that there were estimated 8,000-10,000 criminals in the city and the investigation wing would be made "powerful" so that such criminals do not get released from prisons frequently.

He also underlined the importance of bringing some changes in the laws to this effect.

He said police would encourage people to lodge FIRs as there would be no problem if crime registration increases as it would help arrest criminals.

The city police chief said that SPs and SSPs concerned would conduct inquiry into allegations of corruption against policemen. Vehicles without registration number plates

The city police chief announced that citizens should ensure use of standard number plates given by the excise and taxation department till July 31 and later on a campaign to this effect would be launched from Aug 1.

Earlier addressing police officers, Mr Memon asked them to take important steps to create "strong friendship ties" between the general public and the police.

The police chief also asked for giving briefing to policemen on daily basis before their deployment at duty points.

Personnel guarding religious places should be deployed at "secure places".

Arms being given to the policemen should be checked regularly while arrangements should be made for weapon handling and refresher courses for firing, he said.

SHOs and DSPs concerned should personally monitor snap checking points.

Working condition of all closed-circuit television cameras installed in the metropolis should be checked while checking and cleaning of all police lock-ups should be ensured.

All SSPs and SPs should visit their respective police stations and seek information about its condition and problems.

Banks' security should be checked regularly and one police officer should be assigned the task of checking recording of CCTVs installed there as per standard operating procedure.

Guards deployed at banks should be briefed about their duty and their weapons should also be checked.

Mr Memon declared that the police officers demonstrating good performance would be rewarded, while departmental action would be taken against the personnel involved in corruption and misuse of power.

Earlier, all DIGs presented detailed reports about overall performance and problems being faced by them in their respective zones, said a police spokesperson.

(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 15, 19/07/2019)

80,145 are kept in prisons against capacity of 56,495, SC told

The Federal Ombudsman has informed the Supreme Court that a total of 80,145 inmates are currently housed in 98 prisons of the four provinces against a sanctioned capacity of 56,495 — almost 42 per cent more than the capacity.

A report, submitted to the apex court on behalf of the Federal Ombudsman office through senior counsel Hafiz Ahsan Ahmad Khokhar on Thursday, said that of the 80,145 inmates, 45,423 were detained in 42 jails in Punjab, 16,739 in Sindh, 15,969 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 2,014 in Balochistan. The report stated that these prisons had 1,135 juvenile prisoners as well as 24,280 convicts and 51,710 under-trial prisoners.

The Supreme Court is seized with a suo motu case about conditions of inmates in the country's prisons due to overcrowding.

The hearing was initiated to consider and redress the plight and miseries of women prisoners detained in jails. The Federal Ombudsman had been tasked with making recommendations to improve conditions in prisons and redress the grievances of prisoners.

Apex court is seized with suo motu case about conditions of prisoners because of overcrowding

In the report, the ombudsman office stated that 785 female prisoners had been housed in 28 jails of Punjab and in all these jails, separate barracks/blocks for women prisoners had been constructed. Moreover, it said, female blocks were being supervised by female staff. In all jails, the female prisoners were facilitated with cot (charpoy) and washrooms, it added.

During the current financial year, the report highlighted, construction of five new prisons namely District Jail, Lodhran; High Security Prison, Mianwali; Sub-jail, Sumandari; Sub-jail, Pindi Bhattian; and Sub-jail, Gojra, having a combined capacity of accommodating 2,644 prisoners would be completed.

Likewise, in KP, the report said, construction of jails in three districts was in progress under the current annual development plan (ADP), while a jail in one district would be constructed under the next ADP.

About Islamabad, the report said the interior ministry had informed the ombudsman office that a 720-kanal land for the Islamabad Model Prison had been acquired in Sector H-16 and a PC-I for the construction of the prison had already been approved. The project would cost the national exchequer Rs3.9 billion.

So far, the report added, Rs1.1bn had been released and utilised, whereas work on the administration block, boundary wall, male barracks, etc, was under way. Expected date for completion of the project was June 30, 2020, it said.

About drug addicts, the report said that in Sindh drug addicts had been segregated from other prisoners. Besides, steps have also been taken for screening/treatment of TB, HIV, Hepatitis, AIDS and drug addict prisoners in coordination with NGOs.

Likewise, in Punjab, a drug addict barrack in each jail has been designated as the rehabilitation centre and 32,227 prisoners have been detoxified over the past five years.

Moreover, two 20-bed detoxification centres have been established in central jails of Lahore and Rawalpindi. A scheme of six-bed detoxification centres will be introduced in nine jails of Punjab.

Under the Rule 435 of Pakistan Prisons' Rules, 1978, every mentally unsound prisoner is kept separate from other prisoners.

Prisoners suffering from mental illness had been shifted from other districts of Punjab to the Punjab Institute of Mental Health, Lahore, for treatment, the report said.

In KP, joint efforts will be made by the home, social welfare and health departments to carry out detoxification and treatment of addicts at a specific place. In all major cities, drug addict centres will be established by the social welfare/health departments.

In Balochistan, drug users and insane patients are at present kept in separate rooms inside a jail where basic medical treatment is being provided by the jail doctor, while on the request of the jail superintendent, a qualified psychiatrist also visits jails in cases where specialised treatment of any prisoner is required.

The report said that a letter had also been written to the health department for provision of 100 acres of land for establishment of a 600-bed multi-dimensional health care institute for neglected and mentally ill patients and research activities.

The report called for finalisation of the proposed amendments to the existing probation and parole laws and said that the home departments and inspectors general of prisons should expedite work on under-construction jails/sub-jails/judicial lockups, take steps for improving jails' conditions and provide basic facilities in Bakhshi Khanas/judicial lockups.

(By Nasir Iqbal Dawn, 03, 02/08/2019)

Order reserved on plea to transfer murder case of KESC MD to sessions court

An antiterrorism court on Friday reserved its judgement on two applications seeking transfer of a case pertaining to the murder of the managing director of the Karachi Electric Supply Corporation, Shahid Hamid, to a sessions court for trial of two detained accused.

The accused Mohammad Minhaj Qazi, alias Asad, and Mehboob Ghufuran, alias Atar, along with their alleged accomplices have been charged with killing the then KESC MD, his driver and a guard in the Defence Housing Authority on July 5, 1997.

On Friday, the ATC-III judge heard arguments on the two applications moved by the defence counsel for Minhaj Qazi seeking removal of the charge of terrorism from the case and its transfer to a sessions court from the ATC for further trial.

The defence counsel, Mushtaq Ahmed, moved an application under Section 227 of the Criminal Procedure Code, contending that initially the charge of terrorism was not mentioned in the FIR of the alleged triple murder case since the anti-terror law was enacted on Aug 20, 1997.

Therefore, Section 7 (punishment for acts of terrorism) of the ATA, 1997 was not applicable in the present case, the counsel added and asked the judge to remove the same from the case.

Through another application moved under Section 23 of the anti-terror law, Mr Ahmed argued that the ATC had no jurisdiction to try the applicant in the present case since the case did not fall within the ambit of 'terrorism' as none of the witnesses in the case in their statements had stated that the alleged incident had caused a sense of terror. Therefore, he asked the court to transfer the case to a sessions court for further trial.

On the other hand, the Rangers prosecutor, Rana Khalid, opposed both the pleas arguing that the case fell within the ambit of Section 7 of the ATA, 1997 and the anti-terror law was applicable in the present case. The prosecutor asked the judge to dismiss the applications for lacking merit.

After hearing arguments from both sides, the ATC-III judge reserved his judgement to be pronounced on the next date.

Investigation report sought

The judge also issued a notice to the investigating officer of the case on an application moved by accused Minhaj Qazi under Section 265-C of the CrPC seeking provision of documentary evidence.

In the plea, the defence counsel submitted that initially the then SHO Mobin Ahmed of the Defence police station had started the investigation into the case. However, later the then Additional IG Crime Branch Ali Gohar Mithani probed the high-profile triple murder case, he added.

The counsel said that AIG Mithani had recorded the statements of the witnesses in the case, including the slain MD's wife, who was also a complainant in the case.

Advocate Mushtaq Ahmed requested the court to direct the prosecution to provide a copy of the investigation report of AIG Mithani along with statements of witnesses.

The judge issued a notice on the application to the IO for his arguments on the next date and adjourned the hearing.

According to the prosecution, the then SHO of the Gulbahar police station, Mohammad Aslam Khan, better known as Chaudhry Aslam, arrested Saulat Mirza in December 1998 at the Karachi airport. During investigation, Mirza confessed to having killed the former KESC chief and named his accomplices.

The prosecution alleged that the offence was carried out to avenge the removal of MQM supporters from the KESC by the then MD. An ATC had already sentenced Muttahida Qaumi Movement worker Saulat Ali Khan, better known as Saulat Mirza, to death in 1999 in this case and he was executed in the Machh jail in Balochistan on May 12, 2015.
(By Naeem Sahoutara Dawn, 16, 03/08/2019)

Four of a family die from inhaling generator fumes

Four brothers died from inhaling toxic fumes from a power generator while they slept in their house near Babar Kanta in Landhi on Tuesday.

The Sharafi Goth police said that the generator was switched on because of a prolonged power breakdown in their area due to rain.

The victims were identified as Anwar Ahmed, 22, Umar, 20, Usman, 18, and Hamza, 16. The bodies were shifted to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre for medico-legal formalities. JPMC's executive director Dr Seemin Jamali said that they apparently died of "gas inhalation".

"The brothers died of suffocation as fumes emanating from the generator filled their room," said Malir SSP Irfan Bahadur.

The police also took samples of the meal they had taken before going to sleep and sent them to a laboratory for test. However, apparently, no poison was found in the food.

The deceased originally hailed from Pishin, Balochistan.

Protest as passerby killed in crossfire

A passer-by was killed when he got caught in the crossfire between police and a suspected criminal in the Pirabad area on Monday afternoon, officials said on Tuesday.

The killing of Mohammed Adeel sparked a protest from his family and relatives, who took his coffin to the Karachi Press Club on Tuesday afternoon and staged a protest there.

The protesters, including women and children, said that he was killed by firing carried out by the police.

One of the relatives told Dawn outside the KPC that Adeel was a Hafiz-i-Quran and a tailor by profession. He left his home on Monday afternoon and was talking with a rickshaw driver when a bullet fired allegedly by a policeman hit him in the head, he said.

The protesters said that area people got hold of the policeman handed him over to the police. They demanded that a murder case be registered against the police.

However, Pirabad SHO Amjad Javed claimed that the victim was not killed by police fire.

He said that the police party travelling in a mobile van signalled a suspected drug peddler, Akbar, to stop. Instead, the suspect resorted to firing and the police retaliated. During the exchange of fire Adeel was killed, he added. The police managed to arrest the suspect and recovered a pistol from his possession, he added.

Meanwhile, a woman sustained burn injuries when a fire broke out in an apartment in Jamshed Quarters on Tuesday, police said.

They added that the blaze erupted in an apartment near Islamia College. The police believed the fire broke out due to gas leakage.

As a result, a 50-year old woman, Najma Mushtaq, sustained burn wounds. She was transported to Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital for treatment.

In another incident, 18-year-old Tahir was stabbed to death in Mochko area.
(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 14/08/2019)

Boy lynching suspects may face terror charges

Police on Sunday said that they were taking the lynching of 16-year-old alleged thief by a mob in Bahadurabad on Saturday as an 'act of terror' as the boy was tortured and killed publicly and videos were made, triggering fear and anger in the people.

Besides, the family of the boy demanded that a terror case be registered against the murder suspects, said Ferozabad SHO Aurangzeb Khattak.

The alleged teenage thief was beaten to death by the angry mob in Bahadurabad, whose videos prior to his death went viral on social media, prompting the Sindh chief minister to take its notice. Subsequently two suspects were arrested and booked.

The SHO said that two suspects allegedly entered a home in Kokan Society to commit theft as per residents' statement.

One of them escaped while the residents of the house got hold of one suspect. The area people gathered there and subjected him to severe torture. Later law enforcers arrived and took him into custody.

The boy was taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, where he was pronounced dead on arrival.

The deceased was identified as 16-year-old Rehan, son of Zohair, a resident of Khudadad Colony.

Police surgeon Dr Qarar Ahmed Abbasi said the body was brought to the JPMC at around 3.30pm.

His post-mortem examination was performed and the head injury caused by a "hard and blunt instrument" was declared the cause of death. There were "multiple torture marks on the body", added Dr Abbasi.

The victim's family told the media that the teenage boy was a 'butcher' who had slaughtered sacrificial animals and had gone to the house to take service charges, but he was 'mistakenly' taken as a thief and was killed.

The police arrested two house occupants, Daniyal and Zubair, and registered an FIR against them under Section 316 (punishment for Qatl shibh-i-amd) of the Pakistan Penal Code. The section says whoever commits qatl shibh-i-amd shall be liable to diyat and may also be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 25 years as ta'zir.

The held suspects in their initial statement told the police that they did not kill the boy, but the area people had beaten him to death.

The officer said that Daniyal was the house owner where the deceased had allegedly entered for committing theft while Zubair was his neighbour.

DIG East Amir Farooqi told Dawn that three more suspects in the murder case of the teenage suspect had been arrested, taking the total number to five.

The SHO said the police would invoke Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 against the murder suspects for taking the law into their own hands and they would be presented before the administrative judge of the Anti-Terrorism Court on Monday for remand.
(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 13, 19/08/2019)

'Dirty' politics

THE sanitary situation in Karachi is far from perfect. To put it mildly, Pakistan's largest city and economic heart presents the picture of a giant garbage dump, with streets overflowing with sewage. In the aftermath of the recent rains and with the leftovers of the Eidul Azha sacrifice, the situation has worsened considerably, with mountains of trash spoiling the city and the sewage situation seemingly out of control. And, expectedly, instead of combining forces to tackle this grave situation head-on, the PPP-led Sindh

government and the MQM-steered city administration have been indulging in an ugly blame game about who is responsible for the state of affairs in Karachi. To make things more interesting, the PTI-led federal government has also jumped into the fray, taking potshots at the Sindh administration for its lack of performance. However, a statement by the Karachi mayor on Tuesday, asking the people to stop paying taxes to the Sindh government, is ill-advised. While the mayor is understandably frustrated because the provincial government controls the Sindh solid waste management body, as well as the water board in Karachi, asking citizens to stop paying taxes is not the right way to lodge a protest. Imran Khan advocated similar tactics while the PTI was in the opposition; suffice to say, elected representatives should not be advocating such a course of action, considering the fact that already there are major issues with below-target tax collection in the country.

Interestingly, the federal government, aided by the MQM, has launched the Clean Karachi campaign to spruce up the city. Perhaps realising that this may make them look bad politically, the Sindh government has launched a Blue Jacket movement of its own to prevent littering. All these initiatives are fine, as long as they are not designed simply as political gimmicks. More than gimmickry, what Karachi really needs is an empowered local setup accountable to the people and that has the funds, manpower and mandate to keep the city clean.

(By Editorial Dawn, 08, 22/08/2019)

Relatives of DSP, SHO killed by robbers in separate incidents

Street crime and robberies have become a daily occurrence in the city. Even the houses and families of police officials are not spared by armed robbers who rule the streets of Karachi.

A gang of robbers broke into the house of DSP Tariq Malik in Shadman Town on Monday. They shot dead the DSP's nephew, Riaz Malik, 28, and took off with jewellery, local and foreign currency and other valuables. The incident occurred in the jurisdiction of Shara-e-Noor Jahan Police Station.

The deceased, Riaz, son of Shahabuddin Malik, a resident of Orangi Town Sector 14b, was shifted to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital. Speaking to the media, DSP Malik said that Riaz was his nephew who had been staying with him since he was a child. Malik said that the incident occurred at 3.30pm. Six robbers broke into his house, woke him up and pointed their guns at him, said the DSP. "They assaulted and handcuffed me after which two of the robbers stayed with me while the others went to my brother's room," said the DSP, while narrating the incident. "They assaulted him [brother] and his wife before bringing them to my room. They then went to the room of my other brother, Kashif Malik and also held him and his family hostage," he said.

According to Malik, the perpetrators then took the keys of wardrobes and lockers and started collecting valuables, including money and jewellery, from the house. "During this time, my nephew who had noticed the robbers from the first floor, fired a bullet which caused the robbers to panic and run towards him," said Malik. "We heard over a dozen shots of [gun]fire and then the robbers fled," he added. When Malik and his family managed to break apart the handcuffs and reached the first floor, they saw Riaz's body covered in blood. The DSP said that a neighbour, Khalid, who heard the commotion, brought his car to shift Riaz to a Chippa booth. The ambulance then took Riaz to the hospital where doctors confirmed his death, said Malik.

Shara-e-Noor Jahan SHO Khalid Nadeem Baig reached the crime scene and gathered evidence which included bullet shells and CCTV footage from a camera at the house adjacent to the DSP's. "The police also summoned a fingerprint expert to obtain forensic evidence with the help of chemicals," said Malik. He added that the perpetrators knew that this was a police officer's house. "It appears that the crime was premeditated," he noted.

Malik said that his last posting was at Pakistan Bazaar Police Station in 2013 after which he had left for Canada as he and his family were receiving threats. He added that he had returned to the city only two months ago. "My mother passed away a week ago. My family was still mourning when this tragedy occurred."

Doctor shot dead

Meanwhile, a doctor was shot dead by robbers over putting up resistance during a robbery bid in a bungalow in Gulistan-e-Jauhar. The deceased, identified as Ayesha, wife of Shahzadur Rehman, was the sister-in-law of the area's SHO, Sarwar Commando.

Four or five armed dacoits, in a Honda Civic, bearing the registration plate AWP 747, broke into a house in Gulistan-e-Jauhar Block 13 within the jurisdiction of Sharae Faisal Police Station. The dacoits began looting the residents of the ground floor of the house and the residents raised a ruckus. Hearing the commotion, the people on the first floor of the house opened fire and the dacoits retaliated with more gunfire, leaving Ayesha critically injured.

The dacoits attempted to leave the bungalow and flee in their car but as the residents from the first floor continued spraying bullets, the dacoits abandoned their car and fled, leaving behind one of their pistols.

The police were informed through the Madadgar 15 helpline and Ayesha was shifted first to Darul Sehat and then to a private hospital near Stadium Road where she succumbed to her injuries and died.

Ayesha was a doctor who had come to Karachi from Canada to attend a wedding. She had been in the city from the past month and was going to leave next week. Sharae Faisal SHO Sarwar Commando said that the deceased doctor was his sister-in-law and had come to the city for her niece's wedding. She had come with her husband and three daughters.

According to the SHO, the bungalow belonged to his relative, a retired professor of the Pakistan Shipowners' College, Prof Shakilur Rehman. The professor's grandson was living in the house along with his family. The SHO said that the police received news of the dacoits and the ensuing firing at 8.20am. The dacoits opened fire on his nephew as soon as they entered the house and then tried to flee as the police reached the scene, said the SHO. He added that his relatives informed him that the robbers were well dressed with one of them wearing a school uniform and another one wearing a tie. According to him, the robbers held a domestic servant of the house hostage as they entered the bungalow. However, they were unable to rob the house, said the SHO. He informed that a guard of a private security company was posted at the bungalow but was on holiday on the day of the crime. He said that the police have taken the guard to the police station for interrogation.

One Kalashnikov, one pistol, a mobile phone, a purse, two police caps, police lights and the number plate of a car ATC 458, were found from the scene of the crime, said the SHO, adding that according to the records of the Citizens Police Liaison Committee, the car used by the dacoits was not used in any other crime. Besides, said the SHO, the police collected fingerprints, a 9mm pistol, empty shells of a 30-bore pistol and CCTV footage. The SHO said that the police had collected a lot of evidence and the dacoits would be traced soon.

Aysha's funeral and burial will take place in Karachi, he added. Sindh IGP and SSPs of east and central districts have sought details of the incident.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 27/08/2019)

Sindh police sets up human rights cell

The Sindh police has set up a human rights cell as its first initiative to establish a specialised unit which will operate as a supervisory body responsible for focusing on issues of human rights.

A senior official said on Thursday that the specialised unit would primarily deal with cases pertaining to vulnerable communities that include women, children, minorities and transgender persons.

The new cell, which would work under the command of DIG (headquarters) Abdul Khaliq Shaikh, has created three major sections addressing the issues of minorities, women and children. The cell would take up matters of human rights related to regular policing from all parts of the province, he said.

"Police being an important law enforcement agency plays its role for upholding basic human rights, but due to plethora of crime, important events and law and order situations both energy and attention of the police leadership and force are diverted toward heinous crimes and security of events," said the official citing the objective and reasons behind creation of the new cell.

"Such state of affairs warrants that specialised unit should be created as a supervisory body responsible for focusing and emphasising safeguarding human rights. Among all other responsibilities it was imperative for the Sindh police to establish a human rights cell which is centralised at the Central Police Office for streamlining and dealing [with] matters pertaining to human rights."

Among issues related to overall human rights, he said that the cell would primarily deal with cases pertaining to vulnerable communities.

Elaborating the vision of the new cell, he said that it would provide a platform for better service delivery, implementation of laws and compilation of data pertaining to matters of human rights and human dignity.

When asked about the objective of the new cell, the official said it was expected to provide a centralised and well-organised centre for dealing with the cases of violation of human rights.

"It is aimed at improving the overall response of police units and officers for efficient and just disposal of complaints involving infringement of rights," he said. "It would also enhance coordination with other stakeholders, including civil society organisations, civil administration and other institutions of criminal justice for achieving the common goal of establishing the rule of law."

When it came to mechanism of the cell's operation, he said that the primary function included dissemination of information regarding legislation pertaining to human rights introduced by the parliament to each and every office and ensuring its cognizance by authorities concerned.

"The human rights cell would also aim at creating and then maintaining the record in relation to human rights-related cases," he said.

"The cell would be to own and supervise cases/instances related to human rights and focus on cases that require or need direct supervision of the police high command. It would also help creating awareness and spreading information with regard to relevant laws."

(By The Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 30/08/2019)

Three persons found murdered near Clifton park

Three men were found brutally murdered next to a Clifton park on Thursday, police and hospital officials said.

They added that the three bodies were found with injury marks near the Beach View Park. They were taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre to fulfil legal formalities.

They sustained wounds on their head caused by a hard and blunt weapon, said Dr Seemin Jamali, executive director of the JPMC. A post-mortem examination was carried out at around 2.30pm.

Police surgeon Dr Qarar Ahmed Abbasi said that they were killed around 14 to 15 hours before their arrival at the hospital's mortuary.

Couple dies from gas inhalation, 11 others fall unconscious

Two of the victims were identified through the CNICs found in their pockets as Hamsheer Afzal, 52, and Ali Hasan, 24, while the third one aged around 40 years remained unidentified.

Clifton SHO Pir Shabbir Haider said that one of the victims polished boats to earn a living and the other worked as a masseur in the Clifton area and used to sleep on benches in the park near the beach.

It appeared that they were asleep on the benches near the park when unknown suspects attacked them, smashing their heads with heavy stones.

The officer said that Hamsheer originally belonged to Mardan while Ali Hassan was a resident of Faisalabad.

South SSP Sheeraz Nazeer said that the police had approached relatives of the two identified victims in their respective areas and they had told the police that they had no enmity with anyone.

It seemed that they had slept in the broken and dilapidated park to escape the rain.

"Investigation is still at a preliminary stage, but the police suspected that someone suffering from psychological problems might have killed them," said the SSP.

The investigators have found the two heavy stones used in the murders at the crime scene.

There was no CCTV coverage of the area where the bodies were found as it was covered by trees. The police were trying to obtain CCTV footage from adjoining localities to ascertain the identity and motive of the killer(s), added the senior officer.

Meanwhile, South DIG Sharjeel Kharal took notice of the incident and sought a detailed report from the South SSP, said a spokesperson.

Couple dies from gas inhalation

As several areas of the metropolis experienced a major power breakdown amid the third spell of monsoon, forcing residents to use power generators, a couple died from gas inhalation in a Korangi area and 11 members of a family fell unconscious because of identical causes in Surjani Town on Thursday, officials said.

They added that the couple had run the generator inside their home in Mehran Town of Korangi late on Wednesday night where they were found dead on Thursday.

The bodies were shifted to the JPMC to fulfil legal formalities. "The death was caused by inhalation of gas from a generator," said Dr Seemin Jamali of the JPMC. The dead were identified as Shaukat Abbas, 28, and his wife, Naila Bibi, 21.

In the other incident in Surjani Town, 11 members of a family fell unconscious.

Police said there was a henna ceremony in Khuda Ki Basti late on Wednesday night after which the relatives slept while the generator was running.

As a result, a couple and their seven sons and daughters and two others fell unconscious. They were taken to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital from where they were discharged after first aid, said additional police surgeon Dr Qarar Ahmed Abbasi.

They were identified as Waseem, 50, his wife Sakina, 40, their children Sadiq, 25, Bushra, 24, Iqra, 22, Bisma, 18, Muskan, 11, Kunzila, 8, Owais, 10, and their two other relatives Shahbaz Ali, 17, and Dilawar Tahir, 17.
(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 15, 30/08/2019)

Doctor shot dead in Gulshan in suspected sectarian attack

A senior doctor was gunned down in what investigators suspected to be an incident of targeted killing on sectarian grounds in Gulshan-i-Iqbal on Friday.

Gulshan SP Shahnawaz Chachar said that Dr Haider Askari, 58, was driving home after performing his duties at a government hospital in Korangi when two armed motorcyclists intercepted his car near KDA Market in Block 3 at around 12.30pm.

The assailants fired at him and rode away. The wounded doctor, who sustained a single bullet wound in the left shoulder, was taken to the Aga Khan University Hospital, where he died during treatment.

Later, the body was moved to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre for a post-mortem examination.

Sectarian killing or street crime?

The SP said that the investigators were probing the matter along two angles — sectarian and killing upon resisting a robbery bid. He said that the victim was Shia and the investigators could not rule out sectarianism as a possible motive for the killing due to approaching Muharram.

Dr Askari's killing is second such incident in recent days

Besides, he said, it was also possible that the killing was an outcome of an attempted robbery.

He said witnesses told the police that armed pillion riders tried to stop Dr Askari's car, but when he tried to speed away they fired at him.

The investigators collected one spent bullet casing fired from a .30-bore pistol from the crime scene.

MWM demands govt action

The Majlis Wahdat-i-Muslimeen said that Dr Askari, a cardiac specialist, was killed on sectarian grounds.

"The killing of a Shia community member in Karachi prior to Muharram is regrettable," Allama Baqar Zaidi of the MWM said, urging the government and law enforcers to take notice of the incident.

Also, quoting the victim's family a relatively unknown organisation, the 'Shia Wehdat News', tweeted that it was a "sectarian killing" as the slain doctor got threats around two years back. He shifted from Hyderabad to Karachi around 10 years ago.

Dr Askari's killing was the second incident in which a doctor was killed in the city in recent days.

On Aug 26, Dr Ayesha Rehman was gunned down in her Gulistan-i-Jauhar home by armed robbers. She was the sister-in-law of Sharea Faisal SHO Inspector Sarwar 'Commando' and came to the city from Canada to attend a marriage ceremony.

Gulshan SP Chachar claimed that the killers had been "traced".

"This is one of the major gangs of criminals who mostly targeted houses for robberies," he said, adding that the gang was involved in over 300 robberies in different parts of the city.

Man shot dead in Baldia

A 40-year-old man was shot dead in Baldia Town on Friday.

According to the Madina Colony police, Iqbal was going somewhere when armed pillion riders fired a single shot from behind near a graveyard in Baldia No. 7. He died on the spot.

The body was shifted to the Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi.

Area SHO Imdad Ali Khowaja ruled out the possibility of an attempted robbery and said that it might be related to some personal enmity.

The victim originally hailed from Swat.

'Addict' held for killing son

A 10-year-old boy was allegedly murdered by his father in Ibrahim Hyderi area on Friday, according to police. They added that Sarwar allegedly strangled Kashan in Ilyas Goth.

Area SHO Ejaz Khan said that the police arrested the suspect, who is a beggar and addict.

He often beat his son under the influence of drugs.

The SHO said that he denied having killed his son, but area people witnessed the crime. Besides, the victim's mother also told the police that her husband used to beat their son frequently, he added.

The body was shifted to the JPMC to fulfil medico-legal formalities. Doctors at the hospital said the body bore torture marks.
(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 15, 31/08/2019)

Human rights cell

RECENTLY, the Sindh police established a 'human rights' cell to ensure justice and protection of the fundamental rights of marginalised groups. The stated purpose of the specialised unit is to help the burdened law enforcement forces function more

efficiently by overseeing complaints related to women, children and minorities. The move is undoubtedly a welcome one, and a good place to start in creating awareness of the concept of inalienable rights in a country where might is often right. From once being rejected as a foreign-driven agenda, it is a positive sign to see more acceptability of the language of human rights, and this is thanks to the lifelong struggles of many activists, lawyers and lawmakers. A specialised human rights unit would hopefully make it easier for disempowered groups to register their grievances with the police, which already suffers from a public relations problem, due to a lack of sensitivity in their training. For instance, when the family of 10-year-old Farishta, fearing she had been abducted, tried to register a case with the Islamabad police in May, not only were their fears dismissed, but they were subjected to callous questioning, including being asked if the child had 'eloped' with someone. Farishta's mutilated body was found a few days later. Incidences such as this are the reason why ordinary citizens without connections to power are apprehensive or do not feel safe approaching the police for such sensitive matters.

Additionally, while law enforcement is supposed to uphold the rights of citizens, they are often found violating some basic principles. Thus, the human rights discourse must also extend to policing. Extrajudicial killings, torture, forced confinement (or abduction) without trial, everyday discriminatory practices and corruption are just some of the ways this noble profession to protect and serve others is tainted by mistrust. While it is unfair to categorise all police officials in a negative light, there is a lot more work to be done when it comes to improving the culture they operate in.

(By Editorial Dawn, 06, 02/09/2019)

Efforts being made to shift Karachi central prison, PA told

The Sindh Assembly was told on Monday that the provincial government was making efforts to shift the Karachi central prison from the centre of the city.

Giving a statement and replies to the lawmakers' written and verbal queries during the Question Hour in the house on behalf of the minister concerned, Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Minister Imtiaz Shaikh said that the provincial government had earlier planned the shifting of the prison from the main city, but the legal fraternity protested over the move.

He said that the place where central prison was located was on the outskirts of the city when it was built by the Britishers in 1891, adding that later the city expanded leaving the prison in the middle of the city.

In response to a verbal question by an opposition member, the minister said that the mobile phone jammers were installed in the prison under a standard operating procedure (SOP) of jail security.

He conceded that people living around and near the jail faced inconvenience due to installation of mobile jammers.

The opposition member also pointed out that one of the ways of the dual carriage road to jail was closed at night adding to the miseries of area people in particular and the public in general.

In reply to a verbal question by Muttahida Qaumi Movement's member Mohammed Hussain, the minister said that proper fire-fighting facilities were available in the prison to meet any eventuality.

In response to a question asked by opposition member Rana Ansar, he said there were 158 female under trial prisoners, 45 convicted women in four women prisons.

Giving the break-up, the minister said that 108 female UTPs were confined in the central prison for women in Karachi, 30 in special prison for women in Hyderabad, 12 in special prison for women in Larkana and eight in special prison for women in Sukkur.

He said that 24 convicted women were lodged in Karachi, 14 in Hyderabad, five in Larkana and two in Sukkur.

Besides, he said, two convicted women were on death row in the central prison in Karachi and one in Hyderabad.

To a supplementary question asked by Grand Democratic Alliance member Nusrat Saher Abbasi, Mr Shaikh said that there was no woman in prison for want of payment of fine.

The GDA member pointed out that a large number of poor prisoners were still languishing in jails despite serving their respective terms only due to non-payment of fines imposed on them.

She asked the minister what measures the provincial government was taking for giving relief to poor prisoners who did not have money to pay fines.

The minister said that several poor prisoners were released after the provincial government arranged payment of fines imposed on them.

Moreover, he said, a legal aid committee headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice Nasir Aslam Zahid helped poor prisoners get released after payment of fines.

In reply to a question, the minister said that a primary school was already operational in Youthful Offenders School Karachi since 1995.

Besides, he said, a secondary school was also operating under the control of the education department where prisoners were receiving education.

In reply to a question asked by Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's member Sidra Imran, the minister said that technical courses were offered to juvenile offenders confined at Youthful Offenders Industrial School Karachi by prison staff and non-governmental organisation.

He said the juvenile offenders were given training in computer, painting, tailoring and carpentry.
(By Tahir Siddiqui Dawn, 15, 03/09/2019)

Custodial 'killings'

Custodial deaths do grab the headlines and raise a hue and cry, but police lock-ups continue to act as torture cells. The death of Salahuddin Ayubi, a robbery suspect, at a prison in Rahim Yar Khan has gone viral just as his video of breaking open an ATM machine, making faces and sticking his tongue out at the CCTV camera did. Ayubi was arrested by the police on Friday and reported dead on Sunday morning. What happened during these two days does merit a thorough investigation. The police deny their hand in the death, claiming that the "mad man" suddenly became unwell, and that he was shifted to hospital in an unconscious state and the doctors there pronounced him dead.

For the police, it seems, the dignity of an accused and regard for human life have no meanings. Even though Ayubi had his name and address tattooed on his arms for identification, it was no indication for the police that he may not have been normal. The police may have rather read too much into the tattoo — treating it to be a distraction tactic by a "professional criminal" — perhaps because they are trained to always look beyond the obvious. Ayubi had been out of touch with his family in Gujranwala for a while, according to the FIR lodged by his father Muhammad Afzaal. And the father only came to know of the whereabouts of his mentally-challenged son through the media. The police did not bother to pass on the information of the arrest, or even the death, to the family.

Despite calls for jail reforms, there has been no change in the colonial-era interrogation techniques, and cases of torturous deaths in custody are being reported with regularity. Ayubi's is not the only death in custody in recent times. Just this week, two other persons also allegedly succumbed to torture by the police in Lahore. There is an urgent need for the police to adopt modern methods of interrogation based on scientific techniques and prosecute the torture agents so that deaths in custody could be done away with.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 04/09/2019)

NAB to shut illegal land allotment probe against Qaim, SHC told

The National Accountability Bureau on Tuesday informed the Sindh High Court that a recommendation had been made to close an inquiry against former Sindh chief minister Syed Qaim Ali Shah in an illegal land allotment case.

Mr Shah had obtained interim pre-arrest bail after NAB issued a call-up notice to him in December regarding alleged illegal allotment of land in the Malir riverbed during his tenure as chief minister.

When the matter came up for hearing before a two-judge bench headed by Chief Justice Ahmed Ali M. Shaikh on Tuesday, a NAB prosecutor informed the bench that the petitioner was no longer required for a probe since investigators had recommended to the competent authority to close the inquiry.

The prosecutor further submitted that the allotment in question was later cancelled.

Thereafter, the bench disposed of the petition and issued directive to return the surety amount.

The lawyer for the petitioner, Barrister Zameer Ghumro, submitted that since the allotment of land in question was cancelled by the former chief minister no loss was caused to the national kitty and the offence was not made out.

NAB had issued a call-up notice to former chief minister, then land utilization secretary Ghulam Mustafa Phull, then deputy commissioner-Korangi Kazi Jan Mohammad and others on Dec 18, 2018 for alleged illegal allotment of land to six allottees within the Malir riverbed in Korangi district in 2011-12.

The allotment was prima facie against the Sindh Land Grant Policy 2006 and done at a price lower than the realistic market value, NAB alleged in the notice. It maintained that the petitioner was the chief minister at that time and approved the summaries of allotment of land within the riverbed/delta area for which there was no law.

Notices issued on plea for offal disposal

Another division bench of the SHC on Tuesday issued notices to the Sindh chief secretary and others on a petition seeking regulations for slaughtering of sacrificial animals and proper disposal of their offal.

The bench, headed by Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, put federal secretary of the national health services, chief secretary, local government secretary, Karachi mayor and cantonment board Karachi on notice directing them to file comments on the next date.

Jazib Aftab and others moved the SHC stating that they filed the petition due to unhealthy and unhygienic atmosphere created in the province after Eidul Azha on account of unregulated and unorganised slaughter of animals on roads, footpaths, residential areas and other public spaces.

They argued that such practices had caused various diseases and the respondents failed to implement adequate steps to ensure public safety and proper disposal of offal and waste material.

They sought directives for respondents to make effective rules for slaughtering of sacrificial animals, ensure adequate measures for healthy environment and proper disposal of offal and waste material.
(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 15, 04/09/2019)

Torture in custody

DIFFERING only in a few particulars, suspicious custodial deaths continue to occur in a sickening, never-ending loop. Three cases have again surfaced of individuals dying during their detention by police — the Punjab force in all these instances. In Rahim Yar Khan, a man suspected of theft died on Sunday allegedly as a result of custodial torture. Three cops have been booked for murder. Yet another death allegedly on the same grounds occurred on Sunday in Lahore when one of nine men, found detained a few days ago in a secret torture cell, succumbed to the terrible injuries he had sustained during his 'interrogation'. Several policemen have been booked for murder. Then on Monday, yet another unfortunate man died in similar circumstances; an FIR has been filed against six cops. That these deaths occurred despite the IG Punjab having issued express instructions against custodial torture, and conducted surprise visits to some police stations to gauge the situation there, speaks to a much deeper malaise.

Changing mindsets rooted in custom and/or privilege can be exceedingly difficult, even when backed by the law. Custodial torture is one of the many ways this challenge is starkly illustrated in Pakistan. Punjab police is governed by the Police Order, 2002 (amended in 2013), which stipulates up to five years' imprisonment for officers found guilty of inflicting "torture and violence to any person" in their custody. Earlier, the provincial law-enforcement agency worked under the Police Act, 1861. This was a colonial relic, designed to bring the 'natives' to heel; consider that it includes the word "torture" only in the context of enabling an officer to arrest anyone inflicting cruelty on an animal. Nevertheless, despite a more modern law, the old ways continue — and torture remains the primary tool of investigation. This is partly because accountability mechanisms stipulated in the 2002 legislation have not yet been established; and continued political interference reinforces the culture of impunity, precluding the Punjab police from evolving into a more neutral, democratic force. A year-long National Commission for Human Rights inquiry found that government authorities themselves documented at least 1,424 cases of torture by the police between 2006 and 2012 in Faisalabad district alone. The Punjab law minister in January disclosed that the government is considering changes in the police act to make it more 'people-friendly'. One substantial step towards this objective would be to punish, as per the law, any cop guilty of torturing people in his custody.

(By Editorial Dawn, 08, 04/09/2019)

Police arrest suspect wanted for murder of cop's sister-in-law

Police claim to have arrested the prime suspect and an alleged facilitator involved in the murder of a woman during a robbery bid at a house in Gulistan-e-Jauhar. The victim, a doctor by profession, was visiting from Canada, and was the sister-in-law of SHO Sarwar Commando, under whose jurisdiction the area falls.

Addressing a press conference at his office on Tuesday, East Zone SSP Ghulam Azfar Mahesar, said that four unidentified armed robbers entered house No. B-75 in Gulistan-e-Jauhar on the morning of August 26 with the intention of robbing the house. The suspects had arrived in a Honda Civic, bearing the registration no. AWP-747. As the suspects entered the house, the inhabitants started screaming and putting up resistance, on which the suspects opened fire.

Complainant Shehzadur Rehman's brother, Sohailur Rehman and his son Munibur Rehman also opened fire at the suspects from a balcony on the upper storey of the house. Under heavy fire, the suspects were forced to flee, leaving behind their car.

During the exchange of fire Aisha, 40, wife of Shehzadur Rehman, who was visiting Pakistan to attend a wedding, was injured by the suspects' firing. She was immediately shifted to the hospital, but succumbed to her wounds.

According to SSP Mahesar, police found a Kalashnikov, a pistol, a mobile phone, wallets, two police caps, the genuine registration plate of the car and other items from the car left behind by the accused. Investigators arrested the prime suspect, Faisal alias Kala, son of Abul Hassan, from a private clinic in Nazimabad after seven days.

The SSP said that Faisal had received burns injuries while starting a fire in his own house, which is why he was being treated at a private clinic. According to police, Faisal was a close accomplice of Saulat Mirza — the Muttahida Qaumi Movement target killer who was hanged to death. The suspect, currently in police custody, is wanted in 150 criminal cases and has been arrested multiple times during incidents of robbery, police encounters and murder.

Three of Faisal's accomplices, including Azmat, Anwar alias Grenade and Rehmat are on the run and police are conducting raids to apprehend them. Police officials said that the suspects are affiliated with the MQM-London, adding that Azmat has also served a 14-year prison sentence after he was convicted of murder. Meanwhile, accused Anwar alias Grenade is also accused in an extortion case pertaining to the MQM.

Faisal, Anwar and Rehmat are brothers and the arrested facilitator is their fourth brother. The latter wasn't directly involved in the robbery but the suspects had used a sim card registered in his name during the robbery.
(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 04/09/2019)

Roots of custodial deaths

THERE have been many ineffective campaigns against deaths in police custody in the past, and we should like to hope that the present public outrage will lead to some concrete steps to rid the country's criminal justice system of one of its major flaws.

The signs, though, are not very promising. A man's death in custody was attributed to a heart attack and a woman's to haemorrhage. Death caused by fear of torture cannot be accepted as natural. A police comment on Salahuddin's death by torture was that he was making big money, ie torturing him was justified. Now the use of smartphones at police stations has been banned across Punjab; this will not end torture in custody. In fact, people will be deprived of a source of information about police excesses. Obviously, police officers, at least many of them, are surprised at the outcry over a routine practice that has always been known to the top police echelons and the government — in fact, has often been encouraged by both.

The recent excesses by the Punjab police include deaths in police stations and torture at unauthorised detention centres. Let us begin with the first category of incidents.

Deaths in police custody occur when suspects succumb to torture, which is all that investigation and interrogation mean. All suspects are tortured to extract confession. No article of the Constitution is abused more than Article 14 (2) which, unfortunately, bars torture only if it is used to extract evidence.

There is evidence to establish that there have been alliances between politicians and policemen to kill citizens.

The way the law enforcement agencies have been kept unaware of modern, non-violent means of investigation betrays a streak of sadism in the state's mindset. Deaths at police stations will continue so long as the archaic, torture-based methods of investigation remain in vogue.

That suspects are often tortured at unauthorised places of detention has been known to the government and citizens for decades. These torture dens have been found in police functionaries' official quarters, rented premises and even in a mosque.

Some years ago, a private torture chamber, complete with an array of instruments of torture, was discovered in a posh locality of Lahore. The matter came up before the Lahore High Court. Senior police officers succeeded in confusing the issue by pleading a shortage of police stations, which, incidentally, was true. Police stations had been set up in the Punjab capital in one-room shops and in houses taken over without the owners' permission. The high court proceedings failed to chastise the defiant officials.

However, the furore in public circles made them somewhat more careful, though they have not completely gone out of business.

Recently, an HRCPC councillor went to a police station to look into a torture complaint. A junior official told him that the detainee was present within the police station, but the SHO who had just arrived had confidently declared, "No, I am keeping the criminal at a private house to expedite the investigation".

The question as to why it has not been possible to eradicate custodial deaths can be dealt with on two planes. Firstly there is a mountain of evidence to establish that there have been alliances between irresponsible political authorities and trigger-happy policemen to kill citizens in prisons and in the streets. If politicians in power can deal with their critics/rivals without wanting them killed in police encounters, this form of custodial death could decline substantially.

Secondly, a mess has been made of police reform. Many reform proposals were debated over the past five decades, while the files have been gathering dust. For decades, the British-made Police Act of 1961 was denounced as unsuitable for a free and democratic Pakistan, but no attempt was made to discard it till 2002 when the new Police Order was enforced. This law was never sincerely implemented though. The security of tenure granted to the provincial police chiefs was withdrawn and the chief minister who got this done replaced the provincial police chief several times within a year. The scheme of public oversight through citizens' liaison and complaint commissions was never properly enforced. The section about action on public complaints was deleted. Now, different provinces are relying on heavily doctored versions of the Police Order or the Act of 1861.

The country surely needs a new people-friendly police law that will offer citizens firm protection against custodial death.

The roots of custodial death, however, lie outside the police domain. For about a decade, the state has been lowering its respect for citizens' rights to life, liberty and security. Laws have been made to provide for long periods of detention without trial. The killing of journalists and other human rights defenders, as well as enforced disappearances, are glossed over without remorse. The state is not bothered about a moral justification for its system of rule, and relies more on force than reason. It has also become more vengeful than ever.

As a result, people are becoming more and more violent and brutalised. They cannot settle even petty differences through peaceful exchanges, and reason has been replaced with firepower. Children are beaten to death by parents and teachers. Besides, protesters against custodial deaths are limited to the victims' families. No death in custody has bought the people out into the streets in thousands, as happens in many other parts of the world.

A bill to ban corporal punishment has been pending in the Senate for years for want of clearance by the Council of Islamic Ideology and the relevant Senate committee's approval. What will the world say about a country where corporal punishment is defended as part of the people's (or some senators') culture?

Death in custody, killing of children by parents and teachers, and pumping of bullets into the corpses of missing persons are symptoms of a terribly sick society and a state that has lost its way. Nothing short of radical changes in the system of governance and social structures will enable the people of Pakistan to redeem themselves as a civilised community.
(By I.A. Rehman Dawn, 08, 12/09/2019)

Blasphemy allegations: Rare show of solidarity after communal riots in Ghotki

The Hindu community in Ghotki finally breathed a sigh of relief as political and religious leaders sat down in the Sacho Satram Das temple on Sunday night and assured them of their full support in the wake of protests that erupted following blasphemy allegations against a school owner. The temple had been vandalised earlier in the day, as had been five shops owned by members of the Hindu community, besides a private school that was set alight.

The situation arose when hundreds of angry protesters took to the streets in Ghotki after Notan Lal, who owns the Sindh Public School, was accused of passing blasphemous remarks by a student.

Police registered an FIR against Notan Lal and arrested him on Sunday following the protests, road blockages and riots in Ghotki city and its adjacent small towns. For the better part of the day, the law enforcers were unable to control the situation, which only calmed when the protesters dispersed later in the evening.

The main protest, which attacked the Sindh Public School (SPS), where the incident reportedly occurred, was allegedly led by Mian Mithoo's elder brother, Mian Aslam. Mian Mithoo has in the past been accused of facilitating forced conversions of Hindu girls in the region. For his part, Mian Mithoo told The Express Tribune that he knew nothing about the incident.

Meanwhile, scores of protesters vandalised the Sacho Satram Mandir located in the city centre. At least five shops located in Jilani Market were looted during the riots.

The allegations

A teacher from Ghotki, speaking on condition of anonymity, told The Express Tribune that a student of the SPS, Muhammad Ihtisham, had complained to his father that the school owner, Notan Lal, had allegedly passed derogatory remarks against Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).

In a video that went viral on Sunday, Ihtisham said that he had complained to other teachers about the remarks but he was told to keep quiet. "I then approached my family," he said. On Saturday, protesters gathered at the A-Section Police Station and demanded the police to register an FIR against Lal. According to the FIR, a copy of which is available with The Express Tribune, it was registered late on Saturday night.

Meanwhile, the city administration and law enforcers seemingly remained indifferent and failed to provide security to the temple or disperse the protesters. Thousands of supporters of the Mian brothers held a sit-in on the main roads and marched towards the school.

The protesters reportedly threatened Hindu families, who remained confined to their homes. "We even asked our kids not to cry," a member of the Hindu community told The Express Tribune. "It was a nightmare. We are in a mental trauma and not sure if we can move out freely," he said, adding that the protesters were roaming in the streets, shouting slogans against them and their religion.

In one of the videos that went viral on Sunday following the riots, Mian Aslam is seen to be leading the protest. But Mian Mithoo, a former member of the National Assembly, denied any involvement. "I did not lead the protest," he told The Express Tribune. "I was in Ubaro in a meeting," he explained, adding that he was unaware of the situation in Ghotki. "I don't have any idea. I just heard someone [a Hindu] passed comments against our Prophet."

Reactions

As the events unfolded, civil society activists and political leaders took to social media and demanded the Sindh government and law enforcement agencies to ensure security for the Hindu community living across the district.

Sikandar Ali Hullio, a civil society activist who first shared details of the incident on social media, told The Express Tribune that the whole district was held hostage by supporters of a particular religious group. "These incidents augment the sense of deprivation among the minority communities, who have been living peacefully in Sindh for many centuries," he said.

Call for calm

In the midst of it all, workers and supporters of the Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl, led by Maulana Rashid Soomro, held a peace march in the city and asked the people to remain peaceful as the police were investigating the matter.

In a video message, Soomro instructed his supporters not to take the law into their hands. "The man allegedly involved in blasphemy should immediately be arrested and he should be punished accordingly if found guilty," he said. "Islam doesn't allow

anyone to damage properties and harm persons belonging to minority groups," he said, appealing to his supporters to support the district administration.

Minority's version

Speaking to The Express Tribune, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's MNA Kheal Das Kohistani said that such incidents disturb religious harmony in Sindh. He also contacted Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, asking him to ensure security for the worship places of the Hindu community.

Kohistani, on behalf of his community elders, appreciated the role of Maulana Rashid Soomro of JUI-F. "There is a need to form district-wise [religious] peace committees," suggested Kohistani, adding that representatives from all religious groups should be included so they can control the situation if there is any religious issue. "These kinds of riot will defame our country's image."

Expressing solidarity

Later in the evening, Sindh Information Minister Saeed Ghani and Local Government Minister Nasir Hussain Shah reached Ghotki, where they met leaders of the Hindu community. The two ministers, flanked by local political and religious leaders visited the Sacho Satram Das temple and assured the Hindu community of their full support. They even announced the government will compensate for the damage caused to the temple. "The situation is under control," Ghani told The Express Tribune. "The perpetrators will be brought to justice."

Arrests

According to Ghotki SSP Dr Farrukh Lanjhar, the person nominated in the FIR has been arrested and shifted to an unknown place. He said that the investigation was underway, adding that swift action will be taken against those involved in damaging school buildings, temple and properties of Hindus.

When contacted by The Express Tribune, Sukkur AIG Dr Jameel Ahmed said that the situation had been brought under control, while the police would start their investigation from today.
(By Sameer Mandhro The Express Tribune, 04, 16/09/2019)

DSP refuses to clear hotel tab, threatens waiter with jail

Sohrab Goth DSP is facing allegations of abusing his power and getting food and snacks at a hotel in Sohrab Goth for free through threats and intimidation. Nadeem Khan, a waiter at the hotel, issued a video statement alleging that DSP Khalid Tipu threatened to lock him up when he asked Tipu to pay the bill of five months of food, tea and other snacks. In the video Khan appealed to senior police officials for justice.

According to Khan, Tipu owes him around Rs43,000. The waiter, who earns a Rs20 commission on every Rs100 worth of food orders, said he has been waiting on Tipu for the past five months. When Khan asked the Tipu to clear the tab, the DSP allegedly told him not to approach him again. The DSP also issued directives to the in-charge of a police check post to arrest Khan under charges of being a member of the banned outfit, Tehreek-e-Taliban, said Khan in the video. The in-charge, however, did not act on these directives and told Khan to go.

DSP Tipu has been suspended before for not paying the bill after eating cake from a bakery in Gulistan-e-Jauhar.
(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 16/09/2019)

Police use water cannon, tear gas to stop headmasters' march on CM House in Karachi

Police on Sunday used a water cannon, tear gas and baton charge to stop protesting school headmasters from moving towards Chief Minister House, said officials and witnesses.



Around 450 headmasters, including 100 women, arrived at the Karachi Press Club on Sunday morning where they held a demonstration demanding regularisation of their services.

The protesting headmasters contended that hundreds of teachers had been recruited after they passed a mandatory test conducted by IBA Sukkur around three years ago. They performed their services for two years and later on, the government extended their contracts for one more year, but

their services were not being regularised or confirmed.

Protesters disperse after assurances, to meet education secretary today

A police source told *Dawn* that representatives of the Central Working Committee of IBA-passed Headmasters Sindh — Zakir Husain Gopang, Haji Khan Rajpar and Farooq Azam Lakho — had submitted an application before deputy commissioner (South) Syed Salahuddin stating that they wanted to hold a 'peaceful' demonstration outside the KPC to press for the acceptance of their demands.

They were allowed as protests/rallies are not banned outside the KPC, which is the main venue of such activities.

The protesters stayed there for several hours. However, at around 3pm, the headmasters announced that they would go to Chief Minister House for staging a protest.

The police official said that they warned the teachers not to move further as Section 144 of the criminal procedure code had been imposed in 'red zone' besides it being a violation of their agreement that they would restrict their protest to the outside of the KPC. The police said that the protesters did not pay heed to such warnings and started to move towards CM House, upon which the law enforcers used a water cannon, tear gas and baton charge.

The headmasters allegedly pelted the police with plastic water bottles and stones.

"The police resorted to baton charge and used water cannon to disperse them," said South SSP Sheeraz Nazeer.

The senior officer added that the police also detained 'some headmasters'.

The officer claimed that only one 'headmaster' was injured, but when the police tried to take him to hospital in an ambulance for treatment, the other teachers put up resistance.

A police source told *Dawn* that 19 headmasters had been detained.

Dr Seemin Jamali, executive director of the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, told *Dawn* that they received five teachers for treatment at its emergency department.

One of them sustained head injuries, but no one of them received any serious injury.

The injured were identified as Saqib, 35, Sajid Rao, 42, Mohammed Yunus, 34, Azfar Mohammed, 40, and Ghulam Nabi, 36.

After the police action, the protesting teachers staged a sit-in on Maulana Deen Mohammed Wafai Road at the main gate of the YMCA ground. As a result, vehicular traffic was diverted to the adjoining roads.

Talks held

Later in the night, protesters dispersed after successful talks with district South administration and police, said South SSP Sheeraz Nazeer.

It was agreed between the protesters and the officials that a meeting of teachers would be arranged with the secretary of education on Monday for the acceptance of their demands. After the talks, all held teachers were released, added the senior officer.

The road blocked by the sit-in was also vacated and opened to traffic.
(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 13, 16/09/2019)

Bahria Town sends Rs5b defamation notice to newspaper

The Bahria Town Private Limited has served an Rs5 billion defamation legal notice on a media group and sought its unconditional apology for having run a false report in an attempt to tarnish Asia's largest private real estate developer's reputation and business.

Bahria Town has demanded an immediate end to the defamation campaign, unconditional apology, and publication of a contradiction in the newspaper at a prominent place within seven (7) days. "If you do not comply with this cease and desist demand, among others, within this time period (seven days), our Client (Bahria Town) is entitled to seek monetary damages and equitable relief for your defamation and detriment to its business," said the notice.

"In the event you fail to meet this demand, please be advised that our Client, without prejudice, reserves the right to pursue all available legal remedies (both civil and criminal) including, but not limited to, seeking monetary damages, injunctive relief, and an order that you pay court costs and counsel's fees," Advocate Mohammad Azhar Siddique said in the notice.

According to the notice, the newspaper has been told to cease and desist from spreading false, misleading and defamatory narrative, statements and news of Bahria Town's name, business, and reputation.

Bahria Town has been endeavouring and making headway through its various stakeholders, directors, and employees in the housing sector throughout Pakistan to provide the countrymen affordable housing.

"It [Bahria Town] has tirelessly but triumphantly worked through all days, nights, odds, lows and highs came in its way to provide and protect the true people of Pakistan their fundamental right to live in privacy with dignity, integrity, prosperity, security, basic amenities and facilities – in a house, their own house, their kingdom – which is the responsibility of state to be dispensed with as enshrined under the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973," said the notice.

Bahria Town is not a land grabber or belong to any land mafia, it said. "Your newspaper has misunderstood and not fully appreciated the ideology, vision, mission, goals and successful business ventures of our Client (Bahria Town)," Advocate Siddique said in the legal notice.

The Bahria Town confirmed that none of the villagers, residing in the adjoining villages and towns have ever lodged their complaints or concerns with any authorities, etc. The Bahria Town has been generously helping and rendering support to the residents of surrounding villages with potable and drinking water, schools, dispensaries, etc in order to uplift the downtrodden, long deprived, less fortunate, destitute and suppressed communities dwelling in those poor and neglected areas which should have been looked after by the incumbent governments being their constitutional duty.

The Bahria Town condemned and contradicted any derogatory and defamatory attempts disseminated through the newspaper article to establish liaisons between the local politically influential persons and MPAs or MNAs.

"It is a business-oriented entity and does not believe in working through invisible and diplomatic channels. For that matter, this should also be hereby clarified that our Client has no connection whatsoever with one Mr. Rao Anwaar who has been in limelight for quite some time facing various criminal allegations and charges in some issues irrelevant to our Client," the notice said.

"Our Client unequivocally condemns and contradicts the uncalled for mention and reference to concoct and portray an assumed and baseless wrong linkage between our Client and Mr. Rao Anwaar. Our Client firmly and openly believes in integrity, transparency, hard work, tireless struggle, rule of law, best practices and customs and fair dealings for all."

On the contrary, Advocate Siddique said in the legal notice, Bahria Town is itself a victim of the "intrigues and machinations wryly played by the local feudal lords to their own advantage and gruesomely to the disadvantage of innocent local residents and habitants of the areas surrounding our Client's land".

The notice said that the Bahria Town had its own transparent and lucrative payment plans for the payment of land which was being purchased for its projects. It mentioned that the Supreme Court took the matter into its hands for the welfare, protection and larger interest of the original land ownership as well as the prospective home buyers.

"Accordingly, the Apex Court stipulated price slabs, payment methods and plan with respect to the purchase of land measuring 16,896 acres in area," it said. "That the above plan was formalised through a detailed judgment passed by the Supreme Court of Pakistan reported as 2019 SCMR 703," it added.

"The August Supreme Judiciary did not leave tiny space for anyone concerned in one way or the other to fiddle with the arrangement they have devised. That arrangement goes in the interest of people of Pakistan for now and for the generations to come."

It has been further elaborated that Bahria Town has acted in all bonafide and good faith, throughout; and settled all matters as reflected through the judgment, passed by the Supreme Court (Implementation Bench), on March 21, 2019.

"The tremendous pressure exerted and falsehood conveyed through your aforesaid article amounts to nothing but defamation, intimidation, and harassment which is preventing our Client to carry out its business activities, in an effective manner, and it is likely to undermine the arrangements arrived at, successfully, as spelled out in the order dated 21.03.2019 by the August Implementation Bench, Supreme Court of Pakistan," the legal notice said.

"Bahria Town has invested, of course, in good faith and all bona fide, billions of rupees in the real estate and housing industry and its directors prudently arrived at a settlement in respect of Super Highway Project, Karachi, purely in national interest and to protect the rights of the members of our Client."

The Bahria Town reiterated that its directors and functionaries are working earnestly to ensure compliance of the commitments made to the Supreme Court. "Bahria Town being a law-abiding entity is following the payment plan through making mammoth payment with the Registrar, Supreme Court of Pakistan which can be verified therefrom since this is a public affair and there are no secrets."

The notice said that the newspaper should have researched professionally and thoroughly before embarking upon this derogatory campaign against the Bahria Town to sell "their newspaper to the sheer disadvantage, defamation, and devastation of our Client".

"This unprofessional, highly un-journalistic, devastating, prejudicial, detrimental, defamatory and propaganda against our Client is not acceptable and our Client hereby condemns and contradicts any or all damaging words, lines, paras, cliché, contents, statements and remarks deliberately contained in your noxious article in question."

"In the purview, your spreading false, misleading, destructive and defamatory statements and narrative about our Client, through your newspaper, is entirely objectionable, offensive and without any valid basis," Advocate Siddique said.

"It is most unprofessional and unethical of you and your reporter to, so casually and libellously, state, without any heedful regard to the impeccable name, business and reputation of our Client. Your insertion of false, misleading, derogatory and defamatory statements in the aforesaid article has raised unnecessary and totally unwanted concerns and skepticism amongst the customers of our Client including all relevant business circles, banks, regulatory bodies, the general public, etc for no genuine reasons. The resultant skepticism and negative propaganda have caused a continuing sizeable economic and financial detriment to the business of our Client."

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 01, 17/09/2019)

Ghotki violence

THE vandalism of temples and the destruction of private property, following the registration of a blasphemy case against a Hindu school owner in Ghotki, once again reminds us of the extent to which the social fabric of Pakistani society has been eroded.

Though the Hindu community has been living in Sindh for centuries, violent incidents like these leave them defenceless.

The case against the school owner was registered when a student claimed he heard him making objectionable religious statements; he told his father, who then informed the police.

Earlier in May, violence erupted in Mirpurkhas when a local vet allegedly used paper inscribed with religious texts to wrap medicine. After the incident, a mob vandalised shops and houses, mostly belonging to the local Hindu community.

Though it can be argued that those whose religious sentiments have been hurt have the right to protest, no one can be absolved of taking the law into their own hands and targeting another community.

It is a sad reality that the land of Sufis is falling prey to violence committed in the name of religion.

The Ghotki police have registered a case against the rioters for damaging places of worship. Let us hope that the cases are pursued to their logical conclusion, even in the case of potential political opposition.

Unfortunately, there have been several incidents that show the blasphemy law's potential for being misused.

A Christian couple in Kot Radha Kishan (Kasur) were accused of blasphemy in 2014, following which they were beaten and burnt by a mob because they demanded their wages from their employer.

Similarly, in 2013, a dispute among two friends led to the burning of a whole Christian settlement in Gojra (Toba Tek Singh) on blasphemy charges.

Society's attitude towards the issue is just as big a challenge.

Mashal Khan, a student of the Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan, was killed even before accusations against him could be pursued according to the law.

Prof Khalid Hameed only needed to be seen as 'anti-Islam' for his student to stab him to death.

It is about time the state took religious scholars on board to chalk out a strategy aimed at stopping the rampant misuse of the law — often for settling property, monetary and personal disputes. Meanwhile, it can demonstrate some political grit by penalising those who took the law into their own hands in Ghotki.

(By Editorial Dawn, 08, 17/09/2019)

'Demands for Sindh police stations are replaced by demands for schools'

Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that he is witnessing a positive change in the people of Sindh as their demands for police stations, water supply and sanitation and irrigation water have been replaced by the demands for the establishment of new schools and up gradation of the existing ones.

"Seeing people's growing inclination, especially of those belonging to the rural areas, towards education, particularly female education, is surprising," he said on Tuesday, during the inaugural ceremony of Damba Village Government Secondary School in Malir District. The CM was accompanied by the American Ambassador Paul W Jones on the occasion.

The school has been constructed under the Sindh Basic Education Program (SBEP), initiated with the grant of \$155 million, provided by the USAID, to build schools in 10 districts of Sindh. Of the \$155 million grant, \$81 million has been appropriated for the construction of child-friendly schools in areas affected by the 2010 floods, while the remaining \$74 million has been allocated for teachers' training, community mobilisation, capacity building of education officers, research studies, formulating policies and for providing one-time grants to 300 public schools in the province. The Sindh CM informed the participants of the ceremony that the provincial government has also released \$10 million for the establishment of Programme Management and Implementation, for the overall management of SBEP.

He further revealed that of the total 106 schools, planned to be built under the programme, construction of 68 has been completed while the remaining 38 are at different stages of construction. Out of the 68 completed schools, 43 have been handed over to seven Education Management Organisations under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, he said, adding that, the furniture for these schools, however, has been provided by the government. CM Shah said that the construction of these schools was started in November 2013 and the programme has been extended by two years to complete the construction of the remaining 38 schools.

He expressed gratitude and thanked the US government, the American ambassador, American citizens and the USAID team for working with the Sindh government for uplifting education in the province.

Addressing the ceremony, the CM said that about 10 years ago people used to demand police stations for their villages due to the dismal law and order situation, for the construction of new roads and for the implementation of water supply schemes due to the scarcity of drinking water in villages. But nobody ever demanded schools, he added. "It was a depressing phase and it was worrying," said the CM.

According to him, things have changed drastically now. "Wherever I go now, people demand school buildings, complain about the absence of teachers and specifically ask for the up gradation of existing facilities and construction of new schools for females."

Expressing gratification, he said, "This is what I wanted. I wanted to witness the thirst for education among the people of Sindh and now they have realised that education guarantees a brighter future for their children."

Specifically referring to the female students of class eight and nine at the Damba Village Government Secondary School, who hosted the ceremony in three languages including English, Urdu, and Sindhi, the CM expressed pride and said, "I am now confident that our future is in safe hands." He said that he sees them as "Benazir Bhuttos of the future."

The American Ambassador, Jones, too addressed the ceremony and expressed happiness over female students in the village confidently speaking in English. He appreciated Shah for taking a personal interest in improving the standard of education in Sindh and said that the US government, as well as American people, will extend support to help improve education in the province. Jones also reinforced the provincial government's approach to employing PPP model for improving education in Sindh. "This method of school management has produced good results," he said.

Earlier, CM Shah and Jones unveiled the plaque to inaugurate the newly constructed school.

Consul General of USA in Karachi, Robbert Silberstein, Education Secretary Ahsan Mangi, senior officers of the Sindh education department and management of USAID programme attended the ceremony.
(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 18/09/2019)

Court seeks comments on illegal police station

The Sindh High Court (SHC) sought details from the police department on Wednesday regarding the establishment of Bahadurabad Police Station on land allegedly owned by a citizen. A two-member bench comprising Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Kausar Sultana Hussain heard the citizen's plea against the police station.

Petitioner Arif's counsel maintained that the police station was established on land owned by his client. He said that the court has passed orders to remove the police station from there several times but no action has been taken in this regard.

But the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's (KMC) counsel, Advocate Azra Mugeem said that the plot in question was an amenity plot and was owned by KMC. "The establishment of the police station on this land and the ownership claim by the citizen is wrong. The plot should be evacuated and handed back to the KMC," she maintained.

"Why didn't the KMC realise this in the past 20 years? Most buildings in Bahadurabad have been constructed without approved construction plans," observed the bench.

The court sought details from the police department on the establishment of Bahadurabad Police Station and asked the department to mention who issued the permission for its construction.

Contested land

The same bench issued notices to the East deputy commissioner, University of Karachi (KU), the revenue department and others again, directing them to submit their reply within six weeks on the plea filed by Nabeel Gabol against KU.

Petitioner's counsel, Liaquat Gabol, claimed that four acres of land owned by his client's mother had been occupied by KU.

"After my mother's death, the land now belongs to me and my siblings. The administration is not vacating the land despite the submission of several applications," he said.

"We have not occupied anyone's property," said KU's counsel.

The court issued notices to the relevant parties once again and sought replies within six weeks.

The court also directed the defence lawyer to present the original property documents within 15 days.

Heritage site

Meanwhile, another two-member bench comprising Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar and Justice Agha Faisal summoned the additional secretary of the culture, tourism and antiquities department. The bench directed the Sindh antiquities department to provide an explanation on the plea filed against the occupation of Chaukhandi tombs' land.

The court expressed annoyance on the occupation of Chaukhandi tombs' land.

Petitioner Attaullah Shah's counsel maintained that the ancient graveyard near the National Highway was a heritage site. "20 acres of land had been reserved to set-up up a park and a museum behind the heritage site but more than half of the land of Chaukhandi tombs has been occupied by land mafia," he said, adding that no action was being taken to preserve heritage sites in Sindh despite orders.

The additional advocate-general maintained that the Sindh government lacks funds. "Efforts are being made to preserve heritage sites in Sindh," he said.

The court summoned the culture department's additional secretary and sought an explanation from the department on October 10.

Farmers' arrears

The same bench directed three sugar mills to clear dues by September 24 while hearing the plea filed against non-payment of money to sugarcane farmers.

The petitioners' counsel maintained that the court had directed 11 sugar mills of Sindh to pay sugarcane farmers at the rate of Rs160 per mound. He said that all sugar mills except three have paid the dues.

The court directed the three sugar mills – Bandi, Sakrand and Suhri, to pay dues of 2017 and 2018 to the farmers by September 24.

MPAs' allowance

The same bench directed provincial authorities to pay arrears of Sindh Assembly MPAs' allowances and funds within two months while hearing the petition filed by Syed Sardar Ahmed and others.

The deputy secretary of the finance department informed the bench that the Sindh government was facing a financial crisis which is why the department was waiting for approval of funds by the cabinet committee. "Of the funds expected from the federal government, Rs86 billion are due. Funds are being delayed due to the transfer of secretaries," he said.

"There is a budget for making appointments. Why do you have the budget?" asked Justice Mazhar.

"The total dues stand at Rs664 million," said the additional secretary of the finance department.

"Why has the payment not been made when the money is reserved in the budget?" inquired the bench, while directing that the arrears be paid within two months.

The bench directed the provincial authorities to pay 50 per cent of arrears in the month of September and the remaining amount in October. "The chief secretary must ensure 50 per cent payment by October 15," directed the bench.

The petitioners include Muttahida Quami Movement-Pakistan's (MQM-P) Sardar Ahmed, Grand Democratic Alliance's (GDA) Nusrat Sehar Abbasi, Soorath Thebo, Dilawar Qureshi, Engineer Sabir Hussain and former MPAs.

The petition maintained that the allowances of all members of the assembly were doubled by the government in 2017. While the current MPAs are being paid the additional amount, the former members have not been paid the additional allowance.
(By Nasir Butt The Express Tribune, 05, 19/09/2019)

NAB arrests former KMC Parks DG in fake accounts case

The National Accountability Bureau Rawalpindi's investigation team arrested the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's former Director-General for Parks and Horticulture Liaquat Ali from Karachi in the fake bank accounts case over alleged illegal allotment of Bagh Ibn-e-Qasim land.

According to the notification issued by the NAB, KMC's former Parks and Horticulture DG Liaquat Ali's house was raided and eight cars, weapons, property files, jewellery and KMC's official records were seized. The notification also stated that the accused is currently serving as an adviser to Karachi Mayor Wasim Akhtar. He has received several awards by former presidents of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari and Pervez Musharraf.

Of the 243 other objects seized from the house, the NAB said that the items included jewellery, cars and other valuables whose estimated value ran into millions of rupees.

Besides, Dirhams, Riyals and other foreign and local currency have also been seized from the accused.

According to sources affiliated with the NAB, Liaquat Ali will be transferred to NAB Rawalpindi after his transit remand is acquired from Karachi's accountability court. Big names are expected to be revealed during the accused's interrogation.
(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 20/09/2019)

SHC orders registration of FIR against former SSP for 'half-frying' doctor

The Sindh High Court (SHC) has ordered the registration of a case against former Hyderabad SSP Irfan Baloch and other police officials for 'half-frying' a citizen, Dr Deepak Raj, in 2015. The court has also ordered the formation of a Joint Investigation Team to probe the incident, besides directing the Sindh government to compensate the victim.

Half-fry and full-fry are terms used by the police to refer to the condition of suspects they come across during encounters. The former is used for a person who is injured and the latter when the person is killed during the raid.

On Wednesday, a two-member bench, comprising Justice Salahuddin Panhwar and Justice Shamsuddin Abbasi, was hearing the plea filed by Dr Deepak Raj's wife, Srimat Suneeta. The petitioner's counsel, Barrister Haq Nawaz Talpur, argued that the attack on Dr Raj was an example of sheer brutality as he was left to die after being shot multiple times. "It is no less than a miracle that Dr Raj is alive today," said the lawyer. "A happy family was devastated by the police and now they are living in misery," he added.

The case

Dr Raj ran a private clinic in Chakra Goth, Korangi. On April 16, 2015, he had gone to Hyderabad to visit relatives, when police officials shot him at a tea shop in Hyderabad's Kali Morri area. "I had gone to meet some relatives in Hyderabad and had just stopped at the tea shop for a cup of tea," Dr Raj had told *The Express Tribune* a month after the incident. The policemen caught hold of him at the shop and shot at his legs, he recalled, adding that they kept calling him 'Shareef Panhwar'.

"They took me to the police station and kept telling me to confess to crimes as I kept bleeding," said Raj. "They wanted me to say that I am Shareef Panhwar. I cried and told them that I am not even a Muslim and that my name is Deepak," Dr Raj narrated his ordeal to *The Express Tribune*.

In all, Dr Raj was half-fried with 15 shots – 12 bullets to his left leg, two to his right leg and a single shot to his right arm. His left leg had to be amputated while his other leg and arm were also in a bad shape.

When *The Express Tribune* met him at the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre in May 2015, his left arm – the only limb not injured – was chained to the side of the bed. The medical report noted his name as Shareef, son of Abdullah.

According to Dr Raj, he was shot at around 5pm but he was taken to a hospital at 9pm. "They called me half-fried," he said. "It would have been better that they had 'full-fried' me," Dr Raj had lamented at the time.

By that time, Irfan Baloch, who is now the Larkana Police DIG, had confirmed to *The Express Tribune* that the man had been identified as Deepak. He had insisted, however, that the encounter was genuine. The police killed two of his aides and injured one, while two others escaped, he had told *The Express Tribune*.

"He introduced himself as Shareef Panhwar," Baloch had told *The Express Tribune*, adding that his brother, Suneel, who was in jail, had also introduced himself as Muhammad Ali when he was arrested.

JIT formed

On Wednesday, four years after the incident, the SHC ordered the formation of a JIT, headed by Hyderabad Police chief AIG Waliullah Dal, to investigate the incident. The JIT must include two DSPs and officials of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and Intelligence Bureau (IB), the court-ordered.

The bench also directed the chief secretary to pay Rs50,000 monthly to Dr Raf for expenses and disburse the compensation announced by the chief minister. "If Deepak has to be sent abroad for treatment, he should be sent there on government expense," the bench directed.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 26/09/2019)

'Bushra Zaidi case changed Karachi'

One does not see very often well-known individuals talk about someone with a great deal of genuine affection and sincerity as they did on Wednesday evening at T2F where they had gathered to pay tribute to distinguished architect, town planner and social thinker Arif Hasan.



Zehra Abid, the moderator of the event, began proceedings by putting a couple of questions to Mr Hasan, the first of which was about the fact that the architect does not remain silent in the face of injustice. Mr Hasan replied that his "involvement" was there even before he started practising architecture. He also observed that the Bushra Zaidi case changed the city of Karachi.

Going down memory lane he said as a young student he had an Urdu teacher who used to read a poem by Allama Iqbal the last line of which was, Khudi na baich ghareebi mein naam paida ker (do not compromise on self-esteem, earn a name with scarce means).

Tribute paid to veteran architect Arif Hasan

Durriya Kazi, who heads the department of Visual Studies at the University of Karachi, was one of the three eminent persons who sat along the architect to shed light on his life and work. She said her relationship with Mr Hasan was not as an architect but, "He is an inspiration. He is very much the conscience of our nation, our city [Karachi]. I have learned all types of things from him. He is a combination of idealism and pragmatism. He never moves too far away from people. Anything he does, he keeps the human factor [in mind]."

Ms Kazi said Mr Hasan's research for his work was based on his extensive travels and his interaction with people. She likened visiting and meeting him to visiting a university. "He always gives us a reality check. He has always lived by his principles," she said.

Architect Noman Ahmed recalled the time when he was an undergrad student at the Dawood Engineering University and Mr Hasan was his teacher. Then he [Mr Ahmed] went to Turkey for higher studies. Upon his return to Pakistan he joined Mr Hasan's office who was at the time working on the Karimabad planning project in Hunza. It enabled Mr Ahmed to travel with the senior architect where he learned about the benefits of planning by "including the people of the area for which planning is being done". People's concerns about that region [Hunza] could only be understood by going there. Subsequently, their observations were documented, he said.

Dr Kaleem Lashari first spoke about a seminar that took place in Nepal in the 1990s at which Karachi was discussed. Then in 2003, working with the heritage committee made him get to know Mr Hasan better. He pointed out that the architect has "clarity" when he sits on such committees and where one has to deal with the "market forces" on a regular basis. He also mentioned the invaluable work that Mr Hasan has done in the past for Thar [when it was affected by a drought].

In that connection Mr Hasan narrated the story about how his research on Thar drove home the point that drought was not the issue that Thar was faced with at the time, but it was social destruction that was causing it harm.

In response to a question about Karachi raised by the moderator, Mr Hasan said the element of fear (khof) entered the atmosphere of the city after the Bushra Zaidi case in the 1980s. Before that, even though the political situation in the city was not particularly stable, there was no 'threat'.

"The Bushra Zaidi incident changed Karachi which prompted the Mohajir-Pathan clashes," he said.
(By Peerzada Salman Dawn, 16, 27/09/2019)

Detaining citizens

OVER the past couple of weeks, there have been incidents where members of the public have been detained in Punjab and Karachi for allegedly flouting some vague 'emergency' regulations. 'Rules' were apparently violated during Punjab's dengue emergency drive, while in Karachi, urgent measures to supposedly rid the city of heaps of solid waste were impeded. Nabbing citizens for allegedly violating the rules fools no one; everyone knows the disposal of solid waste is the responsibility of the provincial authorities. In Punjab, some 100 people have been arrested; FIRs have been registered against more than 500 others. In Karachi, a man was detained for throwing trash in an open space before being released a day later. These crises had long been in the making, and citizens cannot be deemed responsible for them. It is the authorities that failed to take measures to prevent conditions from worsening.

The Punjab arrests are absurd — many people were detained or had FIRs registered against them after dengue inspection teams found mosquito larvae in their homes and workplaces. The case of Karachi, on the other hand, is one of sheer negligence. The provincial government spent billions on setting up a waste disposal authority that did nothing to prevent Pakistan's largest city from turning into a garbage dump. If there are no designated places to throw waste, where are people suppose to dispose of it? And if the authorities must hold the public accountable, it should be for logical reasons; they should not do so to gloss over their own incompetence. What will be the legal mechanism for proceeding against those who have 'violated' anti-dengue rules? Cracking down on the public will only fuel resentment. Some years ago, KP decided to arrest parents who refused polio vaccination for their children. This strategy had to be revoked because it politicised the issue and further endangered polio eradication teams who were already a target of the militants. Instead of wasting their time and resources, the authorities should get on with their responsibilities.
(By Editorial Dawn, 08, 29/09/2019)

50 women, 28 men fall victim to karo-kari across Sindh in six months

Amid so many challenges faced by the law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system, killings in the name of so-called honour, or karo-kari killings, mainly in rural parts of Sindh, continue unabated as more than 70 people have lost their lives during the first six months of the current year, it emerged on Sunday.

However, investigations into majority of such cases remain inconclusive bringing no one to justice but have allowed acquittal of a few suspects.

Official figures suggested that some 78 people were killed from January to June 2019 in different parts of Sindh in the name of karo-kari leading to registration of 65 cases. However, more than 90 per cent cases were pending trial due to different reasons and in most cases the police probe had not reached to a conclusion.

Total 65 cases have been registered but no one convicted for killing in the name of so-called honour

"Among 78 victims, 50 were women and 28 men," said a source citing the data. "Total 65 FIRs have been registered in different parts of Sindh for honour killings and charge sheets in 60 cases filed. Some 57 cases are still pending with no conviction in any case. However, three people have been acquitted during the process. In most cases the suspects are close relatives of the victims."

The concern in the police hierarchy over the status of investigations into honour killing cases echoed in a recent meeting chaired by Inspector General of Police Dr Syed Kaleem Imam, who last month reviewed the progress made by police in their assignments related to karo-kari.

IGP seeks detailed report

The Sindh IG had asked investigators to prepare a detailed report on a case-to-case basis about the release and conviction in the honour killing cases across the province.

He also directed the officials concerned to ensure that there must not be any loophole left in the investigations and the same was also adequately pursued before courts.

In the same meeting, the DIG-Sukkur was asked to take on board all stakeholders and with their consultation a proposal be developed to help end the menace of karo-kari.

Despite being highly criticised by the authorities as well as human rights organisations, the heinous trend, usually termed a part of the rural system, continues unabated. Police, however, find it hard to investigate such killings effectively, as both aggrieved and accused parties usually belong to the same family or tribe.

"Honour killing is a social problem and has its roots in the tribal culture and a mindset where women are seen as subservient to men," said DIG-Headquarters Abdul Khaliq Shaikh.

DIG Shaikh has been heading the recently established human rights cell of the Sindh police that operates as a supervisory body responsible for focusing and emphasising safeguarding human rights while primarily dealing with cases pertaining to vulnerable communities that include women, children, minorities and transgenders.

"A long-term solution lies in changing this mindset and empowering women in society in general. As far as the criminal justice response is concerned the police department has taken several useful initiatives to deal with the menace of killings in the name of so-called honour which included execution of a project on prevention of honour killings in collaboration with UNDP and a training module for police officers have been developed to sensitise them," he added.

He said that a centralised human rights cell had been established in the Central Police Office (CPO) to monitor such incidents or cases and the IGP had got conducted a research study by senior police officers to assess the police response and identify ways and means to improve police handling of cases.

"However, there's a need for greater coordination between prosecution, police and judiciary as prosecutors and judges need to be trained to understand peculiarities of murder cases where motive is [so-called] honour," said DIG Shaikh.

Call for reforming criminal justice system

Both human rights organisations and legislators, however, believe that apart from the flaw in the probe and attitude of the families concerned, the police's approach towards the 'honour killing' cases and overall criminal justice system need reforms.

They call for greater reforms in the laws and bringing the culprits to justice instead of blaming the culture for the brutal trend.

"In the first place, you have to treat all crime equally — if its murder then its murder," said PPP leader Dr Nafisa Shah, who has a PhD degree in social and cultural anthropology from Oxford University.

Ms Shah's 2017 book Honour Unmasked offers rich detailed ethnography on honour killing, showing how the state and justice system and informal processes of redress are mutually implicated in providing a space for honour-related violence.

"When it comes to law related to this subject, it's unfortunate these laws are quite vague. They are needed to be reformed. We witnessed some legal changes first during General Musharraf government and then during the last government of Nawaz Sharif. But it needs to address whole criminal justice and one can't blame culture or trend just for an excuse."

She said that the changes made in the laws during two different government to address the menace of honour killings should be counted effective if there was any decline in number of such cases but this could only be called as a step forward, not a solution.

"Since all cases fall in the domain of law, we need to look at the perspective of the law," said Dr Shah. "We need to see that how are these cases dealt with? Whatever changes were made in the law, I believe these all were partial changes. We need to look and reform the criminal justice system for better and effective results."

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 30/09/2019)

Police excesses

PHOTOGRAPHS of bruised and bloodied doctors began circulating on social media soon after the KP police baton-charged and used tear gas against them at the Lady Reading Hospital in Peshawar on Friday. Fifteen doctors and medical staff were arrested and sent to jail under the Maintenance of Public Order Ordinance. They had been protesting against the Regional and District

Health Authorities Act, 2019, which they say will lead to the 'privatisation' of public health service. The bill was passed hurriedly by the government, even though the chief minister had constituted a committee to address the doctors' and health workers' reservations. Shockingly, Section 144 was quickly imposed on the hospital's grounds, which outlawed the gathering of 'five doctors and more', thereby criminalising protest. The doctors' grievances go a little further back, though. In May, the professionals had gone on a strike to register their protest against the continued indifference of the authorities that did not consult them on the health reforms that were first introduced in 2015. They felt these reforms did not take into account the ground realities of the province, and they viewed the changes as the imposition of an expensive, ineffective, 'foreign' system. This animosity then culminated in a physical altercation between an assistant professor and the provincial health minister.

According to the police, it was the doctors who had first pelted stones at the law-enforcement officials. While these details cannot be confirmed, the introduction of Section 144 and the force's heavy-handed response are unjustifiable. Unfortunately, it is a common occurrence witnessed in all the provinces. A few months ago, excesses by the police in Karachi were rightfully condemned, when protesting teachers marching towards the Chief Minister House were baton-charged and injured. Meanwhile, in Punjab the police are grappling with their own cases of torture, custodial deaths and extrajudicial killings. The inability to resolve conflict tactfully and the speed with which we criminalise peaceful protest speaks to a deeper malaise in society.

(By Editorial Dawn, 06, 30/09/2019)

31 illegal police pickets identified in Karachi

Around 31 illegal police check posts and pickets were identified in East Zone. East DIG Amir Farooqi issued directives on Tuesday for all unauthorised police check posts to be razed. He directed the police officials deployed there to return to their respective police stations. The areas where these illegal structures had been set-up can be monitored through patrolling, he said.

The unauthorised check posts include Ghulam Rasool Shaheed Dalmia check post, Shaheed Mehar Ali police post in Gulshan-e-Iqbal and Raja Arshad Shaheed police post which fall in the jurisdiction of Aziz Bhatti Police Station. Darul Sehat Hospital check post, Ashrafal Madaris check post, and Gulistan-e-Jauhar police chowki in Hussain Hazara Goth in the limits of Sharae Faisal Police Station, Liberty Chowk check post in the jurisdiction of Zaman Town Police Station, Qayumabad police post and Bilal Colony picket in the jurisdiction of Korangi Industrial Area Police Station, Khadi police post and R Area police post in the limits of Korangi Police Station, New Sabzi Mandi Chowk, Ahsanabad police post and Northern Bypass police post in the limits of SITE Super Highway Police Station, Al Asif Square police post in the limits of Sohrab Goth Police Station.

Besides, Abbas Town police post and Bhitai Abad police post in the limits of Sachal Police Station, Khuldabad police post in the jurisdiction of Shah Latif Town Police Station, Bhitai Colony police post and Fishery police post in the limits of Ibrahim Hyderi Police Station, Naseerabad police post in the jurisdiction of Bin Qasim Police Station, Afghan camp police post in the jurisdiction of Gulshan-e-Maymar Police Station, Kathore police post, Bahria Town police post and Gadap city police post in the limits of Gadap City Police Station, nine-kilometre police post in the jurisdiction of Steel Town Police Station, Rairhi Goth police post in the jurisdiction of Sukhan Police Station, Ayub Goth police post in the jurisdiction of Sohrab Goth Police Station and Darsano Chano police post in the jurisdiction of Memon Goth Police Station.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 02/10/2019)

ASPs as SHOs: knee-jerk reaction

The incidents of police torture and fake encounters in this part of the world are not new and appear with regular intervals but the death of Salahuddin in police custody has shaken the conscience of society at large. The anguish and shock of the public was particularly intense due to the tall claims of the PTI in their election manifesto to reform the thana (police station) culture. Such promises generated hopes of better governance along with protection of human rights and ensuring justice in all tiers of our society. But every now and then, the country echoes with violations of human rights which overshadow the glorious sacrifices and achievements of the police, particularly in Punjab and Sindh.



The obvious question is: Why do such incidents occur so regularly? Lack of accountability is the answer. Had cases like those relating to the Sahiwal encounter and Naeqeb Ullah murder been taken to their logical conclusion and the culprits brought to justice, more such

incidents might not have occurred.

The callousness of all law enforcing agencies is institutionalised and continues as a norm behind the iron curtain. Common people were shocked as the video of the Salahuddin incident found its way to the public eye via social media. Demands have been made for the removal of the IG and other concerned senior officers. One would have given the supervisory officers the benefit of the doubt had this been an isolated incident. However, the brutality, fake encounters, *qabza* (encroachment) and the general haughty and laidback attitude are endemic to say the least. With this backdrop, calls for accountability and reforms are understandable.

While harping on the clichés of reforms and change in the thana culture, we ignore the basics of policing embedded in the Police Rules 1934. The rot stems from omission to follow the guidelines in the rules. The Police Rules require every police officer, whatever the rank, to be regarded by every law-abiding person as a wise and impartial friend and a protector against injury to his property. When mutual confidence and cooperation are lacking, private persons and village officials resort to connivance with criminals to safeguard themselves against any risks. Proper relations between the police and the public in a district depend

primarily upon the personal attitude of the superintendent, and the example set by him and enforced upon his subordinates. The most important duty of a superintendent is to know the people of his district and to know what his subordinates are doing. Such knowledge can only be gained by full personal accessibility, active touring, thorough and intelligent supervision and a sympathetic interest in the life of the district and the facts and difficulties of the work of his subordinates. He must inspire confidence in his subordinates as well as in the public. While staying alert to check the abuse of power by his subordinates, the superintendent must also be accessible. All supervisory officers should ensure direct access to themselves, unimpeded by their subordinates and they must be ready to patiently hear the complainants' grievances. Unfortunately, the regular abuse of power by police officials proves that the supervisory officers appear to be ignorant about what their subordinates are doing. This might be on account of absence of personal accessibility, minimal touring, and a lack of thorough and intelligent supervision and sympathetic interest in the life of the district.

From a sociological perspective, the situation is aggravated by the cultural norm of *chitrol*, a colloquial term used for lashing with a leather belt to extract confessions — a rather common practice in Punjab. Anyone with a gentlemanly demeanour is generally considered to be a *maatha* (weak) officer. On the contrary, *dabang* and *daada* (bold, inspiring fear) are the terms used for officers that deal in a harsh way and hence yield results quickly. The Punjab Police works in an environment of feudalism — mainly authoritative — based on the lord and serf relationship. The superstructure and relationship in such a society are of an exploitative nature, bonding the serf to the feudal. The instruments of the state are generally aligned with the feudals to the detriment of the rights of the hapless tenants and other marginalised sections of society. The unnoticeable characters called *kammis* (menials) suffer daily in different ways but do not appear important in the corridors of powers and the ruling elite. The feudal class of the ruling elite seeks to fortify its already acquired status by subjecting society at large to its appropriation.

Those attached to lands also consider the phenomenon as their fait accompli. This belief of fatalism keeps them in a system of psychological bondage and chains, difficult to be broken. The police also operate in the same socio-economic conditions and the psyche of the officers, particularly at the police station level, is conditioned by the material conditions and associated social relationships. This puts the staff of the police station to work in a clientele status of the feudals. The ugly combination of the police station staff with the ruling elite and lack of supervision makes matters worse in terms of human rights.

Strangely, the Chief Minister of Punjab and the federal government in a knee-jerk reaction found the solution in posting ASPs as officers in charge of police stations and the establishment of an independent external inspectorate to act as a watchdog of the police without diagnosing the real problem. No reforms can be successful if introduced in isolation. Meaningful reforms are associated with socio-economic reforms by eliminating feudalism and ensuring implementation of existing laws through better supervision, inspections and objectivity in promotions and postings.
(By Syed Akhtar Ali Shah The Express Tribune, 17, 02/10/2019)

IGP says crime has come down since 2013

Inspector General of Police, Sindh, Dr Syed Kaleem Imam said on Wednesday that there had been a steep fall in targeted killings in the city over the last few years as the figure dropped from 509 recorded in 2013 to only 15 this year.

This was stated by the IGP during his visit to the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), where he also confirmed that in 2019 no terrorist incidents had taken place in the city whereas in 2013 there were 61 such incidents.

The provincial police chief said that in any society a majority of people were law-abiding citizens and police had to deal with around 10 per cent criminal-minded elements. But such elements could also be reformed by providing better education, health and social welfare facilities, he added.

Dr Imam further said that most of the crimes in Karachi took place owing to poverty, unemployment, high cost of living and mass migration. But there were also crimes related to civil disputes, including land-related issues.

Giving some other details, the police chief said that incidents related to murder and civil crimes came down from 4,785 in 2013 to 1,200 cases. Similarly, kidnapping for ransom incidents also recorded a steep fall, from 260 in 2013 to only 24 in 2019.

Incidents of extortion, he said, also declined from 575 in 2013 to 121 in 2019, while mobile snatching that once peaked at 14,000 per annum had also receded to a considerable extent.

During the last 18 months, the police chief said, 49,000 complaints were received and 46,000 disposed of, and the police department removed many officials from service on disciplinary action and rewarded those who performed well.
(By Parvaiz Ishfaq Rana Dawn, 15, 03/10/2019)

Law of social change

THE two-day conference in Karachi on law, judicial interventions and social change was well worth the effort for it dealt with a basic but generally ignored function of a legal regime, namely, the social development of the people.



Organised by the Rasheed Rizvi Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights and the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research, the conference discussed labour laws in the broader context of modern labour initiatives that are enabling workers to enrich their lives. These efforts are relevant to Pakistan as post-independence governments have mostly used laws to curtail rights that

even the colonial rulers had recognised. These new techniques of workers' mobilisation have borne fruit in Bangladesh and India and it should be possible to replicate them in Pakistan.

The session on judicial interventions and social justice generated a critique of the judicial system, especially of judicial activism, from more than one perspective. These discussions, however, squeezed the time for a debate on law as an instrument of social change.

The importance of this subject is manifest. Western countries owe much of their social development to laws that abolished slavery and feudal relationships, and guaranteed equality of access to education, health facilities and social security. Now social development has become synonymous with growing respect for human rights.

People are not unfamiliar with laws designed to promote social change. There are examples from the abolition of sati and infanticide to Pakistani laws to eliminate social evils and the framing of family laws, the Indian Trade Union Act, and laws for compulsory education. However, this country faces two serious challenges in this area.

Is it not time to question the adherence to a retributive system of justice?

First, Pakistan has sustained pre-Independence social relationships. A large number of people are living in the tribal phase, a bigger number still subscribe to feudal customs, while a small minority professes post-feudal sensibilities. Naturally, inequalities at various levels have ossified.

Secondly, Pakistan has been drifting towards social regression. The decline in education and health is leading to an increase in the number of people who cannot benefit from their services. For a majority of citizens, access to justice is problematic and laws have been made to deny a large number of workers their basic rights.

The state has been trying to alleviate the hardships of hordes of citizens who are denied social justice by widening the safety net, but that cannot cover more than a fraction of the population.

It is obviously necessary to deliberate further on the role the law should play in promoting forward-looking social change. The immediate tasks for the state apparently are to make legislation to operationalise Article 3 of the Constitution (elimination of exploitation), fulfilment of obligations assumed under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and under various conventions (ie child rights, the elimination of discrimination against women, rights of those with disabilities, torture), and at least a reduction in the exploitation of tenants and farm labour and decrease in gender inequality.

The final session invited participants to dream, and the organisers hoped to cull from the speakers' dreams "a manifesto for South Asia through legal and judicial means and explore the possibilities of (support from) international law".

The proceedings confirmed that a people who are overwhelmed by immediate crises cannot prevent a devaluation of their dreams. The key speakers gave more time to analysing the unhappy situation prevailing in Pakistan than to their aspirations. However, it could be deduced from Raza Rabbani's impassioned denunciation of a hybrid state and a hybrid Constitution that he was ideologising federalism and parliamentary democracy. In a way, his speech was a continuation of Justice Faez Isa's keynote address a day earlier. Likewise, advocate Faisal Siddiqi's plea to the Supreme Court chief justice to answer the three challenges confronting the judiciary identified by himself indicated the areas of essential reform.

Former chief justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani sent a detailed paper in which he limited his presentation to "the challenges of global rule of law and the role of the International Court of Justice". His idea was that "if we want the world to be governed by the rule of law, then the UN has to be strengthened, the veto powers of the five permanent members of the Security Council have to be done away with, and the International Court of Justice has to have compulsory jurisdiction".

While all this is good because attempts to discuss radical ideas about an exemplary judicial order are rare in Pakistan, it may be necessary to further explore the notable aspirations. Is it not time to question the adherence to a retributive system of justice?

Acceptance of the principle of tit for tat amounts to continuing to live by a primitive society's whims, and closing our eyes to all that humankind has learnt about crime and punishment, and the dignity of human person over many ages. Neither our lawmakers nor our judicial lights should be unaware of the modern discourse on reformatory justice as a means to establish humanitarian justice.

The basic formulation underlying reformatory justice, that any human being who commits an unlawful act should be helped to repent and reform himself, is an essential corollary of human rights standards.

One of the problems with retributive justice is that it treats an offender as exclusively responsible for his crime, whereas society and rulers must accept their failure to prevent crime.

Considering the law and order situation in Pakistan and the kind of horrible crimes that are reported almost daily, any suggestion to move towards reformatory justice is likely to be dismissed as unrealistic. But systems entrenched for ages cannot be replaced instantly. A public discourse over an extended period on the demerits of justice by vengeance and the merits of justice by compassion will be necessary before the need for change is commonly accepted. Still, it is never too early to start a debate on the desirability, feasibility and mechanics of a change that should move society towards a more rational existence.

(By I.A Rehman Dawn, 08, 03/10/2019)

CM approves model police stations, transgender quota in govt service

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah gave the nod on Thursday to several proposed reforms in the police service, including the establishment of model stations, upgrade of police personnel's pay scales to bring them on a par with the Punjab Police and the creation of a special police force. Besides, the CM also decided to allocate a special quota for members of the transgender community in government service.

The decisions were made in a meeting, attended by Chief Secretary Mumtaz Shah, Sindh Police chief IG Dr Kaleem Imam, Home Secretary Kazi Kabir, Principal Secretary to CM Sajid Jamal Abro, Training Additional IG Aftab Pathan, Karachi Additional IG Ghulam Nabi Memon, Finance Secretary Hassan Naqvi and senior officers of the Central Police Office.

The CM said that he had lifted the morale and confidence of police personnel by equipping them with the latest weapons, gadgets and other incentives, so that they perform their duties with dedication.

IGP Dr Imam briefed the meeting about various proposals aimed at bringing reforms in the police department. AIG Memon said that there were 108 police stations in the city, the majority of which were redundant in the sense that they had been established on nullahs and there was no need to continue them.

Model police stations

CM Shah suggested that two police stations located within the same periphery of the city should be merged and should be declared a model police station. He approved the establishment of the first model police station by amalgamating the Boat Basin and Clifton Police Stations. The police station would be headed by a senior Station House Officer with DDO powers. He would be given a revolving fund of Rs50,000 to meet the day-to-day expenditures. Moreover, an accountant will be appointed to keep a record of the expenditures and when the funds will deplete, another Rs50,000 will be provided to run the station.

Ghazi Cadre

During the meeting, IGP Imam apprised the CM there are about 2,000 policemen who have been either maimed or blinded in the line of duty.

The CM ordered the IGP to prepare a working paper for the cabinet in this regard and to group the maimed and blinded police personnel under a separate "Ghazi Cadre", which is to be formed on the same pattern as the Shaheed Cadre.

"The government will give them ample funds to live respectfully and will create employment for them in the police department, enabling them to meet their household expenditures and earn their bread and butter," the CM said. Policemen suffer physical harm in the line of duty and it is government's responsibility to look after such officials and their families, he added.

Upgrade of pay scales

Bringing to light another issue, IGP Imam told the participants of the meeting that in Sindh, constables, head constables, ASIs are ranked as BS-5, BS-7 and BS-9 officers, respectively. On the other hand, constables, head constables and ASIs in Punjab Police are ranked as BS-7, BS-9 and BS-11 officers, respectively, he said.

The CM approved IGP Imam's request to upgrade the rank of police officials in Sindh and bring them at par with the Punjab Police. He directed the IGP to prepare a summary on the issue and send it to him for formal approval.

Transgender quota

The CM also spoke about allocating a quota for transgender persons in all government departments.

Addressing the meeting, he said that the transgender community is one of the most neglected segments of society and stressed there was a need to allocate a quota for recruiting of transgender persons in all government departments, including police.

He ordered the chief secretary to prepare a working paper for the cabinet so that the government can proceed with allocating a quota for the recruitment of transgender persons in government departments.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 04/10/2019)

Female medical student shot dead in robbery attempt

A female medical student of a private university was shot dead inside a car by alleged robbers in the presence of her father in Gulshan-i-Iqbal on Thursday morning, said officials.

They added that Misbah, 24, was killed by armed motorcyclists near her home at Mochi Mor on Rashid Minhas Road when she was waiting inside the car along with her father Athar Anwar for a bus of the varsity.

The police in their initial probe described the incident as a robbery-related crime.

"It is obvious that it is a case of robbery," said DIG East Amir Farooqi.

"They [suspects] got panicked and one of them dropped the gun (inside the car)."

"He picked it up and opened fire in panic," added the senior officer.

Another officer, Gulshan SP Shahnawaz Chachar, said that the alleged robbers snatched a mobile phone and wallet from the woman's father.

The woman sustained a critical bullet wound on her head and was taken to a nearby private hospital in Gulshan, where she died during treatment.

Her body was brought to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre by her uncle Kashif Ahmed to fulfil medico-legal formalities.

She sustained a single bullet wound on her head, confirmed Dr Seemin Jamali, executive director of the JPMC.

Speaking to journalists, the victim's uncle, Kashif Ahmed, said that his niece, a resident of Abid Town on Rashid Minhas Road, was a third-year medical student of Hamdard University.

She was sitting in the car along with her father waiting for the university bus at around 7am. Armed motorcyclists looted her father.

The uncle claimed that the suspects came from another side and opened fire and did not snatch anything from the girl.

However, the Gulshan SP disputed the version of the girl's uncle.

He said that the armed men fired from the driver's seat where her father was seated. And if the suspects had fired from the other side, there would be a bullet mark on the window of the car. The bullet was fired from inside the car, which showed that the suspect had become panicked, the officer added.

One spent bullet casing fired from the 9mm pistol was recovered from the car and sent to police forensic science laboratory to ascertain as to whether the same weapon had been used in past crimes.

The police investigators said that the killers were in their early 20s, who wore shalwar kameez. They went towards Sohrab Goth after the incident.

The victim's funeral prayer was held at a local mosque, which was attended by relatives, area residents and varsity students.

On Aug 30, Dr Haider Askari, 58, was shot dead by armed motorcyclists in an attack on his car near KDA Market in Block-3 of Gulshan-i-Iqbal, a short distance away from Thursday's crime scene.

The police at that time had stated that they were investigating the doctor's murder from two possible angles — robbery and sectarian killing.

On Aug 26, Dr Ayesha Rehman was gunned down in her Gulistan-i-Jauhar home by armed robbers.

She was the sister-in-law of Sharea Faisal SHO Inspector Sarwar Commando and came to the city from Canada to attend a marriage ceremony.

Meanwhile, IGP Sindh Dr Syed Kaleem Imam took notice of the killing of the medical student and sought a detailed report from the SSP East, said a police spokesperson.
(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 16, 04/10/2019)

HP violations in Pakistan under-reported, says Rehman

"Human rights violations in Pakistan are always greater in number than what has been reported," said veteran journalist and human rights activist I.A. Rehman. He was delivering a lecture during a seminar on 'The State of Human Rights in Pakistan' as part of the Sheikh Mutahir Ahmed Memorial Lecture Series organised by the Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, on Thursday.



"The topic of human rights is broad with several dimensions to it," he said before listing a few of the positive or good things that have happened in Pakistan recently in the context of human rights.

"There was the merging of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018 and the passing of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act by parliament to guarantee basic rights for transgender citizens outlawing discrimination by both employers and private business owners against them, which also happened in 2018. The Sindh government too passed various labour laws including laws for benefiting home-based workers," he said, mentioning some of the good things that happened in the name of human rights laws.

"But side by side," he added, "there are so many violations of human rights taking place here such as enforced disappearances, the murder of six-year-old Zainab in Kasur, the Higher Education Commission funds slashed in 2018 and then again in 2019, taking away the younger generation's right to higher education, over 4,688 people on death row, over 150 attacks on media persons in

2017/18, the suppression of trade union activities, children dying of undernourishment in Tharparkar, forced conversions of Hindu girls, bonded labour, Pakistan being the second worst country in the world when talking of gender equality," he said.

Acknowledges positive steps taken by govt recently

"Human rights violations happen in many countries but there are also punishments for them there. Redressal of violations is also very important but Pakistan is behind there too. How many people have been punished for violation of human rights? There is little access to justice here. Women wanting to report a crime against them are turned away by the police who refuse to file FIRs. We have a sluggish redressal mechanism," he said.

"Enforced disappearances should be declared a crime. The previous government even drafted a bill in 2014 in reference to this but this government didn't pursue the bill. When presented in the Senate it was said that the bill was the previous government's concern not this government's. Likewise, there have been many praiseworthy things left hanging," he said.

"The Supreme Court of Pakistan issued a verdict on minority rights and proposed a special force for the protection of the people of various faiths and their places of worship. But nothing happened," he observed.

"Human rights are still evolving. Two new rights include the right to development and the right to environment. The Constitution of Pakistan includes almost all the human rights of the United Nations declaration. Still, there is a need to enlarge, enrich and upgrade the fundamental rights chapter in our Constitution," he said.

"The European Charter of Human Rights is better than the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human Rights is even better as it accepts the rights of communities. If a country wants to build its people, it should protect their rights," Mr Rehman observed.

Earlier, acting Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Khalid M. Iraqi said freedom of speech and freedom of the press were the most important human rights in his view as the media serves as a watchdog and thus protects the rights of the people. "Today, India has taken away Article 370 from the people of India-occupied Kashmir but we have to put our own house in order. The document of the Constitution of Pakistan is not enough to provide human rights to the citizens of Pakistan," he said, adding that academia could discuss its shortcomings through such seminars and debates.

Dr Naeem Ahmed, chairman, Department of International Relations, also said that the Constitution provides assurance of human rights but the reality was different. "There is a huge difference and gap between theory and practice of human rights in Pakistan," he said.

(By Shazia Hassan Dawn, 15, 04/10/2019)

Imposition of Article 149 in Karachi

Recent moves by the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) asking the federal government to evoke Article 149 have visibly ruffled political feathers, with claims by the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) that this move is the sinister first step by the federation to wrestle Karachi away from Sindh. Conversely, others labelled this development as an MQM ploy to hurt the PPP. Underneath these politically-charged interpretations, however, remains a more substantive concern regarding the devolution of power in the country.



Devolution of power down to the grassroots level makes sense. It prevents over-centralisation, facilitates outreach and improves accountability. Pakistan has long toyed with the idea of devolving power. Ironically, it was military governments which often experimented with devolution, including those of Ayub Khan, Zia and then of Musharraf. They did so in a bid to gain political legitimacy and simultaneously bypass political parties by holding party-less local body elections.

The passage of the 18th Amendment back in 2010 was hailed as a milestone in terms of achieving more genuine devolution. This amendment did enable significant power to be devolved from the federal level to the provinces. Ironically, however, the provincial governments under a democratic set-up also remained very reluctant to devolve down further to the level of districts and beyond. It took nearly six years for local government elections to be held across the provinces. Even though this was the first time that local elections were held along party lines, the chief ministers of all provinces preferred to keep power in their own hands, rather than pass it down to the elected district representatives or beyond.

The local government structure in K-P was more extensive than the one created by other provinces, but K-P's local governments also remained firmly controlled by its chief minister. Moreover, when the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government won general elections last year, it became reluctant to let local governments function in Punjab and Sindh, where the PML-N and the PPP dominated the local bodies. In the case of Punjab, the PTI paused the current local government system by repealing the law based on which local governments were created under the Shehbaz Sharif government. Earlier this year, the PTI introduced a new act, which is similar in design to K-P's local government legislation.

It is in this broader context that the current debate surrounding the evocation of Article 149 for Karachi needs to be understood. Article 149 enables the Federation to assume administrative control of any part of the country. The Mayor of Karachi, who belongs to the MQM, has thus evoked that article not only out of sincere desire to improve the lives of ordinary citizens of our largest metropolis but also to wrestle Karachi out of the grip of the PPP's provincial government.

If the actual desire was to improve conditions in Karachi, the implementation of Article 140(A) would have proven more useful as it requires each province to devolve political, administrative and financial responsibility and authority to the elected representatives of local governments. However, the PTI is not interested in implementing Article 140(A) until it can dominate the local government system across the country, especially in Punjab.

The federal law minister claimed that the enforcement of Article 149 of the Constitution allows local governments who feel the provincial government is not facilitating them, to evoke help from the federal government. Yet, it would be unlikely to see the PTI being as accommodating if, let's say, a PML (N)-nominated mayor of Lahore or even those of less important districts around the country were to have made a similar plea for federal assistance.

The federal attempt to involve itself in a campaign to clean up Karachi may have also prompted the CM of the province to finally take some action as well, but the political implications of this manoeuvre can cause a backlash against the PTI. This federal assertion will also complicate the task of deepening devolution and decentralisation of power across the country as the country approaches another round of local government elections.

(By Syed Mohammad Ali The Express Tribune, 16, 04/10/2019)

Rising street crimes

The overall law and order in Karachi has seen much improvement when compared with the situation in the recent past. There is still one area where the authorities need to be more focused. Lately, there has been an alarming spike in street crimes in the city. Robbers shot dead a female university student early in the morning on Oct 3 in Gulshan-e-Iqbal while she was waiting for her university bus. She was travelling in a car to the bus stop when a group of robbers intercepted the car.

In September, robbers killed four people upon resistance among thousands of incidents of street crimes: an army soldier, a Rangers official, and two civilians. A shopkeeper of Electronics Market in Saddar was shot dead by unidentified assailants near Radio Pakistan. In August, a male doctor and a lady doctor had been shot dead in apparently targeted attacks within the span of four days. The lady doctor, a Canadian national, was visiting the city to attend a wedding. In September, more than 30 people were wounded while offering resistance to robbers. Around 13,000 mobile phones were snatched at gunpoint. This could be an underestimate as most victims of such crimes avoid reporting to the police because of hassles.

Talking to a delegation of businessman the other day, the IG Sindh attributed the rise in street crimes to growing unemployment and asked the business community to create more jobs to help arrest the increasing rate of crimes. He is correct, but not entirely. Also, there are press reports that a young married woman was raped by four men in her home in broad daylight in the city in the last week of September. Two of the alleged rapists are reportedly serving policemen. Politicians are now in the habit of shrugging off important issues concerning the common man. They usually say things will improve with time. Like mobile phones came into being with time.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 05/10/2019)

Govt inaction to fix quantum of punishment for selling gutka, mainpuri irks SHC

The Sindh High Court has directed police to launch a crackdown to curb the menace of gutka and mainpuri in the province and also incorporate a provision of the Pakistan Penal Code for causing hurt by means of a poison in the FIRs until new legislation is put in place.

The SHC also deplored that directives were issued to provincial authorities time and again in many petitions to make legislation to fix quantum of punishment about manufacture and sale of such hazardous items, but despite the lapse of a considerable period, the compliance had so far not been made in letter and spirit.

In a detailed order issued on Saturday in a petition against use of mainpuri and gutka, a two-judge SHC bench headed by Justice Salahuddin Panhwar said that as per the provincial law secretary, the proposed draft had been approved by the provincial cabinet and it would be placed before the provincial assembly on Oct 5 and sought further time for compliance.

A representative of police submitted that a DIG had issued a letter in April to insert Section 336-B (causes hurt on any part of body other than head and face) of the PPC in the FIRs pertaining to manufacture and sale of mainpuri, gutka and mawa, but he could not satisfy the court that any FIR was lodged under this provision, it said.

Conversely, the deputy prosecutor general argued that Section 337-J (causing hurt by means of a poison) of the PPC was applicable in these cases, it added.

In a detailed order, the SHC asks IGP to take action against policemen involved in the illegal business

"It may well be added that one of the purposes of fixing 'quantum of punishment', is always that of creating a sense of fear/deterrence. This has been the reason because of which legislation was asked for but prima facie such directions, despite lapse of considerable period, have only been shown to have been processed," the court order said.

It further stated that if the gravity of an issue required immediate legislation then the duty of legislatures become double in timely legislation, avoiding any unnecessary delay.

The bench observed that administration of justice also demanded more from the law enforcement agency and courts and directed the inspector general of police to ask all the SHOs, through their SSPs, that Section 337-J of the PPC would be inserted in all the FIRs until new legislation was made.

It also said that this order be circulated to all the judicial magistrates to examine application of relevant provisions of the PPC even in the pending cases and added that application of proper section of offence was not limited to the stage of a case.

The court also issued a directive to take action against those police officials involved in this illegal business.

Earlier, the SHC had ruled that the existing laws with regard to the punishment for manufacturing and selling gutka and mainpuri should be enhanced as culprits involved in such crimes were being booked under the British-era laws and set free after imposing minor penalties.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 15, 06/10/2019)

SHC orders setting up of women rescue police centres

The Sindh High Court on Monday directed the provincial authorities to establish women rescue police centres in every division of the province and to release the sanctioned amount of Rs145 million for the safe houses for women.

The two-judge SHC bench headed by Justice Salahuddin Panhwar also directed the provincial finance secretary to ensure that Rs200m, sanctioned for children protection authority, must be released within a month.

The bench also asked the finance secretary that Rs145m for safe houses be released within a week and in case of non-compliance he would expose himself to contempt of court proceedings.

It further observed that looking into the gravity of the issue, the authorities concerned with the assistance of the secretary for the women development department must set up women rescue police at divisional level and the same should be commanded by women senior superintendents of police.

The women SSPs must work independently in coordination with the women development department, the bench said and added that till new recruitment, the women police officers and constables be separated and trained in accordance with the guidelines of status of women commission and the women development secretary.

As for a permanent mechanism, the bench was informed that all the issues related to women would be brought under one umbrella and addressed within three to four months and a committee in that regard be constituted which would comprise the secretaries of the women development and social welfare departments.

The women development secretary submitted that a model women and children protection centre had been established by the Sindh police and eight more such centres in other parts of the province had also been notified.

The bench directed the provincial police officer to file a compliance report in that regard at the next hearing.

It also asked the orphanage board to ensure the registration of all private orphanages.

The SHC through a judgement in 2016 in the Rehmat Bibi case had ordered the provincial authorities to set up safe houses and rescue centres for women in the province, particularly for the protection of women after they contracted free-will marriages.

In a previous hearing, the provincial authorities informed the bench that Rs145m had been allocated for 29 safe houses for women in the province.

Earlier, the bench also ordered that all issues pertaining to women be dealt with by one department with complete autonomy as previously the status of women commission, social welfare and women development were dealing with such issues.

(By Ishaq Tanoli Dawn, 15, 08/10/2019)

18 fall prey to targeted attacks, robbers in September

Eighteen people lost their lives to either targeted killings or while resisting armed robbery attempts during the last month amid an alarming increase in criminal activities in Karachi.

According to the data released by the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) on Tuesday, in September alone 18 people were killed in targeted attacks for different motives or gunned down by bandits for resisting robberies.

Among other criminal activities, the CPLC said that 26 vehicles were snatched at gunpoint and 163 were stolen in September.

During the same month, 147 motorcycles were snatched by armed men and 2,806 were taken away by thieves in different areas of the city.

The snatching of mobile phones was also on the rise in the last month as 1,737 handsets were taken away from Karachiites by armed muggers.

An incident of kidnapping for ransom and three cases of extortion were also reported during the last month.

Robbers kill man on resistance

A young man on Tuesday was killed while resisting an armed mugging attempt in Shah Latif Town, police said.

They said the 30-year-old Wazeer Khan, who worked at a roadside eatery in Koohi Goth, was returning home in the early hours of the day when armed bandits on a motorbike intercepted him.

“As one of the bandits was collecting valuables, cash and cell phone, Wazeer tried to resist and managed to overpower him,” said an official at the Shah Latif police station. “However, the man on the motorbike fired shots, killing Wazeer on the spot. The two then rode away.”

The police said that the victim had no enmity with anyone and the incident appeared to be the result of armed robbery.

The body was handed over to the family after medico-legal formalities at the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre.
(By Our Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 09/10/2019)

Gutka sale: Sindh Police either complacent or incompetent, says SHC

The Sindh High Court (SHC) came down hard on the police and other law enforcement agencies on Wednesday for their failure to stop the manufacture and sale of *gutka*, *mainpuri*, *mawa* and other such products, while directing the Rangers to take up the task and immediately start a crackdown against the manufacturers and smugglers.

In a nine-page written order passed by the two-member bench, comprising Justice Salahuddin Panhwar and Justice Shamsuddin Abbasi, the court laid out an extensive course of action to stop the sale of *gutka*, which it observed had become a “menace”.

During the hearing, the court heard from medical experts and doctors that the consumption of *gutka* and related tobacco chewing products had caused thousands of consumers to contract cancer, with over 10,000 cases being reported at the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre alone in the last five years.

The court was hearing the plea filed by Advocate Muzzamil Mumtaz, who contended that the raw material for the preparation of *gutka*, *mainpuri* and *mawa* was being smuggled from other countries, and while the Pakistan Coast Guards and police were privy to the operations they weren’t taking any action.

The court, therefore, directed the Rangers DG to start a crackdown against smugglers and manufacturers in their own departmental capacity as well as assist the police in its actions.

Directions for police

The court was informed by the plaintiff that the police were “involved in the menace” and that in one case, Mochko Police, whose jurisdiction lies at the border of Sindh and Balochistan, had apprehended 17,000 tonnes, but only 6,000 tonnes were shown. The petitioner contended that the police are paid a monthly sum by the smugglers and manufacturers to turn a blind eye to the operations. “If the allegation has a little truth in it then it could only result in the conclusion that ‘sale of such huge quantity of *gutka*’ was made by the police itself, because it [remaining quantity] was never brought to light,” the order states. “Such conclusion, we have to acknowledge, is very grave,” it adds.

The court further observed that *gutka* is being sold openly at shops and cabins and anyone, regardless of their age and gender, could purchase it. This, the judges remarked could only mean that either the police had failed in performing their duties or “such sale was being done with implied consent/permission of the police.”

During the hearing on Wednesday, Justice Panhwar questioned whether the government wanted the whole nation to get affected by mouth cancer. “People serving in the police and the assembly are also involved in the crime because *gutka* cannot be sold on such a large scale without their support,” he remarked. “Police are aware of who is involved in manufacturing *gutka* and where,” he added.

The Legal Additional Inspector General of Police told the court that 11 cases had been registered in five days under Section 337 against manufacturers and sellers of *gutka*.

At this, the court questioned how many SSPs had been taken to task. “Things cannot get right unless action is taken against these officials,” said Justice Panhwar. “What share of the monthly does the IG get? Why don’t they take action against the elements involved if the IG doesn’t get a share?” he questioned, adding that everything would be revealed if the assets of SSPs are investigated. “The case should be forwarded to the NAB and FIA. The assets of police officials should be investigated. The poor officials who get there on the basis of merit also start doing the same to achieve a greater post and defame feudal lords,” he said.

In its written order, the court directed the Sindh Police chief to seek explanations from all SHOs regarding the sale of *gutka* in their respective areas. “The IGP Sindh is expected to come forward with some mechanism so as to eliminate the grave charge of the monthly system,” the order states.

"Living beyond means is itself an allegation requiring the public servant to render a plausible explanation," the orders read, adding that failure to furnish an explanation would result in the case being forwarded to the "quarter concerned (agencies dealing with corruption)". The court warned that if both avenues failed, the "failure in discharge of a legal duty shall always be opened to be hammered by this court".

Directions for legislature

Meanwhile, the court was informed by the Sindh law secretary that a bill on *gutka* and related tobacco chewing products has been referred to the standing committee on law and parliamentary affairs and will be sent back to the assembly within a week.

At this, the court observed that the "manufacturers are the ones, who for financial benefits, brought up such menace and even motivated responsible officers to become negligent." The court directed the law secretary to bear in mind the ill-gotten wealth of the manufacturers while drafting the law.

The petitioner also contended that the legislation includes penalties for abettors. The court, agreeing with him, observed that even a "phone call" would count as abetment. "Such like persons are, in fact, silent perpetrators who even use their influence for violation of Article 4 of the Constitution i.e. compelling police officer not to do what the law demands from him," the order reads. The court ordered using the call data record in such cases to expose such abettors and bring them to justice.

Directing the Rangers to crackdown against those involved in the sale and manufacture of the tobacco-chewing products, the court adjourned the hearing till November 18, when the law and health secretaries and the food authority DG would appear before it.

(By Nasir Butt The Express Tribune, 04, 10/10/2019)

Murders and muggings

Human beings need economic and physical security and peace of mind and it is the duty of governments to ensure these. Things are, however, not satisfactory in Karachi, the capital of Sindh and Pakistan's largest city and the country's financial and industrial hub. In September, 18 people were killed either in targeted killings or while resisting armed robberies, according to the figures released by the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee (CPLC) on Oct 8. The CPLC said 26 cars and 147 motorcycles were hijacked at gunpoint and 163 cars and 2,806 motorcycles stolen in September. There are reports that lately rickshaws too are being stolen. Last month also saw a spike in snatching of mobile phones as 1,737 handsets were taken away by muggers at gunpoint. An incident of kidnapping for ransom and three cases of extortion also were reported during September. This shows how emboldened criminal elements have become lately. On Oct 8, a 30-year-old man was shot dead by robbers riding a motorcycle when he resisted them in Latif Town police limits. The victim worked at a roadside eatery. He was targeted in the wee hours while returning home from work. Early in the morning on Oct 3, a young female university student was shot dead by robbers in Gulshan-e-Iqbal.

Mugging victims say robbers usually intercept vehicles at potholes where automobiles slow down. At present most roads in the city are full of potholes, ditches and large craters. The problem is compounded by gutter overflows. So the rising incidents of vehicle hijacking and mugging should not come as a surprise. Civic conditions in Karachi have long been in a state of neglect. The pathetic state of roads is being blamed on gutter overflows. Government functionaries say gutters are choked because some elements have placed rocks inside them. One fails to understand what is stopping the government from acting against such elements when the former has all the coercive powers at its disposal. The delay in doing the needful remains an irreducible mystery.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 10/10/2019)

Octogenarian professor, son found stabbed to death in Clifton

A retired professor and his young son were found murdered in their Clifton residence on Wednesday morning, officials said.

They added that Dr Fasih Usmani, 83, and his son, Kamran Usmani, 23, were stabbed to death in their home in Block-5.

The bodies were taken to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, where doctors said they were stabbed with a knife or sharp instrument.

SSP South Sheeraz Nazeer said that Dr Usmani was a retired professor of the Dawood University of Engineering and Technology and lived in Clifton with his wife and son. His two daughters lived in the United States and Canada, respectively, he added.

The slain professor's wife found the bodies when she came home after her morning walk

The younger Usmani also lived in the US and had come to Karachi around two months ago reportedly to tie the knot, the SSP said, adding that the couple also lived abroad with their children but they had come back about six months ago.

Dr Usmani's wife, Aasia, told the police that it was their routine to go for a walk at the Zamzama Park after Fajr, but today her husband said he needed some rest. So she left for the walk alone. She said she usually left the gate open but when she returned she found the door locked.

She knocked on the door but got no response. Then she entered the house from another door only to find her husband and son dead.

The body of her son was lying on the bed and her husband was lying dead on the floor. The killers did not take away anything from the house, the SSP said.

SSP Nazeer said the motive of the killing was not yet known.

Police officer wounded in 'targeted attack'

A police officer was shot at and wounded in Khudadad Colony on Wednesday, according to the Brigade police.

They added that Sub-Inspector Syed Ghaus Alam, 42, was attacked by armed pillion riders near Allahwala Pakwan Centre.

Brigade SHO Naveed Soomro said that Alam was returning home in his car after dropping his kids at a school on main Kashmir Road and when he reached the Khudadad Colony traffic signal, two suspects riding a motorbike intercepted his vehicle, fired at him and rode away.

He sustained a single bullet wound on the face and was taken to the JPMC from where he was shifted to the Aga Khan University Hospital for further treatment. His condition was said to be stable.

The police said that the wounded official had worked with the Special Investigation Unit and Counter-Terrorism Department. Currently, he was working at the investigation wing of district South.

The area SHO said that it appeared to be a targeted attack.

He was part of a team of investigators that probed TV anchor Mureed Abbas's murder case and arrested suspect Atif Zaman. However, SSP Investigation (South) Tariq Dharejo told the media that the attack did not appear to be linked with the investigation of the anchor's murder case.

The police said that he had also investigated several cases pertaining to the Lyari gang warfare and militants of banned outfits. His elder brother was also a policeman and killed in the line of duty. He was recruited in police after the killing of his brother on martyr quota.

Meanwhile, police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested another suspect allegedly involved in the murder of Mureed Abbas and his friend.

SSP Dharejo said that the police arrested Adil Zaman in Defence. He is a brother of prime suspect Atif Zaman.

'MQM-L hitman' arrested for third time

Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested a man, said to be associated with the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-London, who was arrested twice in the past, for his alleged involvement in the targeted killings of over 100 people.

Acting on a tip-off, the police arrested Abdul Salam near Nishtar Road and recovered a grenade, rifle, TT pistol and stolen motorbike from him, said SSP East Azfar Mahesar.

"He is a MQM-London man and during initial probe he disclosed that he had murdered 111 people in Karachi since 1994," he said. There were at least 57 cases registered against him and he was twice arrested in the past. "He was in charge of a team of target killers in Orangi Town," he said.

The SSP claimed that the held suspect along with his accomplices had killed two army personnel, one navy personnel, eight policemen, one doctor, raped and killed five girls, two government officials, four workers of PPP, one worker of PML-Nawaz, 14 members of MQM-Haqiqi, 11 Punjabis and Pakhtuns, 57 persons over suspicions of being informers and seven persons who failed to pay extortion.

He said that the suspect was also a 'main suspect' in the May 12, 2007 cases.

He was first arrested in 1998 by the Orangi Town police and remained in jail for five years. He was released on parole in 2004. Then he was arrested by the Gulberg police after an encounter in 2014 but later got released on bail.

"He had established a reign of terror in Orangi Town," the SSP said, adding that he had also taken "shelter" in the Tableeghi Jamaat in order to avoid arrest.

He said that the suspect was an employee of the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital.
(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 15, 10/10/2019)

Suspect held in medical student's murder case

Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested a man allegedly involved in the Oct 3 murder of a female medical student of a private university in Gulshan-i-Iqbal.

Misbah, 24, was killed by armed motorcyclists near her home on Rashid Minhas Road when she was waiting inside her car along with her father for a bus of the varsity.

"A future doctor has fallen victim at the hands of scavengers-cum-street criminals," SSP East Azfar Mahesar told a press conference.

He said that a joint team of police managed to arrest Mohammed Nabi. The victim girl's mobile phone and the motorbike used in the crime were also seized from him, he added.

The held suspect along with his absconder suspect, Qari Bashir, had killed the medical student during a mugging incident, he added.

He was a scavenger until a year ago but later started stealing car batteries. For the past five months, he was committing street crimes along with his other accomplices identified as Fazal, Naimat and Bashir.

He said that he was involved in street crimes in Gulshan-i-Iqbal, Mobina Town, Gulistan-i-Jauhar, Sharea Faisal, Bahadurabad, Aziz Bhatti, Sachal and SITE Superhighway police limits.

Meanwhile, the inspector general of police announced a cash reward and appreciation certificates for the police team that arrested the suspect.

(By The Newspaper Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 10/10/2019)

Targeted killings

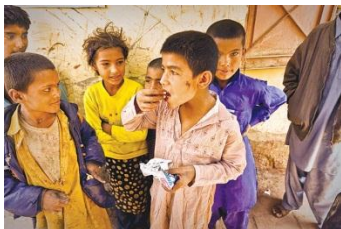
OVER the past few years, the law-and-order situation in Karachi appears to have improved drastically. When compared to its blood-soaked past, Pakistan's economic powerhouse is now deemed a much safer and more livable city. Violence had become intertwined with the city's identity, and most of its young residents had grown up only witnessing rampant terrorism, sectarianism, kidnappings, robberies and extortion, as powerful and often politically backed criminals operated with impunity on the city's streets. But despite some improvements, the challenges regarding law enforcement, extremism and rising inequality are far from over. More worryingly, certain crimes seem to be on the rise again. Just last month, according to new data released by the Citizens-Police Liaison Committee, 18 people were murdered across the city in targeted killings or during armed robberies. Other crimes recorded in September include one case of kidnapping for ransom and three instances of extortion. In the same period, 163 vehicles were stolen, out of which 26 were snatched at gunpoint. Meanwhile, 2,806 motorcycles were reported as stolen, including 147 that were taken through armed encounters.

The violence has continued into the next month, which suggests that criminal elements are resurging. Just last week, a PTI worker named Muhammad Asif was killed as he was heading home from a mosque in Azizabad, when armed assailants fired upon him. Towards the end of the previous year, prominent MQM politician Ali Raza Abidi was shot dead inside his car as he tried to enter his house in Karachi's Defence area. This was then followed by a spate of killings that targeted members of minority communities and various professionals. Such news reports will undoubtedly bring back a sense of unease to the residents of Karachi, who had started welcoming the 'normalcy' that other cities are accustomed to, as memories of the not-too-distant past return. The government and the law-enforcement authorities must ensure the city does not slip back into its old ways.

(By Editorial Dawn, 08 11/10/2019)

211 new gutka sale cases registered across Sindh as non-bailable offence

As the crackdown against sale and manufacturing of gutka and mainpuri across Sindh continues, police have been taking legal action against the sellers and manufacturers of the injurious substances under a "harsh" clause of the Pakistan Penal Code in accordance with a directive of the Sindh High Court.



Officials said that the fresh exercise was being carried out across the province and so far 211 fresh cases had been registered, most of them in Karachi, under Section 337-J (causing hurt by mean of a poison) of the PPC, which contains 10-year imprisonment, instead of Sections 269 or 270 of the PPC which carry the maximum sentence of only two-year imprisonment.

An official said it was a non-bailable offence and, if proved, could lead to 10-year imprisonment.

"Whoever administers to or causes to be taken by, any person, any poison or any stupefying, intoxicating or unwholesome drug, or such other thing with intent to cause hurt to such person, or with intent to commit or to facilitate the commission of an offence, or knowing it to be likely that he will thereby cause hurt may, in addition to the punishment of arsh or daman provided for the kind of hurt caused, be punished, having regard to the nature of the hurt caused, with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years," the official quoted Section 337-J as defined in the PPC.

He said that of the 211 new cases, which were registered after the fresh SHC order, 85 were registered in different districts of Karachi; 57 in Hyderabad; 65 in Shaheed Benazirabad and four cases were registered in Mirpurkhas under Section 337-J.

Police will file supplementary charge sheets in over 5,000 FIRs lodged under a bailable section of the PPC before the SHC directive "These 211 cases are those which have been registered recently. Before the SHC directive, the Sindh police have lodged 5,208 FIRs across the province in 2019," the official said, adding that in all previous cases, Section 337-J would be incorporated to file supplementary charge sheets in court.

He said before the fresh move, the police used to register the FIRs for sale of gutka and other related products under Sections 269 or 270 of the PPC, which were bailable offences and did not carry harsh punishment.

Section 269 of the PPC talks about a “negligent act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life”.

“Whoever unlawfully or negligently does any act which is, and which he knows or has reason to believe to be, likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine, or with both,” the official quoted Section 269 as defined in the PPC.

While directing the police to lodge FIRs under Section 337-J of the PPC, a two-judge bench of the SHC headed by Justice Salahuddin Panhwar had also directed the inspector general of police to hold an inquiry into the allegations that police were not showing a large part of seized gutka in their record and to call explanation from all SHOs regarding continuity of manufacturing and sale of such harmful items in their jurisdictions.

(By Our Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 13/10/2019)

IGP told to focus on policing as CM angered by surge in street crimes

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said on Sunday that he had conveyed his serious concerns to the inspector general of police regarding an alarming increase in incidence of street crimes in Karachi.

Talking to reporters during his nine-hour-long visit to the city to assess the pace of work on the month-long ‘Clean My Karachi’ campaign, he said that IGP Dr Kaleem Imam informed him that the downturn in economy had increased the street crimes in the city.

“The IGP has told me that factories have downsized their staff and daily wagers have lost their work, therefore they all have indulged in street crimes to meet the expenditures of their families,” the CM said. “I have urged him to pay more attention to his policing.”

Murad says he will be visiting all parts of the city during the last eight days of his govt’s cleanliness drive

When asked if he had differences with the IGP, the chief minister while brushing aside the impression of differences said that he was a good officer. “I have shown serious objections to the increasing street crime,” he said.

The chief minister was accompanied by Information Minister Saeed Ghani, his adviser Murtaza Wahab, Karachi Commissioner Iftikhar Shallwani, Local Government Secretary Roshan Shaikh, Sindh Solid Waste Management Board chief Asif Ikram and Karachi Water and Sewerage Board chief Asadullah Khan.

Cleanliness campaign

About the cleanliness drive, he said that from Sept 21 to date over 282,000 tonnes of backlog of garbage had been lifted. “In other words, 70 per cent backlog has been taken away and still 30pc is left which will be cleared by Oct 21,” he said.

He said that just after concluding his garbage lifting drive he would make it sustainable and then put his focus on the reconstruction of remaining roads of the city along with the sewerage system.

“Today, people told me that their hospitals, schools, dispensaries and roads are in poor condition but I told them I don’t want to shift my focus from garbage lifting... after conclusion of the campaign in just eight days, I will focus on reconstruction of the remaining roads,” he said.

The chief minister said that the purpose of the month-long drive was to clear the areas of garbage and hand them over to the district municipal corporations (DMCs) concerned for maintenance.

“I have held a meeting with Mayor Wasim Akhtar and also with chairmen of the DMCs so that everyone must get ownership to the drive,” he said. “The mayor, the DMCs and district council chairmen are onboard and right now DMC-Central chairman Rehan Hashmi is standing with me...This shows our commitment with each other and with the city and its people.”

The CM said that funds would be released to the DMCs on Tuesday (tomorrow) to keep their tractors, refuse vehicles and other machinery repaired and then start lifting garbage on a day-to-day basis.

The chief minister appreciated the performance of the KWSB and said that during his visit to different areas he did not witness any overflowing gutter.

To a question, the CM said that the Manghopir Road was in quite a critical condition and work on the Rs2.4 billion scheme for its rehabilitation was going on at a snail’s pace.

Mr Shah said that the work on the Green Line project being carried out by the Karachi Infrastructure Development Company Ltd was very slow.

He said that in Saddar, from where he had started his visit, he saw garbage on the road at Electronics Market although there were dustbins. The chief minister directed the SP-Saddar to ask shopkeepers to throw their trash into dustbins, otherwise action would be taken against them.

On Abdullah Haroon Road, he saw construction material and open cables of telephone and TV lying abandoned on the road. The chief minister issued directives to the commissioner to get it fixed or he would take strict action against the assistant commissioners concerned.

The chief minister also visited all roads of Korangi, drove to Cattle Colony, visited Jaffer Tayyar Society in Malir and met with party people gathered there.

He also went to District West and visited different sectors of Orangi, Banaras and issued necessary directives for not allowing the builders to put their construction material on roads. "If they do so the deputy commissioners must impose fines on them," he said. Mr Shah also visited district Central where Mr Hashmi, the chairman of the DMC-Central, received him.

The chief minister said that during the last eight days of his cleanliness campaign he would be visiting the city to clear the remaining backlog and hoped the people would cooperate with authorities.
(By Habib Khan Ghorani Dawn, 13/10/2019)

Fundamental rights

THE struggle for the rule of law, respect for civil rights and democracy in Pakistan reached a landmark moment in 1973, when a constituent assembly of politicians from diverse political backgrounds framed a new Constitution. It was not a perfect document, but being drafted for the third time roughly 25 years after independence, and after losing half the country in a civil war, it was one which was a product of experience.



The lessons learned from history were reflected in Part II of Chapter 1 which enshrined the fundamental rights of the citizens of Pakistan. These rights, guaranteed to all Pakistanis, to be respected by all public functionaries and enforceable through the courts of law, were not an innovation — most have been borrowed from prior constitutions — but this time they were, as

some would say, the heart and soul of the Constitution. Thus this Constitution has stood the test of time and triumphed, regardless of its limitations, because its heart was composed of the citizen's rights and freedoms.

However, a folly of the original framers was Article 247, which excluded the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata) and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (Pata) from the constitutional governance afforded to the rest of Pakistan. Through this regressive clause, the executive could selectively apply the constitutional and statutory laws of the country in these tribal areas and the jurisdiction of the courts was also limited.

From the colonial-era Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), 1901, which legalised regressive measures such as collective punishments, to the more recent Action (In Aid of Civil Power) Regulations (AACPR), 2011, which effectively applied martial law to Fata citizens, barbaric special laws were applied to Pakistan's citizens living in the tribal areas through Article 247.

Constitutional guarantees have been done away with by the AACPO.

It is therefore to the credit of Pakistan's entire political spectrum for passing the 25th Amendment Act in May 2018 to do away with Article 247 and integrate these parts of Pakistan into the mainstream. Subsequently, the 26th Amendment Act was passed this year to increase the membership of representatives from former Fata areas in parliament. Pakistan's political and military leadership thus, in a rare moment, showed true commitment to the spirit of our Constitution and provided our most disenfranchised citizens with the constitutional and civil rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

However, in September 2018, the KP Assembly, rather than continuing on the path to constitutional rule, passed laws allowing the continuation of the discriminatory, authoritarian and draconian AACPR for citizens of the former areas of Fata and Pata. These laws were challenged by KP citizens in the constitutional courts immediately as the regulations had no legal standing after the 25th Amendment. During the pendency of these petitions, last month, the KP governor, in an attempt to fill that legal lacuna, signed into law the Action (in Aid of Civil Power) Ordinance (AACPO), which applied these draconian regulations to the entirety of the province. The AACPO allows the armed forces in KP to detain and place in internment citizens of Pakistan for an indefinite period of time without providing any reasoned orders and to search the citizens' homes on the basis of mere suspicion. They can further refuse the accused's right to confer with legal counsel and do not have to produce the accused before a magistrate to detain him. They can also convict citizens on the basis of unsubstantiated statements of their personnel.

As per Article 4 and Article 9 of the Constitution, all citizens have a right to liberty which can only be curtailed by the state after providing due process under the law. Under Article 10 and Article 10A, all arrested citizens must be produced before a magistrate within 24 hours of their arrest and be given a fair trial to be convicted on the basis of legally admissible evidence. Finally, under Article 14 and Article 25, citizens of Pakistan in KP have a right to privacy and to be treated equally under the law. Therefore, it is clear that all fundamental rights of due procedure and fair trial guaranteed by the Constitution have been done away with by the AACPO.

As per the Constitution, no law, executive order or action which violates the fundamental rights of the citizens of Pakistan is valid.

Therefore this regressive, discriminatory and constitutionally invalid piece of executive overreach called the AACPO should immediately be struck down by our constitutional courts, rescinded by the governor of the KP, or repealed by the KP Assembly. If not, we would have taken a stab at the very heart of our Constitution and would be doomed to repeat history.

(By Omer Imran Malik Dawn, 09, 17/10/2019)

Human trafficking

Corruption, conflict and climate change are fuelling a growing trade in people. Trafficking is thriving more than ever before as tens of millions of people worldwide are estimated to be trapped in modern slavery. Formerly slave traders paid the transportation cost for the slaves but now it is the slaves that are bearing the expenses of their transportation. People are trafficked for profit and coerced to work in all manner — forced labour, sex work, crime, begging, forced marriage or even organ mining. Trafficking is one of the world's fastest growing criminal enterprises, according to the United Nations. According to international organisations, at least 40.3 million people worldwide are modern slaves. Around 20 million are forced to work across farms, factories and fishing boats. About 15.4 million are forced to wed and nearly five million are pushed into sex trade. Women and girls account for seven in 10 victims of modern slavery. A quarter of all victims are children. The crime is estimated to generate profits of at least \$150 billion a year.

Corruption and growing conflict in Asian and African countries are compelling more and more people to try to seek refuge at places where life is bearable. Many countries in Asia and Africa are beset by corruption, bad governance, official incompetence and ruling elites who are only serving their own interests. Governments are failing to create jobs; people are dying for lack of medicines and other basic facilities in hospitals; they are dying of hunger due to the lack of purchasing power though food is available in abundance. People are running away from countries ridden with corruption and conflict. While fleeing their countries hundreds drown at sea.

Climate change is also forcing people to migrate from their ancestral lands. Growing sea intrusion into deltaic areas has swallowed up large swathes of land forcing people to move away. Experts believe one of the causes of Brexit is the increasing migration from countries hit by corruption, conflict and climate change.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 23/10/2019)

'Killing Fields' issue: Karachi Biennale and police chief on same page

After the plainclothes men forced the organisers on Sunday to shut down an artwork by Adeela Suleman titled Killing Fields of Karachi at Frere Hall that was part of the ongoing Karachi Biennale, social activists were expecting that the installation would be restored. But in an interesting turn of events on Monday, the issue reached a bit of an anticlimax after Karachi police chief Ghulam Nabi Memon gave a statement, as did the biennale's organisers.

The chief said: "This effort on the part of the organiser seems to be motivated to question efforts of LEAs in restoring peace in Karachi. I don't defend Rao Anwar for his any act which is not legal but efforts to demean him are not restricted to his person but something which sounds beyond him. I think we be very careful in defending any effort which is being sponsored with the intention to show our LEAs as villain."

The statement that the KB19 team released seemed to have settled the issue. It read: "The Karachi Biennale is a platform for artists both emerging and established. We are against censorship of art and believe that expression is very subjective to the viewers interpretation of the artwork. With regards to the exhibit in question, we feel that despite the artist's perspective, it is not compatible with the ethos of KB19 whose theme is 'Ecology and the Environment', and feel that politicising the platform will go against our efforts to bring art into the public and drawing artists from the fringe to the mainstream cultural discourse.

'Any public event has to work within certain agreed with boundaries'

"The city government has been part of the entire process and has placed trust in our platform by facilitating the use of public spaces to install artworks and use the city as a canvas. We have painted with freedom on this canvas, and while art is self-expression, the theme this year did not warrant political statement on an unrelated issue, as all artists have agreed to focus on 'Ecology & the Environment' within the framework of cultural sensitivities.

"We hope the artists community will understand that our platform, as has been illustrated through our projects, is purely to promote art to build a large public audience and any public event has to work within certain agreed with boundaries. To ensure a sustainable future of Karachi Biennale it is imperative that we focus on its mandate to connect art, the city and its people."

Art and the sea

The second edition of the Karachi Biennale (KB19) in its attempt to take art to the common man has chosen three public spaces out of the seven venues — Bagh Ibn Qasim, the zoo and Frere Hall. The uniqueness of the former (park) is its proximity to the sea; and that has made all the difference.

The installations erected in different parts of the Bagh may not have been originally envisioned as a reference point to the choppy waters of the Arabian Sea, but against its backdrop, though most of it is blocked by the countless buildings that have been constructed in recent years, the exhibition gains multiplicity of meaning.

Amin Gulgee's artwork 'Impossible Growth' (copper, iron, steel and mirror) underscores the importance of the setting by "tracking the movement of the sun in the day acting as a sundial". Now we all know how the diurnal and nocturnal motions of the earth in relation to the solar system influence our moods. Here, it is the mood of the city (of Karachi) that is being alluded to. So Amin has personified his hometown by way of pointing to the growth that it has experienced.

The one piece which attracted, arguably, the most attention at the Bagh when the biennale commenced on Saturday (and has now been shifted to the zoo where it was originally meant to be) is the inflated sculpture, 'Timeline', by Swiss artist Victorine Muller. It is a striking work of imagination, a giant elephant, which plays with the viewer's ocular beliefs. The person inside the animal heightens the illusory nature of the otherwise non-illusory powerful species. One doesn't know whether one of the reasons for Muller's bringing the installation to Karachi was the significance of the elephant in the political history of the subcontinent (because the artist has been displaying it for some time); what one does know is that the sea, city and the animal combine to create a story where forgetfulness becomes its theme — the phrase 'a memory like an elephant' springs to mind.

British artist Sinta Tantra's mural 'Bright Dawn' reinforces the idea of looking back by "drawing upon the work of Rudyard Kipling reimagining the complex colonial histories between Great Britain and its empire where 'the sun never sets'". Though the artist lends a touch of positivity to the exhibit by using warm tropical colours, there's much for the viewer to mull over as well.
(By Peerzada Salman Dawn, 15, 29/10/2019)

'Masked men' pick up two ASH staffers

A senior health official of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation on Wednesday confirmed that certain individuals in civvies wearing balaclavas took into custody two staff members of the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital (ASH) from its residential area in the early hours of Wednesday.

"I received information about the incident at 5am today," said Dr Salma Kausar, KMC's senior director of medical and health services, while speaking to Dawn.

She said it was the third incident of its kind in which hospital staffers had been picked up.

"Three staff members were picked up outside the hospital's premises two weeks ago, while another was arrested from the OPD last Saturday," she said.

She said she was informed about the incident in which a number of individuals in civvies wearing masks entered the hospital's premises at about 3am. The registration plates of their vehicles were covered with newspapers.

They went to the IT department and the residential area and picked up three persons from their residential quarters before releasing one of them.

"Those who have been picked up are Shaikh Rashid and Arshad Hashmat from the hospital's non-teaching staff," said Dr Kausar. She said she had sent a letter to the inspector general of police in which those incidents had been reported in detail. "The IGP Sindh has told us that the matter was being looked into," she said.

She said such activities had created panic among the staff and the patients and most staffers were reluctant to work.

She said the hierarchy of the hospital and the KMC should be taken into confidence before launching such an activity.

The city mayor has also been informed about the incident, she added.
(By Newspaper Staff's Reporter Dawn, 15, 31/10/2019)

Protest held against shutting down of artwork

Artists, members of civil society and social activists gathered at Frere Hall on Thursday evening to register their protest against the shutting down by law enforcement agencies on Sunday of an art installation that was on display as part of the ongoing Karachi Biennale (KB19).



The protesters led by artist Sheema Kermani started gathering at the venue from the time given by the organisers, some symbolically wearing black clothes, others white. They made rows, as were depicted in the artwork by Adeela Suleman which was closed down, and sat down. Then they began chanting lines such as hum wo hain jo tareek raahon mein maarey gay (we were put to death on benighted roads). The chants slowly grew louder. After that the participants lay down on the floor.

Talking to Dawn artist Yasir Husain, whose artwork is displayed at Bagh Ibne Qasim as a KB19 exhibit, said, "The biennale organisers have the responsibility to look after their artists, but the way they tolerated what happened to Adeela's work is a question that they haven't been asking. They could've come here."

When asked whether he had talked to the biennale officials, Husain replied, "I haven't talked to them directly but have sent them quite a few messages. They haven't responded."

Mr Husain said protests such as the one that took place on Thursday carry a message that one can see and the symbolism of it is that there are both flowers and thorns here. "This is symbolism we've been using for a long time."

Addressing her fellow protesters, Ms Kermani said art and politics could not be separated. "The water that we drink, clean or not, the cleanliness issue, etc ... everything is to do with politics. The purpose of art is to create awareness in society and help people think [about issues]."

Those who took part in the protest included politician Ghinwa Bhutto, educationist Ameena Saiyid, architect Arif Hasan, writer Rumana Husain, social activists Mehnaz Rehman, Ambareen Thompson, Shabnam Abdullah, Jibran Nasir, among others.
(By Peerzada Salman Dawn, 16, 01/11/2019)

Sindh Police registers FIRs against 124 cops involved in crimes

Sindh Police have registered FIRs against 124 police personnel, who have been found to be involved in various criminal activities. This was revealed in the law and order meeting held at the Chief Minister House on Tuesday.

Official sources, who were present in the meeting, told The Express Tribune that the implicated police personnel were deputed in different districts of Karachi and these cases have all been registered in the past year.

"Many cases are pending before the disciplinary committees against those cops who have violated the code of conduct and are involved in criminal activities," said an official, quoting the Karachi Police chief Additional IG Ghulam Nabi Memon, who briefed the CM on the issue. The official, who is also a senior police officer, said that another 205 police personnel have already been dismissed from service due to their criminal records.

The meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, was held to devise a strategy to control the rising incidence of street crime in the city. The CM, who also holds the portfolio of the home minister, approved a plan to strengthen the police helpline, Madadgar 15, by enhancing its force and equipping them with vehicles, the latest gadgets such as tablets and forensic laboratories so that prompt action can be ensured.

The meeting also decided to conduct summary trials of street criminals for which the CM constituted a committee comprising Law Adviser Murtaza Wahab and Sindh Police chief IG Dr Kaleem Imam. The committee will prepare its recommendations and submit its proposal before the cabinet.

Up-gradation of Madadgar 15

The chief minister approved the disbursement of Rs6 million for the purchase of 200 tablet devices for vehicles to be used by Madadgar 15.

The police emergency helpline would have a dedicated force of 2,900 policemen and 200 mobile vehicles, fitted with geo-location callers.

Meanwhile, the Special Security Unit has been provided with 30 vehicles. The chief minister directed the police chief to initiate special training sessions for the Madadgar 15 personnel by the SSU.

On the other hand, CM Shah approved vehicles (APV – Suzuki) required for forensic vans for each police station as well as the establishment of drug rehabilitation centres in Malir and Korangi. Besides, the chief minister approved Rs96 million for repairs of the existing fleet of police vehicles and construction of police station buildings. At present, only 20 police stations are functioning in purpose-built structures.

The chief minister, on the recommendation of the Karachi police chief, approved the creation of a Security and Emergency Response Division (SERD). It was also decided to further strengthen the SSU and the Crowd Management Unit (CMU).

Street crimes

AIG Memon gave a detailed briefing to the chief minister on the prevalent scenario of street crimes as well as the police's efforts to curb such activities

He said that drug addicts were largely involved in street crimes and there were a large number of addicts in the streets. Street crimes had become a source of livelihood, said the AIG, adding that they provided the money to purchase drugs. AIG Memon pointed out that there was no proper rehabilitation mechanism for drug addicts.

It was also pointed out that the lengthy criminal procedure – from the registration of the case to its final judgment in the court – was inconvenient. "This discourages victims from getting the case registered, thus the accused are at an advantage," said the chief minister, whose observation was endorsed by the AIG Memon. The latter pointed out that out of 2,468 complainants approached by the police [Police Victim Support Unit], only 15 agreed to get their cases registered. At this, the chief minister directed his law advisor, Murtaza Wahab, to prepare recommendations to simplify the criminal procedure.

It was also pointed out that bail policy was quite liberal, therefore many of the criminals had become repeat offenders. Illegal Immigrants such as Afghans, Burmese and Bengalis, were also termed drivers of street crimes.

The Karachi Police chief told the chief minister that the police have started searching the hideouts of criminals in 162 slum areas of the city. He said that 390 repeat offenders have been apprehended in October 2019, while 1,631 drug addicts have also been taken into custody. Of these, 1,156 drug addicts were handed over to Edhi Home.

The AIG told the chief minister that mobile patrolling and picketing at crime hot spots have been intensified. "Beat-wise mobile patrolling plan and patrolling by escort mobile of senior police officers has been initiated," he said.

The CM said that there was a dire need to expedite the Safe City Project, besides strengthening the investigation and prosecution wings.

Investigation Branch

The chief minister directed the Sindh Police chief to dedicate personnel for DNA and biometrics verification and give them the required training and expertise. He also issued orders for the creation of a Crime Scene Management Unit (CCMU), as well as the establishment of case file preparation rooms which must be equipped with necessary equipment and gadgets. He directed the IG to select competent officers for the Investigation Branch and enhance their technical support through the IB. The IG told the chief minister that 25 sub-divisional Investigation Officers were being posted.

Home Secretary Kazi Kabir, CTD AIG Kamran Fazal, Special Branch AIG Imran Yakoob, South DIG Sharjeel Kharal, East DIG Amir Farooqi, West DIG Amin Yousif Zai and other officers attended the meeting.
(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 06/11/2019)

Misuse of antiterrorism law

LAST week's Supreme Court verdict has laid down the urgently needed guidelines on the applicability or otherwise of the antiterrorism law and asked parliament to make some essential changes to it. The judgement also offers much food for thought to jurists, students of law and civil society who interpret the rule of law as a rational, just and humanitarian dispensation.



The issue before the court was whether the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) was rightly being invoked. The landmark judgement begins with a fairly comprehensive account of terrorist movements and activities across the globe from 2 BC to the 1990s, launched to secure political, ideological or religious objectives. Students of terrorism will find it useful. The court then refers approvingly to Prof David Rapoport's theory of four waves of terrorist movements, to emphasise the point that terrorists' goals have been changing with time. An extract from Yuval Noah Harari's 21 Lessons for the 21st Century follows, which reassures us that the people can defeat terrorists if they do not overreact to the theatre of terrorism and offer a balanced response.

While discussing the various interpretations of the ATA by different courts and its application in cases that do not qualify as terrorism, the court recalls a Lahore High Court judgement by Justice Asif Saeed Khosa which deals with the same subject. An analysis of 40 cases decided by the Supreme Court between 1998 and 2018 shows these cases did not fall within the revised definition of terrorism but were all treated as cases of terrorist acts or terrorism on the basis of presumption and speculation about the effect of the relevant actions. These cases, decided at the apex court level, offer a measure of the wrong application of the ATA which could be taken as misuse of the law by the police officers who drew up the charges.

The judgement promises a reduction in the misuse of the ATA by a predatory executive.

The court's conclusion and direction that all actions must be judged by the objective as defined in the ATA — that an action, however grave, gruesome or horrifying, cannot be termed as terrorism if it is not committed with the design and purpose as mentioned in the law itself, and that actions taken in furtherance of personal enmity or private vendetta cannot be described as terrorism — should prevent wrongful application of the ATA.

The court has suggested that the definition of terrorism in the ATA may be made simpler and succinct along with a change in the preamble and deletion from the Third Schedule of offences that have no nexus with terrorism.

Civil society should welcome this judgement as it promises a reduction in the misuse of the ATA by a predatory executive that has used this law to frighten the people into submission and often to suppress dissent and punish citizens for raising a voice for their rights. The ATA has been used against lawyers, students and trade union leaders for demanding their rights. The state is so fond of the ATA that it was extended to Gilgit-Baltistan before benign laws were introduced there, and its victims included Attabad hero Baba Jan, prominent lawyers and human rights activists. It will be no exaggeration to say that, in the hands of irresponsible authorities, the ATA can become an instrument to spread fear among the people.

Unfortunately, Pakistan has an unenviable record of the executive's insatiable desire to nibble at due process with a view to denying the people their basic rights and freedoms. The history of the state's love of brutal punishments and its tendency to address serious crime by compromising due process makes painful reading.

Within the first decade of Independence, the preventive detention laws, against which the Muslim League had carried out a civil disobedience movement in Punjab, were revived, and the state started treating the constitution, the law and civil liberties with blatant contempt. The process was compounded with the establishment of military regimes that ipso facto denied constitutionalism, rule of law and basic freedoms.

From 1974, when Suppression of Terrorist Activities (Special Courts) Act was enforced to 2011, when the monstrosity called Actions in Aid of Civil Power Regulation was issued, the state has been trying to control serious crime and terrorism by trimming due process and increasing detention without trial for much longer periods (and without any judicial review) than is contemplated in Article 10 of the Constitution. Nobody can claim that these measures have succeeded.

The fallacy underlying consistent disregard for the rule of law, due process and plain common sense is the belief that serious crime, including terrorism, can be eliminated by short-circuiting the trial process and prescribing tougher punishments. This view has been proved wrong across the globe over the last two centuries and more, and in Pakistan too.

The state's search for deterrent punishments and its fondness for harsh laws, the level of impunity enjoyed by law-enforcement personnel and disregard for the requisites of fair trial are alienating the people from what the system of justice has become. The fact that only the poor are hanged in Pakistan or that no perpetrator of murderous attacks on the Hazara Shias has been punished has undermined respect for the justice system, which is also weakened each time a citizen falls a victim to enforced disappearance or a woman is killed to save a man's primitive concept of honour. The number of people preferring the jirga system to the judicial process appears to have increased over the years, and now they are visible in the corridors of power too.

The world has learnt that the majesty of law is not established by curtailing due process and raising the scale of punishments; it is established by the people's social uplift, guarantees of employment and fair wages, and by convincing the people that no one can avoid paying for breaking the law. Instead of putting the people at risk under bad laws, the executive should make policing and prosecution efficient and honest. Along with ATA, all other laws that clip due process and prescribe inhuman punishments need to be reviewed.

(By I.A Rehman Dawn, 08, 07/11/2019)

Police detain over 50 teachers for protesting in 'red zone'

Teachers of government colleges from across Sindh staged a sit-in outside the Chief Minister (CM) House in Karachi on Wednesday, demanding time scale based promotions.

The protest began at Karachi Press Club, where teachers from various cities, including Ghotki, Larkana, Shikarpur, Nawabshah, Dadu, Mehar, Karachi, Sukkur and Hyderabad, gathered, carrying banners and shouting slogans, in order to press the relevant authorities to accept their demands.

From KPC, the protesters moved towards the CM House, intending to stage a sit-in over there. As the protesters made their way towards the CM House, a large contingent of police, along with water cannons, was called to the spot, citing security concerns. Moreover, police officials placed barriers in the protesters' way, in order to prevent them from reaching the CM House. The protesters, however, managed to cross all the barriers and reached outside the CM House, where they staged a sit-in.



Addressing the protesters during the demonstration, Time Scale Committee for Sindh Professors and Lecturers Association Chairperson Professor Mansoor Anwar said that teachers have the right to protest for the acceptance of their "legitimate demands."

"We are protesting on behalf of 8,500 teachers who have been deprived of their right of time-scale based promotions for the past 10 years," he said.

Professor Anwar said that former CM Syed Qaim Ali Shah had assured the teachers back in 2011 that a summary pertaining to time scale promotions would be passed soon but no action was taken in this regard thereafter. "The notification is pending for the past 10 years," he added. Anwar said that a system needs to be devised for promoting teachers on the basis of time scale after every seven years.

He demanded that immediate measures be taken to pass the summary and issue a notification for this purpose.

"It will only take a signature for the summary to pass," he said, addressing the partakers of the demonstration, and added that they will continue to protest until the government issues a notification.

He lambasted the government for its "cruelty that has even forced women to take to streets and for denying teachers their rights."

Meanwhile, Sindh Agriculture and Supply and Prices Ministers Muhammad Ismail Rahoo reached the site of the protest to negotiate with the teachers but failed to appease the angry protesters. Later, Education Additional Secretary Nuzhat Fatima too requested the teachers to give the government more time for deliberations. However, her request was rejected and the teachers continued the demonstration outside the CM House.

As the sit-in continued, police removed the barriers placed earlier. Though, it was only a matter of six hours, after which police came into action, clashed with the protesters and dispersed them, reportedly, taking more than 50 into custody. It has also been reported that the arrested teachers were shifted to a nearby police station.

Despite police action, the teachers are determined to continue the protest if their demands are not met.

Following police action, they again gathered at KPC and announced to continue their protest until the fulfillment of their demands. They expressed annoyance over authorities requesting for more time while ill-treating them at the same time when they have only been protesting for the acceptance of their legitimate demands.

The protesters have also demanded that police immediately release the arrested persons, who, according to them, include 50 male teachers and four female teachers.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 05, 07/11/2019)

SI held for kidnapping, extortion

The Zaman Town police of Korangi on Sunday claimed to have arrested a police officer allegedly involved in kidnapping and extortion, said officials.

"The police have arrested Sub-Inspector Aslam who was allegedly involved extracting protection money from medical stores and kidnapping people for ransom," said a police officer.

He used to travel in a car with a 'fake' number plate and extracted money from people by "posing himself as an officer of police". DIG-East Amir Farooqi said that the held suspect was a suspended police officer.

The senior officer revealed that the suspended sub-inspector was involved in picking people while in police uniform and releasing them after extorting money from them.

He was absent from police headquarters where he was supposed to report his presence every morning till a decision of his departmental proceedings.

The DIG recalled that the held officer was suspended in a recent case of extorting money.

"He has been arrested now and FIRs registered against him related to kidnapping and demanding money/ ransom," said DIG Farooqi.

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 13, 18/11/2019)

Naqeebullah murder case: Eyewitness recounts harrowing tale of torture

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) recorded the statements of the second eyewitness and another witness in the Naqeebullah murder case on Tuesday. ATC no.3 was hearing the case at Karachi Central Jail.

Former Malir SSP Rao Anwar's counsel completed cross-examination of the witness statements. Defence lawyer Amir Mansoob cast doubt on the credibility of the witnesses and poked holes in the witnesses' statements by implying that they recorded contradicting statements before the police and before the court. The witnesses, however, maintained that they were subjected to torture by Anwar and his accomplices.

The petitioner's counsel, Salahuddin Panhwar, filed a plea on Tuesday praying the court to allow the petitioner, Naqeebullah's father, to record his statement via video link. The court admitted his plea and issued notices to the relevant parties.

Anwar, DSP Qamar and other accused, who have acquired bail in the case, appeared before the court while jail officials produced the arrested accused.

Panhwar appeared with eyewitness Hazrat Ali and witness Sharob Khan.

Eyewitness account

Eyewitness Hazrat Ali stated before the court that he had gone shopping for clothes with Muhammad Qasim on the 3rd or 4th of January, 2018. "I received a message from Naqeebullah which said 'let's meet'. We were outside Sardar Hotel at Al-Asif Square at the time and Naqeebullah called us to Sherpao Hotel," said Ali. He recalled that when they reached the Sherpao Hotel, Naqeebullah beckoned to the waiter and placed the order. After a short while, said Ali, police officials in plainclothes entered the hotel. Some of them wore shalwar kameez while others were dressed in pants and shirts, he recounted.

"They apprehended us and took us to Sachal Police Post. They kept Naqeebullah in a separate room and detained us in another. A man came and asked us what we do [occupation]," said Ali before the court.

Ali recounted that they were then blindfolded and taken to some other place at a distance of 45 kilometres. "When we asked where are you taking us they said we are taking you to Rao Anwar and he will send you directly to heaven," said Ali. He told the court that they were taken to a small room at an undisclosed place with manacles on their feet. "They told us to remove the blindfold when they leave. When we opened our eyes we saw that Naqeebullah was also with us. Naqeebullah told us that they had beaten him and demanded of him a million rupees".

Ali told the court that a man came to the room later in the night and asked for their addresses. The men then took Naqeebullah out of the room and Ali and Qasim heard his screams. "We knew that he was being tortured. A man entered the room we were in and took me outside. He unlocked the manacles on my feet and tied my hands behind me. They laid me down on a wooden table and put water mixed with Naswar up my nose. They did this six to seven times," Ali told the court. He recalled that 'they' took Qasim outside and subjected him to the same. "They asked us what we do and then locked us again in the same room after their interrogation". Ali told the court that him and Qasim were then taken back to Sachal Police Post and kept in the lock-up. "A tall man with a moustache came and returned our things which they had taken earlier. He told us to not discuss the night's events with anyone or we would lose our lives," said Ali.

The eyewitness told the court that it was on January 17 that him and Qasim found out that Naqeebullah had been killed by Anwar's team. "We saw Rao Anwar's press conference on social media. His voice was the same as the one we heard when we were kept there."

Cross-examination

After Ali completed his statement before the court, Rao Anwar's lawyer advocate Amir Mansoob began cross-questioning the eyewitness.

The defence lawyer asked Ali if his father, Shakir Saeed, was a witness in a case to which Ali replied yes.

"You had a brother named Khattab who was killed in a police encounter. He was accused in several cases of killing police officials and he was on the run," said the defence lawyer.

"Yes, my brother Khattab was on the run and was involved in attacks on the police but I did not know that," said the eyewitness. Anwar's counsel asked Ali if he informed any police station or any other authority of what had happened to him and Ali said that he did not. Advocate Mansoob then asked if any complaint was filed when Ali went missing for 72 hours. "No complaint was submitted but my father went to Pirabad Police Station and Edhi Centre."

The defence counsel asked Ali if he had stamped the statement he gave to the police official and if he had given the same statement before the court. "Yes, I told the same," replied Ali.

Advocate Mansoob asked him whether the inquiry committee recorded his statement and Ali replied that he did not remember that. "You did not state in your statement to the police that you went to Al-Asif Square with Muhammad Qasim on January 3 or 4," said the counsel. To this Ali replied that he had mentioned that he went shopping for clothes and had mentioned Muhammad Qasim as well. Advocate Mansoob pressed further and said that what he was asking was not mentioned in Ali's statement. The defence counsel also said that Rao Anwar was not mentioned in the statement given to the police. Ali said that yes, it wasn't mentioned. "Your statements under sections 161, 164 and the statement given before the court are different from each other. Did you go to any government hospital after getting released as you had been tortured for 72 hours?" said advocate Mansoob. "Yes, I went to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital," said Ali. The defence counsel then asked him if he provided the medico-legal officer's report to the IO and Ali said that he did not.

Anwar's counsel cries foul

Witness Sharob Khan also recorded his statement before the court. He recounted that he was going to his home on January 3 or 4 of 2018 when he saw officials dressed in plain clothes arresting three people. "I could identify one of the three people as Naqeebullah while the other two men were Pathan [Pashtun]. They went towards Abbasi Town and I came to my house," he said, adding that he could identify some of the persons.

The defence counsel said that the statement given to the police differed from this statement. He argued that Khan's statement to the police mentioned only January 3. Advocate Mansoob asked Khan if the official who recorded his statement read it out to him and the witness confirmed that he did. The defence counsel asked Khan if he had submitted a complaint at the police station about what he saw and Khan replied that he had not.

Meanwhile, the counsels of two other accused asked Khan if he had any cases against him. "I have been acquitted in one case and have acquired bail in another," said Khan.

The counsels of the accused completed the cross-examination of both the witness statements.

Anwar's counsel dubbed both the witness statements as false while the court admitted the petitioner's plea praying the court to record his statement via video link.

The court issued notices over the petitioner's plea and adjourned the hearing till December 3 while summoning more witnesses. (By Nasir Butt The Express Tribune, 04, 20/11/2019)

`MQM-L man` held for killing 96 persons, weapons seized

Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested a suspected hitman for his alleged involvement in killings of 96 persons.

"The anti-street crime squad and Soldier Bazaar police arrested Yusuf alias Thelewala and seized a TT pistol, grenade and a motorbike from him," said SSP East Azfar Mahesar.

The held suspect belonged to the Muttahida Qaumi Movement-London and he had revealed to have killed 96 persons, he added.

Speaking at a press conference at his office, the SSP said that the held suspect joined the MQM in 1995 and started targeted killings the same year.

"He along with his other accomplices was directly involved in killing of 30 people. He had also disposed 66 bodies," he said.

The suspect claims to have been in touch with Dr Farooq Sattar, who denies the allegation

The victims included two army personnel, an official of the Pakistan Air Force, 12 people whom he killed on suspicions of being police informers, one policeman, five workers of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement-Haqiqi, a government employee and others.

During initial investigations, he revealed that he along with his other accomplices — Nadeem alias Marble, Riaz alias Chacha, Azeem alias Chhota, Rashid alias Chhota, Abdul Salam — kidnapped two brothers, Asif and Kashif, from Mominabad and killed them over suspicion of being informers.

The SSP said that he was first arrested by the Rangers in 1996, but he got released on bail in 1997.

He was again arrested by the Mominabad police in 1998 for his alleged involvement in the murder of two persons. He spent five years in prison and got released on parole in 2003.

The SSP said that he had been in hiding since 2003 and during that period he got directions from the MQM leadership in London. He said that the home department had also issued directives for his arrest since his parole was cancelled.

“He had established a reign of terror in district West,” the SSP said, adding that his several accomplices were either killed during ‘encounters’ or languishing in prison.

The held suspect told the media that he was in touch with senior MQM leader Dr Farooq Sattar.

He claimed that he used to meet with Dr Sattar at the party’s Nine Zero headquarters and he (Sattar) arranged a room for him for his temporary residence there.

However, Dr Sattar rejected the suspect’s claims and said that he did not know any “alleged target killer named Yusuf”.

“I did not know as to who came to Nine Zero or Khurshid Begum hall because hundreds of people had brought their grievances there on a daily basis,” he said in a statement issued on Wednesday evening.

Dr Sattar saw a conspiracy in the allegations levelled by the suspect.
(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 15, 21/11/2019)

Police shoot man to death for not stopping car in Civil Lines

Police on Friday morning killed a man and wounded his friend when they allegedly did not stop their car in the Civil Lines area, officials said.

The incident occurred at around 4am near the residence of the victims. However, the body and the wounded man were brought to the hospital after a delay of over an hour at 5.20am.

DIG South Sharjeel Kharal said that the police team, which killed the innocent man, committed a “blunder” and said that justice would be provided to the victim’s family.

He said that the police were chasing the victims from Khadda Market in Defence.

“The police party first fired into the air to stop the victim’s vehicle and subsequently fired on the vehicle. As a result, Nabil Hoodbhoy, 40, was killed and Raza Imam, 40, wounded,” a police statement said.

Three policemen have been taken into custody and a murder case has been registered against them

They were taken to the nearby Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC), where doctors declared Hoodbhoy dead on arrival. He sustained a single bullet wound in the neck. Imam suffered a bullet wound in the right arm and he was later moved to the Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH) for further treatment, said JPMC executive director Dr Seemin Jamali.

DIG Kharal told Dawn that a head constable had fired a single shot from his pistol when the victim’s vehicle slowed down on main Fatima Jinnah Road near the PACC. The bullet hit Imam and the same bullet hit Hoodbhoy and proved fatal. Only one spent bullet casing was found from the crime scene, he added.

Three policemen — Sub-Inspector Abdul Ghaffar, Head Constable Aftab and Constable Mohammed Ali Shah — were arrested and a case under Sections 302 (premeditated murder), 324 (attempted murder), 427 (mischief) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code read with Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 was registered against them at the Artillery Maidan police station on the complaint of the wounded.

The DIG, who also met the wounded at the AKUH, said that they did not stop the vehicle as they feared that they would be detained by the police.

The police claimed that they were signalled to stop on Khayaban-i-Muhafiz and when the police tried to search the vehicle the driver sped away apparently because they had beer.

They said the family of Hoodbhoj was abroad and he lived here alone. He was said to be one of the best tennis players at Karachi Gymkhana. The wounded was his friend and his condition was said to be stable now.

Inquiry ordered

The DIG South said that footage of CCTV cameras had been obtained from the spot and surrounding area. The police have collected all evidence from the crime scene.

"The policemen involved in the killing made a big mistake and will be punished," he said.

He said that the incident was being investigated by a three-member team, led by the SSP Investigation (South).

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police Dr Syed Kaleem Imam took notice of the incident and sought a detailed report from the DIG South.

(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 15, 23/11/2019)

Quality of police investigation

Expressing displeasure over the police investigation in a child sexual abuse case, Chief Justice of the Islamabad High Court Justice Athar Minallah has set guidelines for inquiry of such cases and made it mandatory for such offences to be investigated by no less than an officer of the rank of assistant superintendent of police. Rejecting a petition seeking bail in a child sexual abuse case, the judge criticised the police investigation and instructed that the standards of such investigations be improved. The petitioner, Zeeshan, had sought bail in a case registered on Aug 20 this year. The complainant has alleged that his child was sexually abused. The judge's instructions lay bare flaws in police investigations, which reflect poorly on the police's image. The police charge sheet said charges had been framed against the petitioner but the investigation did not find incriminating material against him. The investigating officer told the court that his investigation was limited to recording the statement of the complainant. The court said the case had not been investigated properly. Later, a DIG while appearing in person in court admitted that the case had not been investigated properly.

The court ordered that in view of the recent increase in reported cases of child abuse, the executive authorities should exercise utmost care in such cases. The court noted, "Due to poor quality of investigation and lapses on part of the prosecution, persons involved in heinous crimes go unpunished... children require extraordinary care and protection, particularly when incidents involving sexual abuse and molestation are reported frequently."

The court has blamed lapses on the part of the prosecution for letting culprits off the hook. The recent case of a paedophile illustrates this lapse well. The maniac had served jail time in foreign countries but in spite of this he was hired as a government consultant. Justice demands engagement with public affairs with the "eyes of mankind."

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 26, 23/11/2019)

Soldier Bazaar Police deny involvement in Thelaywala's arrest

The arrest of Muttahida Qaumi Movement's alleged target killer, Yousuf alias Thelaywala, and the events following his arrest remain to be shrouded in mystery. The investigation committee formed to inquire into the matter has yet to submit a conclusive report. It has, however, recorded the statements of 12 officials, including cops, and is expected to furnish its findings today (Monday).

On Sunday, the police officers deputed at Soldier Bazaar Police Station denied their involvement in the arrest. It appears that the statements of former Soldier Bazaar SHO Javed Sikander and the suspended in-charge of Anti-Street Crime Squad Imran Gujjar – both the officials relieved of their duties after the release of Thelaywala's video – contradict each other.

On November 20 (Wednesday), at a press conference held to announce the arrest of the man accused of at least 96 targeted killings, East SSP Ghulam Azfar Mahesar had said that the arrest was made in a joint-operation by Soldier Bazaar Police and the Anti-Street Crime Squad. It was reported on the same day that the arrest of Thelaywala had earlier been announced by the Sindh Rangers on August 24, 2017. While the whereabouts of Thelaywala between the two arrests remain unclear, the plot thickened on Thursday when a video was released in which Thelaywala made startling disclosures, including the claim that he had met Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah while he was in the custody of the Rangers in 2017.

The investigation thus far

The committee has recorded the statements of 12 officials, including those of Sub-Inspector Aijaz Hussain, Saleem Niazi, Saleemuddin and other cops who were stated to be part of the police team that arrested Thelaywala. The statement of Baloch Colony SHO Saleem Rind has also been recorded.

Whether the findings of the investigation committee's report are conclusive remains to be seen. Sources within the police department allege that the East SSP is trying to protect himself and say there is speculation within the department that subordinate police officials will be scapegoated in the matter.

The case against Thelaywala was registered at Soldier Bazaar Police Station on behalf of Sub-Inspector Aijaz Hussain. According to the FIR, four cops arrested Thelaywala from Naseem Cloth Market in Garden West and police officers, Saleemuddin and Saleem Niazi, found a 30-bore pistol during Thelaywala's body check. The FIR states that they also found a

hand grenade inside a black bag. It further reads that Thelaywala's accomplice, Riaz alias Qabar Khuda, managed to flee the scene.

The investigation of the case against Thelaywala was then handed over to the Baloch Colony SHO.

Findings sought

On Thursday evening, Karachi Police Chief AIG Ghulam Nabi Memon constituted a committee to investigate the release of Thelaywala's video on the CM's directives. The committee, headed by East DIG Amir Farooqi and comprising Special Investigation Unit SSP Noman Siddiqui, District West Investigation-II SP Tariq Nawaz and East District Investigation-I SP Irfan Zaman, was tasked with finding out the perpetrator of the "conspiracy" involving the recording and the release of the video. They officials were also assigned the responsibility to investigate the intent behind releasing the video. Additionally, the committee was asked to identify the officials whose negligence led to the release of the video and gather information pertaining to the number of cases registered against Thelaywala. It was further directed to probe into the reasons behind Thelaywala's release after his arrest in 2017.

The committee was directed to submit its findings by 6pm on Friday and was scheduled to meet Memon on Saturday, however, the committee sought a two-day extension to submit its report.
(By Sajid Rauf The Express Tribune, 04, 25/11/2019)

SSP-East Mahesar shown the door for 'serious misconduct

The Sindh police on Monday removed SSP-East Ghulam Azfar Mahesar from his post on charges of "serious misconduct" and asked the chief secretary to surrender his services to the federal government. Tanveer Alam Odho, a PSP officer of BS-19, has been posted as the new SSP-East. He was currently serving as the principal of the Elite Police Training Centre, Razzaqabad.

SSP Mahesar and his team came under the spotlight after the video of a suspected hitman — in which he was seen claiming to have met Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah while in Rangers' captivity in 2017 — went viral hours after Mr Mahesar announced his arrest at a press conference and claimed that he was involved in 96 murders, mostly committed in the 1990s.

However, the startling claim made by the suspect, Yusuf alias Thelewala, in the video forced Karachi police chief Additional Inspector General Ghulam Nabi Memon to set up an inquiry committee.

Questions remain about suspected hitman Thelewala's claims

"I am directed to refer to the subject cited above and to state that the services of retired Capt Ghulam Azfar Mahesar, PSP (BS-19) presently posted as SSP Dist/East, Karachi Range are no more required for Sindh Province/Sindh Police due to serious misconduct," said a notification issued by the Additional IG-Establishment of the Sindh police.

"It is therefore requested that the services of above officer may kindly be surrendered to Establishment Division, Government of Pakistan, Islamabad, in the interest of government work."

Last week's episode sent ripples both in security administration and political circles. On his part, CM Shah denied the very next day any link with the suspected hitman and called the video a "conspiracy" hinting at knowing those behind it.

"I don't know him and have never met him. But under a conspiracy a spoon-fed statement of the accused has been recorded on a mobile phone in which Thelewala has taken my name," he had said.

Unanswered questions

The city police chief the same day set up the three-member committee headed by DIG-East Amir Farooqi and comprising Special Investigation Unit SSP Nauman Siddiqui, SSP-Investigation (Central) Tariq Nawaz and SSP-Investigation (East) Irfan Zaman.

An official said that the committee investigated as to how, where and who made the video of the held suspect and what was its authenticity.

"Yusuf was first arrested in 1996 and again in 1998. He was released on parole in 2003 in one criminal case because he was not wanted in other cases at that time. The committee also looked into whether there was any negligence on part of the police for not arresting the suspect during all these years," he added.

Apparently the mystery has been resolved within a week, but left a couple of questions unanswered including about the authenticity of the suspect's claim that he met the CM in the custody of Pakistan Rangers, Sindh.

Another one was about the motive behind such a "conspiracy", as Murad Ali Shah termed it, seemingly hatched by some person(s) in the Sindh police against the chief executive of their own province.

"We at first place ordered a transparent inquiry," Sindh Information Minister Saeed Ghani told [Dawn](#) when contacted. "It's not because he levelled allegations against the CM [that] we ordered a probe or [took] action against a police officer. Every sensible man can understand that it was rubbish to allege that the CM went to meet him [the suspect] when he was under the custody of Rangers.

"We all need to know what is the motive behind this false statement and who directed this episode. I hope the police committee would have covered this aspect as well," he added.
(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 15, 26/11/2019)

Sindh Police chief apologises for Thelaywala video, sends SSP packing

Days after a video of alleged Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) target killer, Yousuf alias Theylawala, raised a storm regarding his claims about meeting Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, the Inspector General of Police (IGP) tendered an apology and surrendered the services of East SSP Ghulam Azfar Mahesar to the Establishment division, Islamabad, over serious "misconduct" in this case.

According to police officials, during the closed-door meeting held at the Chief Minister House on Monday, IGP Dr Syed Kaleem Imam and Karachi police chief Ghulam Nabi Memon admitted to the negligence of their personnel, from whose custody a video of the alleged target killer was released in which he had confessed to having met the incumbent CM. The inquiry committee headed by East DIG Amir Farooq also termed it negligence on the part of the police, adding that it was an internal "loophole" within the police, due to which the video with the fake statement about CM was released.

Soon after the meeting at the CM House, the IG office issued a notification, requesting the chief secretary to send Mahesar packing as his services were no more required to the Sindh police.

Sources privy to the development told The Express Tribune that action would also be taken against more police personnel working in District East. "The chief minister and even the Rangers personnel were annoyed over the fake statement of the terrorist, who has never met the CM," said a senior police official, who attended the meeting on Monday. "It seems the video was pre-planned and the East SSP, who heads the police in the district, has been held responsible for it," said the official, who asked not to be named.

The meeting was attended by the Sindh Police chief, Karachi Police chief, inquiry team head East DIG and the Sindh government's spokesperson, Murtaza Wahab, among others.

The video

On November 20, SSP Ghulam Azfar Mahesar had announced in a press conference that the police had arrested a serial target killer, Theylawala, who according to them was involved in the killing of around 96 people, including two army personnel.

Police said that the terrorist, who was affiliated with the MQM, was an active member of a 43-member gang of target killers. "He himself killed around 30 people and assisted other terrorists in murdering around 66 innocent people in Karachi. He gained the nickname Theylawala because he used to chop the bodies of people and shift the same on a pushcart," the SSP had said. Reports pouring in from various sources also suggested that Theylawala was also arrested by the Rangers in August 2017. Ever since there has been no clue about his whereabouts.

Transfers

Meanwhile, the Sindh Police have appointed Tanveer Alam Odho as East SSP. The notification issued by the IG office also states that Fida Husain Janwari, who was presently working as Anti Violent Crime Cell SSP, has been posted with immediate effect as West SSP. While SSP Shoukat Ali Khatian has been relieved from the post of West SSP and posted as principal of the police training center Razzaqabad.

(By Hafeez Tunio The Express Tribune, 04, 26/11/2019)

A case for student unions

It is this country's great misfortune that its educational institutions place critical thinking and the growth of an independent spirit at the bottom rung of their priorities. Those who question the status quo are seen as pariahs as the state grows more intolerant of dissent with each passing day. In this atmosphere, Arooj Aurangzeb — the young woman whose slogans, and leather jacket, captured our discourse — is an inspiring sight. For many young students she has become a symbol of resistance.



On November 29, Arooj and her fellow students will be taking to the streets to demand better standards in our country's higher education institutions. I urge people to join them. Their quest is not only noble, but also the need of the hour in our country. For these students are not just demanding better facilities (such as transportation and books) but are also asking for the adoption of stricter measures to combat issues like sexual harassment on university campuses.

Perhaps their most important demand is the restoration of student unions and political activities in universities throughout Pakistan.

There is a misconception in the country that student unions are banned. While Zia's suppression of multiple freedoms did include a ban on student unions in 1984, the ban was lifted by Benazir Bhutto's government in 1989. The confusion seems to stem from a 1993 judgment of the Supreme Court of Pakistan regarding a petition that prayed that the ban on student unions be reinstated. But as many other commentators have recently pointed out, that judgment does not ban student unions. Instead, it asks the federal government to restore them.

Despite there being no legal provision that curtails the right of students to engage in political activities, the majority of our universities prohibit such actions through a number of administrative rules. At the heart of the debate, and the subject of the November 29 march, is an affidavit that many students have to sign before gaining admission to many public and private universities. This affidavit asks that students undertake that they will not participate in any unions or political activities. The consequences of violating this affidavit involve expulsion.

The government and universities must understand that any attempt to curtail student unions is a violation of Article 17 of the Constitution. The Constitution guarantees every citizen the right to form associations or unions. The only condition is that such associations not be against the “sovereignty”, “integrity”, “public order”, or “morality” of Pakistan. The government has no factual basis upon which it can say that any of these restrictions is applicable in the case of student unions. The sole argument given against student unions is that they have given rise to violence in the past.

However, this seems to be a broad generalisation. It implies that student unions are inherently violent in some way.

Student unions are no more violent than any association of people such as political parties. And if some are violent, that still does not justify a blanket ban on every single union that may exist. Only a draconian theory of the Constitution would allow a government to curtail a fundamental right on such a vast assumption. If student unions were the cause of violence, then violence in campuses across the country should have decreased, instead it continued to exist. Exposing how the narrative of violence was a myth perpetuated to strangle student unions rather than to curb violence.

If students engaging in political activities create violence, then it seems many of the best universities in the world haven't gotten the memo from Pakistan. The University of Oxford has its student union, and Yale has its College Council.

Universities are environments for the fulfilment of academic pursuits. However, that is not their sole purpose. Universities are supposed to be places where students evolve their thinking, identity, and political thought. The ban on students undertaking political activity stands in the way of students and their political awakening.

To be sure, student wings of various political parties exist, but student unions serve a different purpose. They allow students to address the power disparity that exists between individual students and the university administration.

It is necessary to address this disparity. Recent events are a testament to this: in the University of Balochistan, the administration was complicit in a massive sexual harassment ring. Had the Balochistan High Court not intervened, the pleas of the students would have continued to fall on deaf ears. At Sindh University, students were branded seditious because of their demand for better water facilities.

Many people point to the hold that the Jamiat has on Punjab University as a case against student politics. But I believe that the opposite is true. It is the fact that students cannot unionise against the Jamiat that has allowed it to grow so powerful. It is unchecked power; other students can curb that power.

Student unions can help Pakistan achieve something that it drastically needs: a development of a culture of democracy. Let students practise democracy and the workings of politics in the days when they are developing their identity. Let them learn the value of the vote. Let them learn the compromise and diplomacy that are essential qualities of leadership. As many commentators have argued, the death of student unions has resulted in a lack of good political leadership in the country. These laboratories of democracy must be reinstated.

It is a cornerstone of liberal democracy that a conflict of ideas will always exist in society, but the best process to resolve this conflict is the democratic process. Student unions can help nurture within students the idea that debate, not violence, can resolve even the most intractable issues that might exist.

(By Hassan Niazi The Express Tribune, 17, 26/11/2019)

Family of Nabeel Hoodbhoy demands justice

The family of a young man who was gunned down by police near the Cantonment Railway Station last week on Thursday demanded a high-level inquiry into the incident and urged the chief justice of Pakistan to take up the case on priority.

The mother and sister of Nabeel Hoodbhoy along with their lawyer spoke at a press conference at the Karachi Press Club in which they expressed their dissatisfaction over the pace of the inquiry into the murder case.

“My son was a British citizen; yet, I have not sought help from the United Kingdom. We want justice [for] Nabeel in the same manner as the world deals with such brutal murders,” said Nabeel’s mother.

She said her son was a sportsman who was gunned down by the police with impunity.

“Yet, we see no one in the senior authorities who have shown real interest in punishing the killers.”

She said Nabeel’s killing was not a one-off incident since “the police have gone wild particularly in district South where similar incidents have been reported previously”.

She said that no law permitted the police to open fire on unarmed citizens.

"The policemen who shot at my son ran away; and they were even not bothered enough to shift my seriously wounded son to hospital."

She said despite lapse of around a week since the incident, there was no tangible progress by the police in solving the case.

Though the family was not impressed with the performance of the police vis-à-vis the case, Nabeel's mother placed her hope in the institutions meant to provide justice to the people.

"No one is safe here in Pakistan as there is no one who can ask our guards as to why they have turned killers. Police are not doing anything; still, we have hope in the institutions in according justice to us."

She said as things stood so far no one related to the incident had been suspended.

She appealed to Prime Minister Imran Khan to play his part in giving justice to her son.

"The prime minister should wake up to this. I want an eye for an eye. I don't want to see another mother lose her son in the same fashion and by the same killers.

"I have lost my only son. I want justice for him and not just an apology from anyone. I want justice in a manner that conforms to the standards of justice."

She demanded the Sindh chief minister to order a high-level committee to investigate the murder case.

Nabeel's sister said her brother was a law-abiding Pakistani and had committed no crime to pay such a heavy cost.

"I beg for justice [for] Nabeel."

(By Newspaper's Staff Reporter Dawn, 15, 29/11/2019)

Removing the hurdles

AROUND the world, the International Day of Disabled Persons is being marked with various stakeholders coming together to create a better and more inclusive world for people living with disabilities. According to the World Health Organisation, around 15pc of the global population suffers from some form of disability, while around 2pc to 4pc live with more severe and debilitating impairments. In Pakistan, the 1998 census found that 2.38pc of the population was living with disabilities, but this figure dropped to a mere 0.48pc with the 2017 census. Disability rights activists feel this statistic severely underrepresents their reality on ground, and instead cite WHO figures, which estimates that around 13.4pc of the total population suffers from some form of disability. Since the passage of the 18th Amendment, the responsibility of enacting legislation on disability rests with the provinces. While Sindh and Balochistan have passed new laws on the subject, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have not. Meanwhile, the Islamabad Capital Territory Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018, is yet to be presented before the National Assembly. It is imperative that such a large section of society not feel excluded from mainstream society, and lawmakers must work closely with activists and members of non-governmental organisations who have a clearer picture of what barriers confront people living with disabilities, whether in politics, employment or education.

Most recently, the Punjab government's Special Education Department launched its new policy which aims to enrol more children in public schools by making the education system more inclusive and focusing on the various barriers that keep those living with disability away from their right to an education. According to studies cited by the programme, children with disabilities are less likely to go to school, and have a greater chance of dropping out, if they do, owing to stigmas and structural barriers. If successful, the data and research-driven model can also be adopted by other provinces that must strive towards greater inclusivity for those who are disabled.

(By Editorial Dawn, 08, 03/12/2019)

Police suspect militant outfits behind student's kidnapping in DHA

Police found evidence that those kidnapped a 20-year-old law student in Defence Housing Authority (DHA) were also engaged in a shoot-out with police in Gulshan-i-Iqbal a day before her safe release, it emerged on Sunday. They also suspected the involvement of some elements belonging to militant outfits in the kidnapping incident.



Dua Mangi was kidnapped by four armed men, who first shot her friend Haris Soomro and then escaped in a car in Khayaban-i-Bukhari, DHA, on Nov 30. The girl was freed and reached home safely on early Saturday morning.

The spent bullet casing found at the scene of Dua's abduction was sent for a forensic analysis. It matched with the spent bullet casings found at the NIPA traffic intersection, where on Dec 3 an encounter took place between policemen and armed motorcyclists.

Investigators believe Dua Mangi and Bisma were abducted and freed by the same group

Narrating details of the encounter, Aziz Bhatti SHO Adeel Afzal told Dawn that on Thursday night four policemen were patrolling in Gulshan-i-Iqbal on two motorbikes when they signalled two masked men riding a motorbike at around 11:30pm. However, the suspects resorted to indiscriminate firing and the police returned fire.

The suspects managed to escape, but in the exchange of gunfire Constable Arsalan sustained five bullet wounds and was taken to a hospital, where his condition is said to be stable now.

The area SHO said that they suspected that one of the attackers was also wounded.

Ballistic matching

A police officer told Dawn that one spent bullet casing found at the crime scene in DHA on Nov 30 and five spent bullet casings of the Gulshan encounter were sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory.

An analysis at the lab confirmed that all the six bullets were fired from a same weapon, the source said, adding that investigators suspected that the criminals were possibly in the Gulshan neighbourhood to collect the ransom amount before freeing Dua.

He recalled that in a previous kidnapping incident, in which a girl named Bisma was abducted in a similar fashion from the same Defence neighbourhood in May, the kidnappers had collected the ransom money just about 200 metres away from the scene of Thursday's encounter.

Security officials believed that a 'professional criminal gang' was involved in the kidnapping of Dua as well as Bisma.

Dua's family not cooperating

Sources said that the statement of the kidnapped girl or her family could not be recorded on Sunday as reportedly the family was not cooperating or sharing any information with police.

However, columnist Aijaz Mangi, who is girl's maternal uncle, told a section of media that Dua was not in a position to give any statement.

"When her condition improves, she will definitely give a statement to the police," he said.

He claimed that the police had so far not contacted the family for recording the statement.

Recalling similarities between the Bisma and Dua kidnappings, the police officer opined that it was significant to note that the kidnappers did not mistreat Bisma and there were also reports that they did not mistreat Dua in their captivity.

'Militant elements'

The officer suggested that the manner with which the kidnappers executed their plan, abducted both the girls and then treated their captives suggested that they might belong to some militant outfits.

He said that the kidnappers had targeted both the girls apparently because of their appearance as they considered them as a "fashionable person who don't follow Islamic traditions or conventions".

The kidnappers appeared to be sophisticated who were familiar with the use of modern technology.

The officer hinted that the kidnappers might belong to one of the militant groups as they were experts of modern technology.
(By Imtiaz Ali Dawn, 12, 09/12/2019)

Law on enforced disappearances demanded

The government must bring a law on enforced disappearances, declare it a crime and punish those involved in the offence. The right to a fair trial is guaranteed in the Constitution and the government must ensure it.



This was among the list of demands put forward by civil society activists on International Human Rights Day marked at the Karachi Press Club on Tuesday.

Before sharing their concerns on human rights, the activists appreciated the fact that Pakistan was signatory to almost all the UN conventions on human rights and labour rights and said this ratification made it obligatory upon the federal and provincial governments to bring in mechanisms for compliance which would help improve the country's image at the international level.

Enforced disappearances

Speaking on enforced disappearances, Zulfiqar Shah, joint director at the Pakistan Institute of Labour, Education and Research (Piler), said: "Out of the total 6,474 complaints officially received by the Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances till Nov this year, 3,434 people have been freed whereas 2,206 cases are still pending. We would like to know what legal action has been taken against the perpetrator/s of these cases. There is no law to punish the persons involved in such crimes."

He also criticised the government for its failure in legislating on the matter despite being in power for more than a year.

Government asked to respect political, civil and economic rights of the youth

"We don't support any person involved in criminal activity or terrorism and want the government to respect fundamental human rights enshrined in the Constitution. 'Missing persons' should be produced in courts and punished under the law, if found guilty," he said.

He also urged the government to ensure freedom of expression, access to information and the right to association which, they said, was under threat in Pakistan.

"There is a growing attention on the compliance to human rights and labour rights and one such example is the Generalised Scheme of Preferences of the European Union under which Pakistan is getting trade incentives.

"It is important that the human and labour rights' situation is significantly improved so this scheme creating employment opportunities, especially in the textile sector, can continue," he said.



Mr Shah also raised concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in India-held Kashmir and demanded that the UN pay special attention to restoring fundamental freedoms in the valley.

Special laws for activist

Saeed Baloch, representing the Sindh Human Rights Defenders Network, said the government should create enabling environment for rights activists to help them work without any fear and threat.

"There is a need for special laws to protect human rights activists," he said.

Activist Naghma Shaikh called for the restoration of student unions which had been banned for the last 35 years.

"Pakistan's population in 2017 was declared 207 million, showing an increase of 58 per cent since the last census. Of them, 64pc are under 30 years of age. Hence, it's important that the government respect the political, civil and economic rights of the youth," she said.

Answering a question, Zulfiqar Shah said the media crisis had undermined the freedom of expression as journalists faced grave economic hardships due to layoffs and salary cuts.

(By Faiaz Ilyas Dawn, 15, 11/12/2019)

Of guns and private armies

A private army, or militia, is a military or paramilitary force made of armed combatants who serve a private person, group, or organisation instead the state. A private army is born when an individual or organisation — be it a landlord, tribal chief, criminal group, extremist, mafia or a member of the rich powerful elite — employs even one person with a weapon. Private armies are almost always formed by individuals or organisations to protect their interests, conduct unlawful activities, or to forcibly impose their views on others.

One must begin with the basics. It is well recognised that it is the constitutional responsibility of the state to protect the life and property of all citizens, and that this responsibility cannot be sublet to "prohibited bore gun-brandishing" individuals, private militias or private security agencies. It is estimated that Pakistan is now home to over 500 private armies and the number of privately-owned guns by civilians has risen from 18 million in 2007 to 44 million in 2017. The state and the elite of Pakistan are too reluctant to ask such basic questions as to who these people are and their reasons behind these millions of private weapons and private armies.

It is important to understand two aspects of this deadly disease. Firstly, how does a state consciously or unknowingly become the patron-in-chief for weapons and private armies? Secondly, how a country's rich and powerful elite are the real cause of the spread of weapons and ownership of private armies. A few recent events may well explain these phenomena.

In December 2017, the interim government placed a ban on the issuance of all weapon licences and declared that individuals holding prohibited bore weapons should either surrender or downgrade their weapons within 30 days. Having issued this excellent notification, the government stepped back from implementing these actions while the rich and powerful managed to obtain stay orders from the court.

In December 2018, under pressure from the gun-craving parliamentarians, the new government lifted the ban on the issuance of non-prohibited bore arms licences and cancelled the 2017 notification that called for an end to the possession of automatic weapons.

The ruling elite's greed for weapons and militancy is simply insatiable. Come August 2019 and the government issued another highly discriminatory SRO to allow the president, PM, chairman Senate, speaker NA, governors, judges, CMs, ministers and senior bureaucrats to obtain prohibited bore arms licences. This SRO was a de facto declaration that the rich and the powerful were now allowed by the law to possess prohibited bore weapons (an oxymoron) and form private armies. Not to be left behind, the Sindh government, a few months later, also lifted the ban on the issuance of arms licences.

Countries like Bangladesh, Malaysia and Korea — having understood the link between weapons, crime, tolerance and governance — have not just controlled but also reduced the number of civilian-owned weapons in the last decade. Pakistan, sadly, has added an extra 26 million guns since 2007. We learnt nothing from the Army Public School tragedy, we forgot the de-weaponisation resolve of Radd-ul-Fasaad and we also ignored the Supreme Court's de-weaponisation call in its judgement of suo motu case 16 of 2011.

Pakistan must declare the possession of arms as the exclusive domain of the state and ban all citizens, regardless of their status, to possess, carry or display any weapons. In compliance with Article 256 of the Constitution, Pakistan must disband and eliminate all private armies regardless of their size or patrons. It must ban the issuance of new arms licences and declare the already issued licences void. The state must demand individuals to surrender all illegal weapons or face harsh consequences. For all previously licenced weapons, a well thought-out weapon buy-back programme ought to be implemented. While not entirely comfortable for some, these steps may be the only way for Pakistan to become a crime-free, peaceful and tolerant society.

(By Naeem Sadiq The Express Tribune, 16, 11/12/2019)

Sindh's streets of poison: The (bloody) writing on the wall

In April 2019, news of a Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) outbreak among children shocked the world. Most had never even heard of Rato Dero — a small town with a population of 0.33 million according to the latest census, located 30 kilometres to the north of Larkana. But that was before it gained notoriety for being the epicentre of an HIV epidemic. Many couldn't fathom how children as young as a few months old could be infected by a virus that is commonly associated with sexual transmission.



As the saga unfolded, all eyes were set on Dr Muzaffar Ghangro — the doctor believed to have infected almost 900 children by injecting them with the virus. Dr Ghangro has since denied the charges, but admitted that he reused syringes in many of the cases.

In the days that followed the outbreak, aid organisations and the world media converged upon the small town, the former trying to make sense of the epidemic and the latter trying to tell the world about it.

The provincial and federal governments too jumped into the fray — promises were made and orders were issued. Ministers scurried to Larkana, where many of the patients were brought after the screening, looking for photo-ops with the parents, who barely understood the gravity of the situation. Many had never even heard of the term HIV before.

As the months passed, the world became obsessed with other important matters and soon enough, the residents of Rato Dero were all but forgotten.

Today, the situation has turned to normal. And normal is dangerous in Rato Dero.

History will repeat

Dr Ghangro's clinic, the Konain Child Medical Centre, is located in Nano Mal Mohalla, at one end of a busy marketplace in the middle of Rato Dero. The area is teeming with hawkers and customers during the day. At night, it is the fiefdom of stray dogs and drug addicts, scavenging for food.

Since the news broke out in April, Dr Ghangro's clinic and his pharmacy next door have been 'sealed'. A rusting padlock rests against the handle of the metal shutter at the entrance. A large billboard, featuring a child's caricature and the name, "Dr Muzaffar Ali", give away the site's identity.

Walk in any direction from Dr Ghangro's establishment and you will find at least a dozen such 'clinics' and pharmacies in the surrounding streets. Most of the clinics are shabby-looking one-room establishments, with several patients waiting in line to see the doctor. The clinic themselves look like they haven't received a fresh coat of paint in decades and smell of urine and vomit.

But you don't even need to see the establishments to realise the abundance of these 'medical facilities'. If you simply glance around the unpaved streets, you will notice plenty of used syringes and other medical waste being kicked around by passersby.

At the centre of the marketplace is an empty plot. Here is where most of the waste is dumped. When The Express Tribune visited this plot, hundreds of used syringes, along with the sharp needles, cannulas, blood bags and empty medicine containers were lying in the plot.

Child's play

A young boy, hardly 10 years old, with a schoolbag hugging his back, entered the plot and picked up a syringe. "I am just playing," he says, frightened at having been caught in the act. "Uncle, I don't take them home," he tries to explain. "I promise I won't touch them again," he pleads, before throwing the syringe and running off.

Shahzado Qureshi, who was sitting at a roadside tea stall opposite the plot, told The Express Tribune that children often pick up the syringes on the way to school or back to play with them. "I keep telling these doctors not to throw their waste here but no one pays any heed," he exclaimed, raising his hands into the air in desperation. "Sometimes, when the pile of waste becomes too much, I burn it, but that too is dangerous," he explained.

Shopkeepers in the area refused to be interviewed but some did say the practice had been ongoing for the past several years. At least one shopkeeper, who abstained from giving his name, said that the clinics stopped dumping waste on the plot for some weeks after news of the HIV outbreak. "When the officers stopped visiting Ghangro's clinic, everything returned to normal."

'Not mine'

In the meantime, a young man came to dump some garbage at the plot. Asked about his identity, he refused to give his name but said he worked as a compounder at a nearby clinic. "I am only throwing away the garbage I collected during the morning cleaning," he retorted. "We destroy the waste at the taluka hospital's incinerator," he added.

The 'incinerator' he referred to is basically a large stone compartment that is fired from the bottom and releases smoke from a long iron chimney. It is placed in the Rato Dero taluka hospital and is at best a makeshift apparatus for burning harmful waste. Hospital staff refuted the compounder's claim and said that no clinics sent their waste to be disposed of to the facility.

The Express Tribune spoke to at least half a dozen doctors at their clinics and none of them admitted to throwing the medical waste in the streets or on the plot. "I hardly use 20 syringes a day and we don't throw them outside," said Dr Ikhtiar Ali Mangi, standing in the middle of a 40-foot-long room that was partitioned in the middle with a cardboard wall. The clinic was packed with patients, mostly women and children from nearby villages.

Meanwhile, residents of the area complained that the clinics threw out their waste in the streets without any fear of the authorities. "There is no check on them," said Himat Ali Jalbani, a social worker. "I am visiting this area after a couple of months and am shocked to see the needles and blood bags lying around," he added.

Inept or apathetic?

Back in April, with the world media focused on Rato Dero, all government agencies had gone into overdrive to control the situation. There was talk about action against quacks, incinerators were to be installed and made functional at all hospitals, awareness sessions were arranged and political leaders left no stone unturned to ensure they came out as the good guys.

In the chaos that ensued, it seems everyone forgot the underlying problem — that there is no mechanism to check how much medical waste is being produced in the province and if it is being disposed of in the safest way possible.

Of all the public hospitals in Sindh, only five teaching hospitals have standard operating procedures to dispose of waste using scientific methods, including sterilisation and incineration. These hospitals include the Jinnah Postgraduate and Medical Centre, Dr Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital and Lyari Hospital in Karachi, and Liaquat Hospital and Benazir Bhutto University Hospital in Larkana.

The law

In 2005, the Sindh government crafted rules regarding the scientific disposal of medical waste, while in 2012, the rules were amended under the Environmental Protection Act of 1997. According to the rules, medical waste must be dumped in secure places according to scientific techniques. The irony is that most medical facilities don't even know that such a law exists, let alone take steps towards its implementation.

When approached for comment about the prevalent situation in Rato Dero, Dr Sikandar Memon, the head of the Sindh AIDS Control Programme, held the doctors at private clinics responsible. "We have sensitised over 200 doctors who run their private clinics about the need to dispose of their waste properly and shut down 265 such establishments across Larkana district for not following the law," he said.

When it was pointed out to him that the Rato Dero hospital itself didn't have an incinerator, Dr Memon retorted that the doctors had been told to dump the waste into a seven-foot-deep ditch if they didn't have access to an incinerator. "We will also install an incinerator in the Rato Dero taluka hospital by next month," he promised in typical bureaucrat-speak.

An endemic issue

Rato Dero is located at hardly a half-hour's drive from Larkana city — a bastion of the ruling Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). It is the constituency of PPP chairman Bilawal Bhutto, who has been elected on the National Assembly seat from the area. It is also the constituency of his aunt, MPA Faryal Talpur.

The irony is that the issue is not just limited to Rato Dero. It is endemic across the province and in the absence of a mechanism to check the disposal of medical waste, there will likely be several more epidemics like the one earlier this year.
(By Sameer Mandhro The Express Tribune, 04, 13/12/2019)

DHA, police dig up ground outside tea shops in Karachi

Defence Housing Authority (DHA) and Defence police administration dug up the ground outside a number of tea shops in DHA early on Saturday morning. The operation was conducted after a girl was recently kidnapped and her friend shot outside a tea shop in the area, said sources.

The ground has been dug up using shovels and heavy machinery in order to stop shopkeepers from placing tables outside for customers in the evening. Shopkeepers were further warned that placing tables and chairs outside is strictly prohibited from now on, with officials adding that violators would be arrested.

The owners of the tea shops said that the police had already ordered them to close all shops and hotels by midnight, but this new restriction has made it nearly impossible for them to run their businesses. They said that they paid between Rs200,000 and Rs250,000 in rent for their shops.



Adding that hundreds of staff members and waiters worked there on daily wages, they said that their workers would be left to beg on the streets if business came to a stop. "Taking such measures instead of providing security to citizens is not understandable," maintained a shopkeeper.

Fears about security in the area arose after 19-year-old Dua Mangi was abducted by unidentified persons from outside a tea shop in Bukhari Commercial Area on the night of November 30, while her friend, Haris Fatah, was shot and injured for putting up resistance.

Mangi returned home a week later on December 7.

(By Our Correspondent The Express Tribune, 04, 15/12/2019)

No more silence on workplace sexual harassment

When it comes to workplace sexual harassment in Pakistan, it is far more prevalent than most people realise. To raise awareness about the prevalence of sexual harassment at workplaces and ways to prevent it, the Provincial Ombudsman Office Sindh for Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace conducted a seminar to celebrate the National Working Women's Day held on December 23, 2019, in Karachi.

Titled "Working Women's Problems, Challenges and Solutions," the event was attended by political personalities, lawyers, and civil society members from all over the province.

An equal number of men and women participated in the event to discuss the role of working women and the need to provide them with a safe and secure workplace environment.

Speaking on the occasion, Chairperson Sindh Commission on the Status of Women (SCSW) Nuzhat Shirin said that despite the presence of strong laws that protect women at workplaces, together with the existence of different governmental departments that ensure the implementation of the laws, women continue to suffer.

"Even though we have the laws in place, their implementation has been a challenge because things have not been well-organised," she said.

Shirin cited the examples of sexual harassment cases in universities and lamented the lack of awareness about the existing laws.

"When a female student was harassed by her professor at a university, the commission intervened and our team visited the campus to discuss the matter with the institutional higher-ups.

Unfortunately, even the vice-chancellor was unaware of the laws on sexual harassment at the workplace," she said.

She also added that it is wrongly presumed that if someone is accused of sexual harassment at the workplace, they will be directly thrown into jail.

"There will be a proper trial per the law. We will fight for women's rights but in an educated and legal way," she insisted.

The plight of women

Sexual harassment could either be subtle, so much so that it becomes harder to pinpoint and report, or coercive and intimidating. In either case, most women are reluctant to report their experiences for the fear of being judged or humiliated.

"I have not been a victim of explicit sexual harassment but one of my superiors has tried to flirt with me from time to time," Amna Ali, who works for a renowned corporate firm in Pakistan, told *The Express Tribune*.

"Initially, I didn't even recognise his behaviour as harassment but I learned about it after attending a safety workshop. However, I found it extremely difficult to report him because of his position and the general attitude of people towards women who speak up."

Faiza Khan, a transwoman activist and fashion designer by profession, said that things are harder for working transwomen because they have to face sexual harassment on a daily basis.

"We have to put up with harassment, catcalling, bullying and snide remarks almost every day," she said. "I pray that the problems of transgender and LGBT community in the country are taken seriously."

The need to educate men

"I am not going to talk to women today but would like to address the men sitting in the hall because the problem starts from them," said renowned academic, media consultant and trainer, Dr Huma Baqai.

“Pakistan has some strong laws regarding sexual harassment at the workplace along with different departments and committees to ensure the implementation of laws. Despite that, Pakistan is among the top 10 most dangerous countries for women.”

Dr Baqai said that the problem persists despite the presence of laws because sexual harassment has become a structural problem.

“Sexual harassment and rape are never about a victim’s age, the way they dress up, or about desire or animal instinct. It is all about power,” she said. “When it comes to working women, men don’t hate them just because they are earning.

They hate them when they ask for their rights and ask to change the status quo.”

She also said that in order to prevent cases of sexual harassment at the workplace, more women should be allowed to assume leadership positions.

Dr Baqai urged men to bring about a change in the way they think so as to provide a safe working environment for women.

“Try to create a world that you would like to see for your daughters. Laws and departments alone cannot prevent sexual harassment. Your thinking can change everything,” she concluded.

The existing laws

Shedding light on the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010, advocate Supreme Court Shoaib Ashraf said that per the law, every organisation is required to adopt a code of conduct related to sexual harassment at the workplace.

“It should not only be adopted throughout the organisation but guidelines must also be displayed within the company’s premises,” he said. “Besides, it is mandatory for every organisation to constitute an inquiry committee to enquire into complaints under the Act.”

He added that if a woman lodges a complaint against someone in her office, the company’s inquiry committee and human resource department is responsible to launch an initial investigation into the matter.

“Once the investigation is carried out at an organisational level and someone is found to be allegedly involved, the final decision is then forwarded to the ombudsman’s office for legal proceedings,” he explained.

Spreading awareness

Briefly explaining the procedure of lodging complaints by victims of harassment, the Provincial Ombudsman for the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Justice (R) Shahnawaz Tariq said that women should be vocal if any act of harassment is committed against them.

“Women must come forward and voice their concerns. It is our job to investigate the matter and serve justice,” he said.

According to the Ombudsman’s Office, the provincial government is working to eradicate incidents of sexual harassment at the workplace by organising seminars and publicising the measures and action to be taken by the government.

(By Sarah B Haider The Express Tribune, 05, 24/12/2019)

Karachi police to wear body cameras as a step to improve their accountability

Amid growing complaints of abuse of power, ill-practices and corruption in the police, the authorities are set to launch a surveillance project to monitor activities of officers on patrolling duties, snap-checking and those deployed at checkpoints to improve accountability.

According to officials, the proposal to acquire the first consignment of modern cameras had made some progress and the police authorities were in final talks with the National Radio Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC) — the high tech industry engaged in manufacturing of telecommunication equipment in Pakistan. They said that once the deal was finalised, a set of 100 cameras was likely to arrive for the city police within a few weeks to kickstart the first phase of the project.

“Bearable body-worn cameras are often utilised by the law enforcement agencies in several countries to record their interaction with public or gather video evidence at crime scenes,” said a source. “It has been suggested to increase both officer and civilian accountability,” he added.

A set of 100 cameras is likely to arrive for the city police within a few weeks to implement the first phase of the project

“We also witness that sometimes accidental events may have an effect on memory so the cameras also allow video playback in the case of memory loss. A portable network device would also be provided with the camera to ensure network connectivity all the time,” the source said.

He said being an organisation under the Ministry of Defence Production, the NRTC was fully capable to meet the requirement and the launch of the project would be a major value addition to policing in Karachi.

Apart from complaints of deep-rooted bribery culture, abuse of powers and patronisation of criminal activities, the police force in Karachi has been accused of killing people in fake encounters and almost non-existent accountability system in the institution.

Many believe that the initiative to bring policemen who directly interact with the people during execution of different types of duties under direct surveillance may bring some sense of accountability but major improvements will only come with overall reforms in the institution and making it depoliticised.

"The next phase of project is the procurement of gadgets. Initially, it's been planned only for 100 units in Karachi. According to the plan, the officers posted at different checkposts conducting search operations and duties of special events would be monitored primarily at the command and control centre at the Central Police Office but the access can also be offered at any permanent or temporary operation rooms."

The proposal is part of a larger project that includes monitoring all police stations, reporting rooms and public dealing rooms in the future through the same technology.

(By Imran Ayub Dawn, 13, 28/12/2019)

Police accountability

The Karachi Police, after finalising the deal with the National Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC), is set to introduce 100 sets of "bearable body-worn cameras" amidst increasing complaints of abuse of power, ill-practices and corruption in the police, to "increase both officer and civilian accountability". While the step seems to be in the right direction, it is important for authorities to construct a clear plan before implementing it in order to prevent any complications in the future.

In the case of an accident or a crime, the use of these body-cams must be synonymous with the law, or new laws should be established to better protect both the police and the civilians without discrimination. Furthermore, authorities should be thoroughly informed about the moral responsibility that comes with the use of body-cams as consent can be a major issue for most civilians. This is extremely paramount as complications can arise as to how and when footage can and cannot be used during legal trials. The authorities need to move ahead with a clear goal in mind.

While there is much to think about, the use of body-cams may prove beneficial in a country bedeviled by crime, robbery and illegal practices. Body-cam surveillance, with routine systematic inspections will provide some sense of structure in the chaotic police system on the ground. These body-cams will be an extremely useful tool to fight lawlessness in the city, if used properly. The introduction of technology in the police gives the authorities a base through which they can bring about much needed structural reforms within the police. At such crucial times, what Karachi needs is increased accountability not just in the police but across the board by creating a middle ground between civilians and authorities and body-cams might just do exactly that. One can only hope and wait.

(By Editorial The Express Tribune, 16, 31/12/2019)