



**COMMITTEE  
FOR THE  
WELFARE OF  
PRISONERS**



# NEWSLETTER

April - June 2024  
19<sup>th</sup> Edition

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



**964**

Vakalatnamas filed in  
the courts



**430**

Bail applications  
granted



**427**

Cases disposed off  
through court orders



**289/40**

Acquittals (On merit  
& 265-K & 249-A  
CrPC)

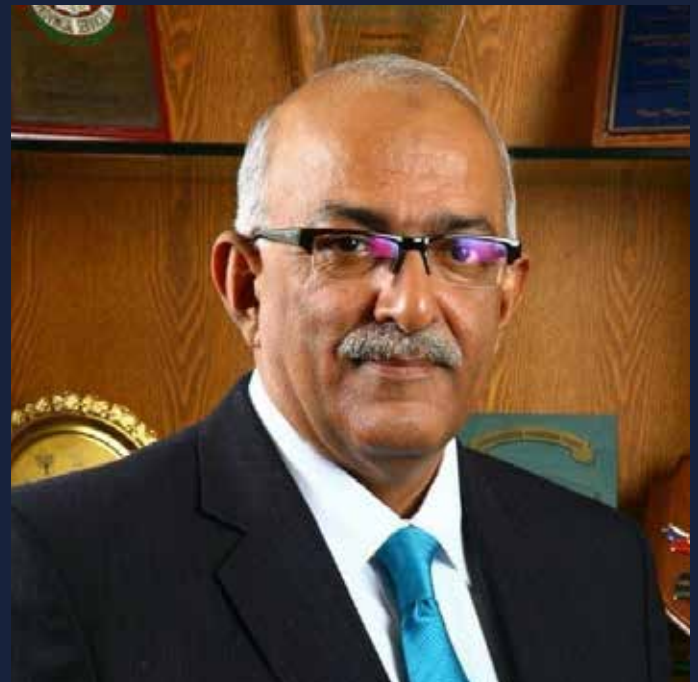
## Message from Chairperson Mr. Muhammad Siddique Memon

**A**lhamdulillah, I feel humbled and honored to be assigned the responsibility as the Chairperson of the Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners. I am thankful to the Chief Minister Sindh for placing his trust in me, for discharging responsibilities as the Chairperson.

It's a great honor to continue the great legacy and remarkable work initiated by my predecessor Justice (Rtd) Nasir Aslam Zahid Sahib. As a then junior Government functionary, I was a witness in the Court of Chief Justice, to his benevolence and care for the underprivileged applicants who couldn't hire advocates to represent themselves. The benchmark of public service set by my honorable predecessor is way too high. Under his remarkable leadership, the Committee has represented over 29,000 under-trial prisoners which constitute 78% of the prison population in Sindh Province.

Being a humble son of this land of Sufi', may Allah give me vision and determination, along with my colleagues and associates to assist those in need of legal assistance and protection of their rights. I bring 40 years of public service in various positions like Chief Secretary Sindh, Federal Secretary, and Chairman of various public sector corporations as well as magistracy.

I am committed to further the cause of the Committee to the best of my ability. I must place on record my appreciation for the very supportive role of the Home Department Government of Sindh and the Office of Inspector General of Prisons Sindh. Moving forward, our mission remains clear, to ensure that each single under-trial prisoner has access to justice and we will be working for a reform-oriented, equitable, and humane prison system in Sindh. May Allah Be my Hami O Nasir.



**Mr. Muhammad Siddique Memon**  
**Chairperson**

## The Heart of Our Mission: A Reminder Through Stories of Hope

As we reflect on our achievements this quarter, it's essential to remember the purpose behind our efforts. Our quarterly wins, such as the total vakalatnamas filed, acquittals, and bail applications, are more than just statistics—they are lifelines for those in desperate need of justice and hope. Two poignant stories illustrate why we do what we do.

Before the pandemic, Nabila was a hardworking factory worker, providing for her family of five. Her husband, a former rickshaw driver, lost his vision due to old age, making Nabila the sole breadwinner. When COVID-19 hit, the factory closed, and Nabila lost her job, plunging her family into extreme poverty. Desperation led her son, Asim, to make choices that landed him in prison.

Despite the overwhelming despair, Nabila's unwavering love for her son kept her determined. Through the Committee, she found a lawyer who guided her through every step of the legal process. This lawyer provided not only legal support but also mentorship for Asim, helping him envision a future beyond crime. Today, Asim is earning an honest living and has vowed never to return to his old ways.

Another story that inspires our work is that of Amna Bibi, a symbol of enduring hope and strength. With eight children, her son Fayyaz, a certified nurse, fell into drug addiction due to bad company. To fund his addiction, Fayyaz turned to crime and was eventually arrested. Despite her own health issues, Amna never missed a court hearing, standing by her son when others abandoned him.

With limited financial resources, Amna couldn't afford drug treatment for Fayyaz. However, with the Committee's support, Fayyaz received detailed updates on his case and a promise of continued assistance. This dedication provided Amna Bibi and Fayyaz with hope and the means to fight for a better future.

These stories remind us of the profound impact our work can have. We are not just fighting for justice; we are providing a path to redemption. We are giving families hope, transforming lives, and building a more compassionate society. This is why we do what we do—to see people like Nabila and Amna Bibi find light in the darkest of times and to inspire others with the possibility of a better tomorrow.

As we celebrate our quarterly wins, including the total vakalatnamas filed, acquittals, and bail applications, let us remember that behind each number is a story of hope and transformation.

## Presenting progress to the Additional Chief Secretary Mr. Muhammad Iqbal Memon

Grateful for the opportunity to present our progress and fund utilization to Additional Chief Secretary Mr. Muhammad Iqbal Memon in Home Department, Government of Sindh. Thank you for your guidance and support!



## Team Meet & Greet With Chairperson, Mr. Muhammed Siddique Memon

With the appointment of Mr. Siddique Memon as the new Chairperson, we had a team meet-and-greet to welcome him. At our Karachi Head Office, Mr. Memon met the entire team, and we look forward to the positive changes his tenure will bring.



## Commissioner Sukkur Commends Legal Aid Efforts During Youthful Offenders Industrial School and Women's Prison Visit

Commissioner Sukkur Mr. Fayaz Hussain Abbasi, along with Deputy Commissioner Dr. Raja MB Dharejo and Assistant Commissioner Miss Sobia Falak Rao, visited the Youthful Offenders Industrial School (YOIS) and Women's Prison Sukkur with the Committee's team. They inspected the facilities, including barracks, classrooms, and vocational training programs, and praised the Committee's team for their dedication to providing legal assistance and free legal aid to inmates.



## Spreading Joy: A Heartwarming Eid Celebration for Children Behind Bars



We're immensely grateful to our pro bono partner, Mr. Hasan Mandviwala, and CEO of Biscoffi, Mr. Hamid Ismail, for joining hands with us to bring smiles to the faces of children behind bars at the Women's Prison and YOIS Karachi. Our distribution included not just toys, but also everyone's favorite treat - Cocomo! This heartwarming collaboration reminds us of the power of empathy and the importance of reaching out to those often neglected by society. Every individual, regardless of their circumstances, deserves to feel the warmth of Eid and be treated with dignity and equality. We hope we continue to spread love and compassion to all corners, embracing the true spirit of humanity



## Group Art Therapy Session in the Women's Prison Karachi

The impact of imprisonment on mental health is profound, particularly among women inmates in Pakistan. Despite constituting only 1.5% of the prison population in Sindh, women prisoners face a disproportionate burden of mental health challenges and socio-economic struggles, exacerbated by inadequate healthcare and a lack of structured mental health support within the prison system.

With the support of a small-scale research grant from Interactive Research and Development (IRD) Pakistan, the Committee embarked on a transformative journey to pioneer a unique approach to mental health improvement—group art therapy. This innovative method aims to provide women prisoners with a platform to express and manage complex emotions, such as anger and depression.

The study seeks to assess the efficacy of group art therapy in reducing depressive symptoms, enhancing mental well-being, and improving the overall quality of life for women prisoners. In the first phase of our study, the Committee screened all 153 women prisoners in the Women's Prison Karachi for mental health needs. The comprehensive pre-screening process involved 113 willing participants, with 83 women identified as exhibiting symptoms of depression. A total of 13 women consented to partake in group art therapy sessions supervised by a psychologist conducted fortnightly.



Since the commencement of the first group art therapy session on December 11, 2023, we have conducted 16 group art therapy sessions with a dedicated group of 13 consenting women prisoners. These sessions have explored various themes aimed at fostering emotional and mental well-being. Some of the themes we have covered include:

- Exploring Happiness Through Art: Helping participants visualize and create representations of what happiness means to them.
- Exploring Emotions: Encouraging the expression of a wide range of emotions through different artistic mediums.
- Mandala and Breathing Exercises: Combining art with mindfulness practices to promote relaxation and stress relief.
- Painting: Providing a creative outlet for self-expression and emotional release.
- Showing Gratitude: Fostering a sense of community and positive interpersonal connections by expressing gratitude towards one another.

The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive. Many women have reported a noticeable improvement in their mood. The sessions have not only provided a creative outlet but also a supportive environment where participants feel heard and valued.

As we continue with these sessions, our goal remains to further reduce depressive symptoms, enhance mental well-being, and improve the overall quality of life for the women prisoners involved. The transformative power of art therapy is becoming increasingly evident, and we are committed to sustaining and expanding this initiative to reach more women in need.

## Eid Basket distribution

**W**e expressed our heartfelt appreciation to our dedicated prison department stakeholders by presenting them with Eid baskets. This gesture was a token of our gratitude for their tireless efforts in ensuring fair and equal treatment for all.



## Toy distribution in Women's Prison Sukkur

**O**ur mission to spread joy reached the Women's Prison Sukkur, where we distributed toys to children incarcerated with their mothers. Every toy carries a message of hope and a reminder that they are not forgotten. We hope to continue to extend our hands of compassion and make a difference wherever we can



## Eid celebrations at youthful offenders industrial School Hyderabad

Our mission to spread joy reached the Women's Prison Sukkur, where we distributed toys to children incarcerated with their mothers. Every toy carries a message of hope and a reminder that they are not forgotten. We hope to continue to extend our hands of compassion and make a difference wherever we can



## Free Legal Advisory Camps

The Committee prioritizes the provision of legal aid across prisons in Sindh, including efforts towards increasing prisoners' awareness regarding right to legal aid and ways to seek legal aid services.

Between April to June 2024, we successfully organized **20** free legal advisory camps for prisoners. The camps witnessed the active participation of **684** under-trial prisoners, including adult men, women, and juvenile prisoners who benefited from free legal advice.





# Justice SUCCESS **STORIES**

## Naseeb\*

**A** Naseeb, a 14-year-old boy from Karachi, found himself in a daunting situation when he was detained in **Remand Home Karachi** on accusations of carrying an unlicensed weapon. Despite his protests of innocence, coming from a very poor family just trying to get by, he faced a challenging legal battle without the means to hire a lawyer.

Fortunately, **Ms. Mehwish Naz**, an advocate from the Committee, stepped in to help. On February 28, 2023, she filed a vakalatnama on Naseeb's behalf to initiate legal proceedings. However, the case faced lengthy delays due to repeated absences of case witnesses, all of whom were police officials, despite multiple court notices.

Eventually, Ms. Mehwish decided to file an application for the disposal of the case, citing unnecessary delays that were wasting everyone's time. Upon review, the court identified significant flaws in the prosecution's case against Naseeb. The FIR indicated he was arrested from a different location than claimed, no evidence of the alleged weapon was presented, no eyewitnesses came forward, and the police report lacked substantial grounds for suspicion.

After a thorough examination of the facts, on May 6, 2024, the court exonerated Naseeb, declaring him innocent and freeing him from the accusations that had haunted him for 1 year, 2 months, and 9 days.

This outcome highlighted the importance of fair legal processes and competent representation, ensuring that vulnerable individuals like Naseeb are not unjustly punished due to circumstantial inaccuracies and procedural delays.



**Advocate  
Ms. Mehwish Naz**

\*pseudonym used to  
protect privacy.

# Justice SUCCESS STORIES

Sajjad\*

**Q** Sajjad, a 23-year-old from Khairpur, found himself unjustly imprisoned in **Central Prison Khairpur**, falsely accused of drug possession. He was the primary caregiver for his parents and came from a financially disadvantaged background, unable to afford a private advocate to defend him.

Desperate for legal representation, Sajjad reached out to the Committee where **Mr. Syed Ahmer Raza Shah**, took on his case. On February 10, 2024, Sajjad's vakalatnama was filed, marking the beginning of his legal battle.

As the case progressed, significant discrepancies surfaced in the prosecution's case. Witness statements contradicted each other on crucial points: the officer in charge of the patrolling police party gave conflicting accounts, witnesses disagreed on the distance from the incident to the police station, and the exact location of the police vehicle's parking was inaccurately documented.

These inconsistencies played a pivotal role in the court's decision. After reviewing all case files, including the charge sheet, evidence, the accused's statement, and final arguments from both sides, the court concluded that the prosecution had failed to substantiate their allegations against Sajjad. Consequently, on April 5, 2024, just 1 month and 27 days after proceedings began, Sajjad Ali was acquitted of all charges and set free.



**Advocate  
Syed Ahmer Raza Shah**

\*pseudonym used to  
protect privacy.

# Justice SUCCESS STORIES

## Tariq\*

**A** Tariq, a 28-year-old resident of Karachi, found himself in **District Prison Malir** facing charges of drug possession. He worked hard as a laborer, earning Rs. 25,000 a month to support his wife and young daughter. Tariq maintained his innocence, vehemently denying any involvement in the alleged drug case, which he believed was completely baseless.

Facing financial constraints, Tariq\* sought legal assistance and was represented by **Mr. Abid Ali Jatoi**, a dedicated advocate from the Committee. On December 26, 2023, **Mr. Jatoi** filed the vakalatnama, officially initiating Tariq's legal defense. The court proceedings began, and as the case unfolded, discrepancies and contradictions in the prosecution's evidence became obvious.

Critical flaws emerged during the trial: the complainant failed to provide crucial documentation regarding the police station entry on the alleged date, and despite the incident purportedly occurring in a crowded area, no independent witnesses could corroborate the events. Moreover, discrepancies between the quantity of drugs mentioned in the evidence and the FIR further weakened the prosecution's case.

In light of these inconsistencies, the court ruled in Tariq's favor, declaring him innocent on May 4, 2024. The legal process, from filing to acquittal, spanned 4 months and 9 days, ultimately ensuring that justice prevailed for Tariq. This experience underscored the importance of fair trials and competent legal representation, offering Tariq and his family a chance to rebuild their lives free from wrongful accusations.



Advocate  
Abid Ali Jatoi

\*pseudonym used to protect privacy.



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**



# Justice SUCCESS **STORIES**

## Zeeshan\*

**A** Zeeshan, a 27-year-old resident of Dadu, found himself imprisoned in **District Prison Naushahroferoz**. He was married with six dependents and worked as a laborer, earning Rs. 15,000 per month. Zeeshan claimed innocence in a drug possession case, alleging he was falsely implicated after refusing to bribe the police who stopped him.

Coming from a financially challenged background, Zeeshan struggled to make ends meet. His case was taken up by **Mr. Naveed Khan Ujjan**, an advocate with the Committee. On March 25, 2024, Mr. Ujjan filed a vakalatnama on Zeeshan's behalf, initiating legal proceedings that swiftly moved forward.

During the proceedings, significant irregularities came to light: the complainant was also the investigating officer, a breach of legal standards; crucial records, such as the entry of alleged recovered drugs into evidence, were missing; no private witnesses were available; and proper documentation of recovered items was absent.

Considering these flaws, the court recognized Zeeshan's innocence. Finally, on June 4, 2024, after just 2 months and 11 days, Zeeshan was acquitted of all charges and released from prison.

This ordeal highlighted the challenges faced by Zeeshan, his family, and others like him, underscoring the importance of fair and just legal proceedings in protecting the innocent.



## GET IN TOUCH!

