



**COMMITTEE  
FOR THE  
WELFARE OF  
PRISONERS**



# NEWSLETTER

April-June 2022

11<sup>th</sup> Edition



Supporting Sindh's Criminal  
Justice System through  
**Legal Aid, Legal Empowerment**  
and **Swift Trials.**

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF SUCCESS from this quarter



**817**

number of  
Vakalatnamas/ cases  
filed in courts for our  
clients



**423**

number of bail  
applications filed for  
clients



**585**

number of cases  
disposed off through  
judicial orders



**417**

number of acquittals  
(On Merit & 265-K &  
249-A Cr PC).

all made possible through the support of Government of Sindh

[www.lao.org.pk](http://www.lao.org.pk)



## Muhammad Nasir Khan

Deputy Inspector  
General Prisons, Sindh

During my course of service in the Prison's Department, I have seen the work of the Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners – Legal Aid Office established in almost all the prisons and correctional facilities of Sindh.

## MESSAGE FROM the Deputy Inspector General Prisons – Muhammad Nasir Khan

The free legal aid and representation provided by the Committee is a relief for prisoners who are unable to hire private legal councils. I'm witness to the competency and professionalism of the team of lawyers at the Legal Aid Office. It is through their dedication that the Committee has represented 25,795 cases of prisoners across Sindh. Out of these, 22, 953 cases have been disposed of.

Notified by the Government of Sindh in 2011, the Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners has expanded its work to several welfare and rehabilitation initiatives. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee conducted serology tests and provided health kits and personal protection equipment for prisoners.

The Committee has also been at the forefront to provide and arrange for fine and surety amounts for prisoners.



## FREE LEGAL ADVISORY CAMPS in 23 Prisons of Sindh

Between April to June 2022, the CWP-LAO has successfully organized 21 free legal aid camps for under-trial prisoners. The camps witnessed the active participation of 145 under-trial prisoners, including adult men, women, and juvenile prisoners who benefited from free legal advice.



## ACTIVITIES & HIGHLIGHTS

### Two Days Football Tournament at YOIS Karachi

Being involved with sports or extracurricular activities plays an important part in one's character/personality development. While such healthy activities are an effective way of diverting the youth away from anti-social behavior, violence, crime, drug use, and the like. Following this principle, the Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners - Legal Aid Office, in partnership with Karachi United Football Club, organized a two-day football (soccer) tournament to promote sports amongst the young inmates in YOIS Karachi.



The qualifying teams of the knockout round Moeen Stars (YOIS) and Golimar Greens (Karachi United) played the final on June 29, 2022. Moeen Stars won the tournament (3-2) through their stellar performance. **During these matches, Karachi United Football Club also identified three potential players among the inmates who will be offered free-of-cost career-oriented football training after release.**

The occasion was graced by **Mr. Jan Muhammad** (Superintendent) and **Mr. Nisar Baloch** (Deputy Superintendent YOIS) who enjoyed the match and highly appreciated this initiative.

### DONATION DRIVE AT DISTRICT PRISON DADU

Climate change has not only affected our planet's core, but also our health, ability to grow food, housing, safety, and the way we work. With heat waves becoming a consistent phenomenon every summer across the country, and blistering heat gripping most parts of Sindh; temperatures scorch to nearly 50 degrees.



Working for the well-being of the prisoners, CWP-LAO made arrangements for sweet drinking water to avoid the risk of heat strokes among prisoners in the District Prison & Correctional Facility of Dadu. Urgent arrangements were made for two water tanks, outers, and copper pipes to facilitate almost 400 gallons of water for prisoners.

## DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS AMONG JUVENILES AT YOIS KARACHI

**“There is no friend as loyal as a book - Ernest Hemingway”**

Paying special attention to juvenile education and academic enrichment, books were distributed in the Youthful Offenders Industrial School (YOIS) Karachi. The books were donated by The American School as leftovers from other children. **The CWP-LAO thanks The American School for their generous donation, which will go a long way in the enlightenment of children who are stuck in prisons.**



## SCHOOL KITS DISTRIBUTED AMONG STUDENTS IN EARLY LEARNING CENTER KARACHI:

**T**he Early Learning Centers (ELCs) at Women Prison Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur, and Larkana provide free basic education to children aged between 2.5-9 years who are incarcerated with their mothers.

In addition to which the CWP-LAO distributed beautiful school kits to the children enrolled in the Early Learning Center (ELC) at the Women's Prison in Karachi, during a parent-teacher meeting. The kits included uniforms, backpacks, shoes, course books, and necessary stationery, and were distributed with the objective to fully equip our little champs with the necessary learning materials before the schools reopen.

Upon receiving the attractive school kits, nothing could beat the smile of these little stars!



## SPECIAL DAYS AND EVENTS – A CELEBRATION!

Celebrating events and occasions allows for breaking the monotony of the prison routine. We consider celebrations an important part of rehabilitation (particularly for the children in prisons). While highlighting important events and occasions serves to connect children behind bars with the world outside.



## CELEBRATING EID BEHIND BARS

Early Learning Center in Women Prison Karachi organized an "Eid Milan Party" to celebrate Eid with the students.



مفت قانونی مشورہ  
صرف ایک کال کے فاصلے پر



**Law Department**  
Government of Sindh

24/7 Helpline 0800 70806  
**SLACC**  
Sindh Legal Advisory Call Center

Speak to a qualified & high-court  
registered lawyer - TOLL FREE number:

**0800 - 70806**



## EXPERIENCES AS AN INTERN



**M**etallic bars, dingy and congested environment occupied by dangerous individuals. That's the picture that came to my mind when I heard the word 'prison'. This imagery associated with the prison system isn't by any means new; especially for individuals whose only exposure to the idea of prison is based on binge-watching "Orange is the new Black"

Are the prisons in Sindh like what we see in the movies? Are they just punishment centers or do they actually live up to their names and serve as corrective and rehabilitative facilities? I had all sorts of questions in my mind as I walked into the office of the Committee for the Welfare of Prisons – Legal Aid Office (CWP-LAO) on my first day as an intern. Over the three weeks that I spent at the CWP-LAO, I came to realize that the system is far more complex. My perception about prison

being a dangerous hostile environment has changed to the prison being a rehabilitative facility.

I had numerous conversations that I had with individuals working with CWP (each an enlightening one). What was common in all the conversations was that they possessed the passion for rehabilitation and welfare for the often-neglected segment of our society. The Prison Paralegal Program, Early Learning Centers (ELC), Sewing Centers, and Football Camps for juveniles are just some examples of the rehabilitative initiatives that the CWP undertakes, while all these initiatives are designed in consultation with experts after assessing the needs of the prisoners to deliver maximum impact.

My experience in the field was limited, however, I had the privilege of interacting with the stars of the show: the lawyers at CWP. These lawyers are the backbone of the free legal aid services that CWP provides to underprivileged deserving under-trial prisoners. Ms. **Noor-ul-Saba** is a force to be reckoned with, who began working with CWP in 2004. And up until 2021, she has secured the acquittal of 250 women prisoners. She walks into the office with a warm smile and greets everyone individually in the room –

which was the usual highlight of my day. She is the epitome of **"love what you do, do what you love" – being affiliated with the committee for over 17 years.**

Before my experience at CWP, I used to categorize individuals in prisons – reduce their existence to the crime they had committed and their sentence. However, when you work closely with the justice system, hear testimonials and witness how rehabilitative initiatives can transform lives, you become aware of how disconnected you are from the reality on the ground. My time at CWP was nothing short of insightful. And it instilled in me, a profound interest and respect for those who work every day for the welfare and rehabilitation of prisoners.

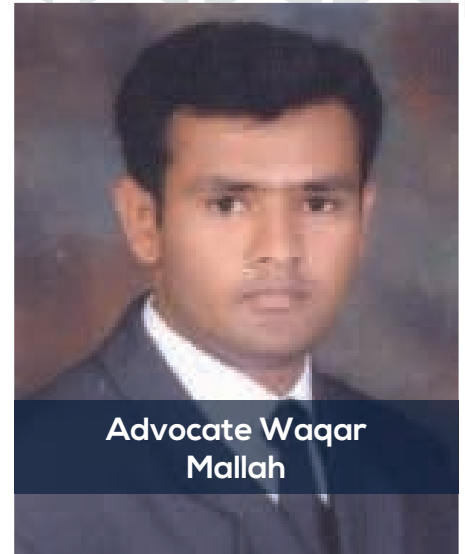
**Fatima Abbas**  
Internee



# Justice SUCCESS **STORIES**

## Acquitting a financially deprived person from baseless charges

**A**li Asghar, aged 16, lived in a joint family with his parents and ten siblings. To support his family financially, Ali worked as a fisherman. He was implicated in a robbery case with an attempt to cause death or grievous hurt. Having nowhere to go and being struck in the prison falsely, Ali was interviewed by **Mr. Waqar Mallah** (CWP lawyer). Upon meeting the criteria, Ali's Vakalatnama was filed in court. The court later concluded the case on May 16, 2022, acquitting Ali due to lack of witnesses.



## Helping a woman to prove her innocence and get back her respect

**F**ahima had charges of dual murders against her. Her younger sister and sister-in-law were unfortunately beheaded in their home. Fahima's father had suspected Anees (a man who had a conflict with the family over Fahima's marriage proposal). When Anees was arrested, he named Fahima as his accomplice for the murders he had done. As a result of which Fahima was arrested and sent to prison as a suspect until the case was concluded.

During this process, Fahima lost her respect, and the support from her family, after which and was left alone. Fahima got connected with **Advocate Noor-ul-Saba Hussain** for her legal assistance. Noor thoroughly studied the case files, interviewed the alleged, and filed for her Vakalatnama on October 30, 2018. After several proceedings and constant struggle through the justice system, the case concluded on June 6, 2022, declaring Fahima innocent.



# Justice SUCCESS **STORIES**

## Taking immediate action to protect a young laborer

**A**fter his parents passed away, Shahzaib looked after his two siblings (one brother and one sister). One day, Shahzaib was stopped by police officials for snap-checking in Rizvia Society. Shahzeb obliged to police orders like a responsible citizen. After going a thorough checking the police did not find anything illegal on Shahzaib, yet still demanded 'Chai-Pani' (bribe), which led to a heated argument with the officer-in-charge, and Shahzaib was taken away on the spot after being falsely accused of bike theft.

Shahzaib who was earning a meager sum of Ten thousand rupees per month and could not afford a private lawyer for his case proceedings, contacted CWP-LAO on February 17, 2022, for his legal representation.



**Advocate Jamil Abbas  
Talpur**

Taking immediate action, Shahzaib's Vakalatnama was filed by **Advocate Jamil Abbas Talpur** on February 28, 2022. Since the case was baseless, the honorable court examined case details and found that Shahzaib's name was not even mentioned in the FIR. Hence the case was therefore discharged by the court and Shahzaib was acquitted on April 01, 2022.

## Innocent brothers saved from further humiliation

**S**hah Hussain and Shah Faisal are two brothers who fell victim to the unjust system in September 2020. They were imprisoned in District Prison Malir for false charges of robbery and carrying illegal weapons, after an exchange of harsh words with some police officers.

As time passed by their hopes of getting justice was getting diminished until they were told about free legal representation provided by the Legal Aid Office. Both the brothers approached **Advocate K.B. Shah** (Lawyer, CWP), who filed their Vakalatnama on February 15, 2021.

Despite taking proactive approaches, the case took sixteen months to conclude due to the lengthy case proceedings. However, justice prevailed, and in light of the witnesses and evidence, the honorable court acquitted both brothers on June 01, 2022. Had it not been for K.B. Shah's proactive approach, the two brothers could have continued to waste ages in Prison.



**Advocate KB Shah**

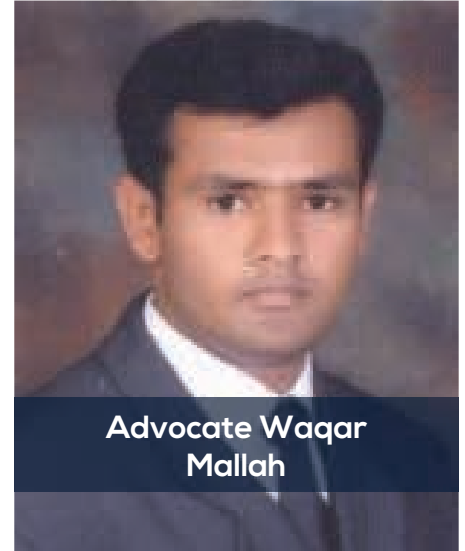


## Acquitting a young laborer from a false theft case

**S**alman, a 17-year-old young contributed to the family finances by working as a laborer, earning twelve thousand rupees per month; with a family consisting of his parents and four siblings.

The young offender was incarcerated in YOIS Karachi on charges of motorcycle theft in two cases. Salman approached CWP-LAO for his legal representation. Both his cases were presented by **Advocate Waqar Mallah** before the concerned courts. Based on cross-questioning of witnesses and examination of evidence, Salman was found innocent and later released from YOIS Karachi.

The court decisions passed judgments in Salman's favor in both the cases and were announced on April 13, and May 13, 2022, respectively.



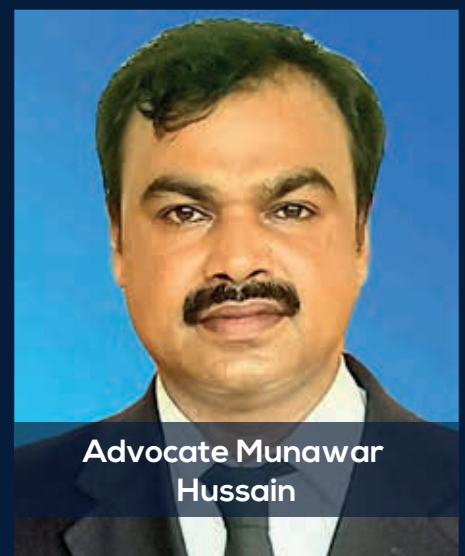
**Advocate Waqar  
Mallah**

## Acquitting from false charges for possession of an illegal weapon

**A**meen Ahsan, a resident of Nazimabad Karachi lived with his eight family members. Ameer was a rickshaw driver when he was implicated for carrying an unlicensed weapon under the Sindh Arms Act 2013.

Ameen's case was taken up by Advocate Munawar Hussain on January 12, 2022. Taking a proactive approach **Advocate Munawar Hussain** filed a bail application, along with the Vakalatnama on the same day before the court. With the bail granted, Ameen was provided with instant relief.

During the case proceedings, the evidence produced was insufficient to prove the charges against Ameen. Eventually, the court acquitted Ameen on April 21, 2022.



**Advocate Munawar  
Hussain**

# Justice SUCCESS **STORIES**

## Helping a rickshaw driver from baseless charges

**B**ashan, aged 20, lived in Sukkur and was working as daily wage labor to earn bread for his family. He was wrongly arrested for carrying narcotic substances.

Bashan approached **Advocate Ahmer Raza Shah** (Lawyer, CWP) for his legal representation. After interviewing Bashan, and understanding his situation, CWP-LAO filed his Vakalatnama on January 19, 2022. During the proceedings, the prosecution produced two witnesses, both of which were police officials – which was a dubious practice itself.

After assessing the statements, the court found discrepancies in terms of time and place and declared that the evidence produced was not substantial enough to convict Bashan. Ultimately Bashan was acquitted on April 25, 2022 (three months and seven days after being held falsely).



**Advocate Ahmer  
Raza Shah**

## Removing worries for someone who was fabricated in a robbery case

**D**in Mohammad Brohi was wrongly imprisoned in Shaheed Benazirabad on charges of robbery.

According to the FIR, he had been an accomplice to a gang that robbed Rs. 195, 600 from a fuel station. Din was said to be recognized by the fuel station owner who had also approached him asking for money (for settlement) and threatened to take him to the courts otherwise. When an agreement was not reached, the fuel station owner filed an FIR against Din Mohammad.

Much worried Mr. Din requested CWP-LAO for his legal representation and assistance. **Advocate Majid Ali** filed his Vakalatnama before the honorable court on March 27, 2022, along with a bail application that was also granted. As the proceedings began and progressed, Din Mohammad did not plead guilty. While after examining the available evidence, the court declared Din Mohammad innocent on April 29, 2022.



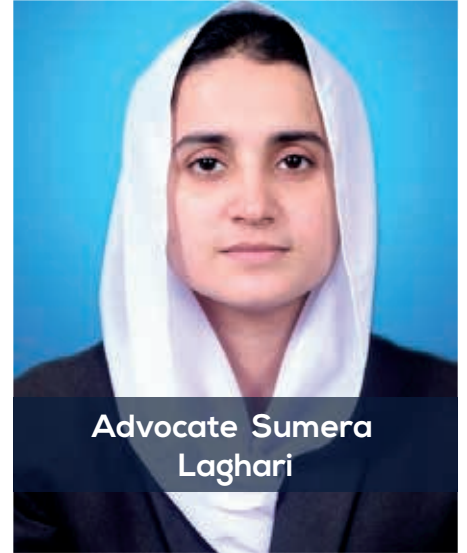
**Advocate Majid Ali**

# Justice SUCCESS **STORIES**

## Taking speedy measures to attain justice

**H**aneef, a laborer, was implicated in a motorcycle theft case and was imprisoned in District Prison Dadu. Having nowhere to go Haneef reached out to CWP for legal representation. Following to which **Advocate Sumera Laghari** (Lawyer, CWP-LAO) took the case and filled Haneef's Vakalatnama on January 13, 2022.

The case witnessed an extensive twelve hearings, But striving to get justice for an innocent being, Advocate Sumera maintained a firm grip over cross-examination. In the later stages of the case and its hearings, the complainant failed to recognize Haneef - which emerged as a major contradiction with the FIR. As a result of such continuous efforts and struggles, Haneef was acquitted of all charges on April 5, 2022 (within 4 months).



## Helping a father to avert a 14 years sentence in prison, and get

**G**hulam Raza, the father of four, and resident of Shaheed Benazirabad, worked as daily wage labor to provide bread for his family. Ghulam was arrested in a false case for possession of illegal weapons. At that time Ghulam only earned ten thousand rupees. Much troubled, and not able to afford a lawyer Ghulam reached out to a CWP-LAO for legal assistance, where the responsibility for his case was handed over to **Advocate Noman Maqbool**.

After investigating his case, Ghulam's Vakalatnama was filed on September 28, 2021. After several proceedings, Ghulam Raza was acquitted on May 7, 2022, in light of the weak evidence produced before the court. Ghulam could have faced up to fourteen years of imprisonment based on false charges. But through CWP-LAO's assistance, Ghulam was acquitted of all charges in 7 months and 10 days. Today Ghulam is reunited with his family; is living his routine life with his children.



## Court Kahani:

Shumaila visits the City Court in Karachi, along with her kids at each hearing to catch a glimpse of her husband. She says this is the only way for her kids to see their father. Her youngest son was three months old when her husband was imprisoned for a robbery case; he is now a year old. The one-year-old reached out for his father's hand – weighed down by heavy chains. This reunion was overwhelming, as the father tried to get in as many hugs as he could, while he also engaged with his wife and lawyer.

Shumaila constantly gazes at the courtroom door, yearning; she isn't allowed inside because of the kids. She is accompanied by her daughter – who is rather shy to talk, while the rest of her children wait in the courtyard. Secured in a plastic bag, she carries a copy of all the documents that may be needed. Tears in her eyes, she says she does not wish to be experienced even by the worst of her enemies.

The legal system in Pakistan is known for its delays and inefficient management of case proceedings.

The situation takes a dire turn when one accounts for the fact that under trial prisoners often have to languish in prisons for years before their cases are heard and decided. All of this adds up to overpopulated prisons, a huge backlog in the criminal and civil justice system, and therefore a lack of faith in the justice delivery mechanisms.

Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners, through its legal aid services to juveniles, female and adult male prisoners, seeks to overcome the barriers faced by individuals who come in contact with the justice system. The dedicated team of lawyers visits their assigned prisoners at least twice a week to interview under-trial prisoners who do not have legal representation. If the prisoner meets the criteria set by the Committee, their Vakalatnama is filed before the concerned court. Throughout the court proceedings, the lawyer guides the procedures and law to the client and their family – in an attempt to develop a better and informed understanding of the justice system.

Shumaila and her family's struggles for justice is only one of the thousand stories that one can witness in courts every day. Cases lingered on through generations, this journey is made even tedious by factors such as little to no knowledge of the justice system, financial constraints, failure to produce witnesses in court, vacant judge positions and frequent adjournments prolong most cases. Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners through its legal aid and representation services strives to improve access to justice for families like Shumaila's and alleviate the existing backlogs in the justice system.



**GET IN TOUCH!**

