



# SINDH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION - BI ANNUAL NEWSLETTER



**JANUARY 2024  
TO  
SEPTEMBER 2024**

## MESSAGE FROM: THE CHAIRPERSON



**Dear Readers,**

As the Chairperson of the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC), it is my distinct honor to present to you our bi-annual newsletter for the period of January to June 2024. The first half of this year has been marked by significant achievements and meaningful progress. We have launched several key initiatives aimed at addressing critical human rights issues, conducted trainings, extensive

field visits, and collaborative events, and engaged with various stakeholders to advocate for policy reforms.

We have forged strong partnerships with local and international organizations, enabling us to broaden our reach and amplify our impact. The joint events and collaborative efforts have not only strengthened our network but also provided a platform for exchanging ideas and best practices. We have made significant strides in advocating for legislative changes that align with international human rights standards. The progress we have made is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our team, as well as the support and cooperation of our partners and stakeholders.

As the Chairperson, I am dedicated to fostering a dynamic and inclusive environment within our organization, one that encourages robust dialogue, collaboration, and action. My vision for the SHRC is anchored on three pillars: advocacy, education, and engagement.

By leveraging our collective expertise and networks, we will amplify marginalized voices, advocate for policy reforms, and support initiatives that seek to uphold human dignity and equality. Through webinars, seminars, and workshops, we will provide our members with opportunities to deepen their understanding of international human rights law, emerging trends, and best practices. Additionally, we will prioritize outreach to law students and young professionals, encouraging the next generation of human rights advocates. We will actively seek collaborations with partner organizations and stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.

I look forward to working with you all to realize the objectives and advance the mission of the SHRC.

Warm regards,

**Iqbal Ahmed Detho,**  
Chairperson, Sindh Human Rights  
Commission

## INTRODUCTION:

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) is dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights across the Sindh province. The SHRC's mission is to ensure the implementation of human rights standards, provide redressal mechanisms for violations, and foster an environment where every individual's dignity is respected. The SHRC envisions a society where justice, equality, and respect for human rights are the foundation of a prosperous and inclusive community.

This newsletter aims to raise awareness about the training programs conducted by the SHRC. By highlighting these initiatives, we intend to engage our audience, report on our activities, and encourage collaborative efforts to enhance human rights protections in Sindh. The training programs are crucial for equipping various stakeholders with the knowledge and skills necessary to safeguard and promote human rights effectively.

## Powers and Functions of the Commission:





# January 2024

## Key Meetings and Representations



### 1. Participation in the Ninth Treaty Implementation Cell Meeting

Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho represented the Sindh Human Rights Commission at the Ninth Treaty Implementation Cell Meeting, organized by the Human Rights Department, Government of Sindh. The meeting, held at the Sindh Assembly, focused on Pakistan's EU GSP+ status and highlighted human rights concerns aligned with EU recommendations. It was co-chaired by the Secretary of the Human Rights Department, with active participation from various government department representatives.

### 2. Meeting on Legal Discrimination Against Minorities

Superintendent Complaints (Enquiries & Suo-Motu) Adnan Ali Khaskhaly represented SHRC at a dialogue organized by Community Innovation Lab on the state of legal discrimination against minorities. He stressed the evolving nature of Pakistan's legal system, highlighting the need for social dialogue on implementing laws and policies against violent extremism.



### 3. Review of Sindh Youth Policy, 2018

Representatives from the Sindh Sports and Youth Affairs Department and the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) met at SHRC to assess the progress and challenges of the Sindh Youth Policy. Plans for 2024 include Human Rights Training for youth in Hyderabad to empower them with the knowledge and tools to contribute meaningfully to society.



#### 4. Collaboration with United States Institute of Peace (USIP)

A USIP delegation met with Mr. Detho to discuss collaborative efforts in promoting peace and advancing human rights in Sindh. The meeting highlighted SHRC's commitment to fostering a peaceful and supportive environment.



#### 5. Meeting on Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Rules, 2024

Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho convened a meeting with key stakeholders to reformulate the Sindh Child Marriages Restraint Rules, focusing on updating the roles of the Social Welfare Department and enhancing protections under the SCMRA-2013.

## Visits and Inspections

### 1. Monitoring Visit to Basic Health Unit, Khudaabad, Dadu

Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Superintendent Complaints, Mr. Sarfraz Ahmed, visited the Basic Health Unit in Khudaabad. They appreciated the efforts of the PPHI team in managing the health unit's services.



### 2. Visit to District Prison & Correctional Facility, Dadu

Mr. Detho and the Deputy Commissioner of District Dadu inspected the District Prison, noting the absence of convicted prisoners and identifying needs such as additional barracks and sanitary workers. Mr. Detho assured the oversight committee of SHRC's support in advocating for these improvements.





### 3. Visit to Darul Aman, Larkana

Chairperson Mr. Detho, accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner, visited Darul Aman, focusing on enhancing women's security, socio-psychological support, and vocational training. He emphasized proactive measures to protect and support vulnerable women and children.



### 4. Oversight Visit to Central Jail, Larkana

During a visit to Central Jail Larkana, Mr. Detho stressed the need for vocational training, improved legal access, better living conditions, and upgraded medical facilities for inmates. He highlighted the importance of socio-psycho support sessions for prisoners and refresher courses for jail staff.



### 5. Inspection of Darul Atfal, Sukkur

Mr. Detho engaged with children at Darul Atfal and reviewed the facilities, addressing the need for staff and continuous improvements. He reaffirmed SHRC's commitment to upholding the rights and well-being of children in care institutions.

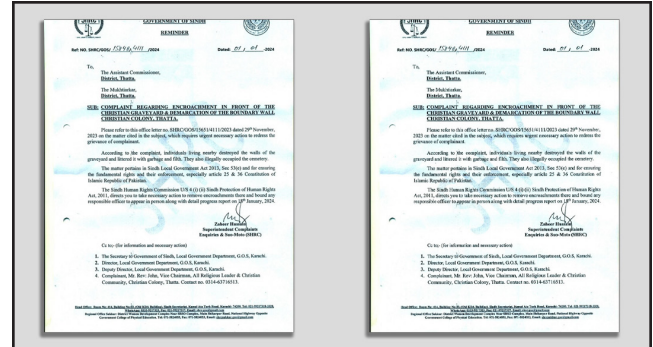




# Community Engagement and Response Initiatives

## 1. Meeting on Post-Flood Rehabilitation in District Dadu

SHRC focused on assessing ongoing flood relief efforts and emphasized the development of an emergency response plan to define roles and coordination mechanisms among government agencies and community groups.



## 3. Addressing Encroachment at Christian Graveyard, Thatta

SHRC responded to complaints about encroachment and boundary wall revisions at a Christian graveyard, taking swift action to ensure appropriate measures were taken by local authorities.

## 2. Promoting Human Rights in Larkana

Chairperson Detho led a meeting to address key issues, including child labor, domestic violence, and transgender rights. The meeting also discussed school enrollment strategies, healthcare infrastructure improvements, and disaster preparedness in Larkana.



## 4. Safeguarding Sanitation Workers

In response to recent fatalities among sanitation workers, SHRC urged authorities to enforce the Sindh Occupational Safety and Health Act, 2017, ensuring the safety of workers by mandating the use of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE).





SHRC, in collaboration with the Sindh Police Training Wing, organized a two-day training program for probationary inspectors focusing on the latest human rights laws, including laws related to women and children. Sessions were led by experts, including Chairperson Detho and senior faculty from the Sindh Judicial Academy.





# Human Rights Advocacy and Legal Interventions



## 1. Intervention to Prevent Forced Child Marriage

SHRC acted swiftly to prevent the forced marriage of a 16-year-old girl, ensuring compliance with the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013. The intervention highlighted the need for awareness and adherence to laws protecting minors.

## 2. Protection of Human Rights Defenders

SHRC addressed complaints of harassment against human rights defenders, emphasizing the importance of protecting their right to peaceful assembly. Representatives from relevant districts and HRCP were present to discuss the issue and develop protective measures.



## 3. Collaboration with Roshni Helpline on Missing Children

SHRC met with Roshni Helpline to discuss collaboration on addressing issues related to missing children. The meeting included discussions on legislative aspects and strategies for improving the response to such cases.



# February 2024

## Key Conferences and Collaborations



### 1. International Conference on Combating Human Trafficking and Bonded Labor

SHRC participated in the International Conference organized by SSDO Pakistan on combating human trafficking and bonded labor of women and girls. The event saw participation from parliamentarians, law enforcement agencies, government departments, National & Provincial Human Rights Commissions, academia, and civil society. Key discussions focused on amplifying women's voices, citizen involvement, and strengthening the legal framework on Trafficking in Persons (TIP) in Pakistan.

### 2. Consultative Meeting at SHRC Karachi Office

SHRC hosted a follow-up consultative meeting with stakeholders from the Sindh Healthcare Commission, Sindh HIV-AIDS Commission, Sindh Mental Health Authority, and National Commission for Human Rights Pakistan (NCHR). Led by Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Dr. Khalid Hussain Shaikh, the meeting focused on integrating health components into fundamental rights and outlined collaborative initiatives between SHRC, SHCC, and NCHR.



### 3. Launch of Pakistan Labour Academy (PLA)

SHRC, in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Pakistan, and the Labour & Human Resource Department, inaugurated the Pakistan Labour Academy (PLA). This flagship project aims to enhance the capacities of trade unions and workers' organizations through a comprehensive training program at NILAT Karachi.



#### 4. Meeting with SZABIST Karachi

Chairperson Mr. Detho met with Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali, President of SZABIST Karachi, to discuss potential collaborations. The meeting explored the possibility of conducting awareness sessions with SZABIST students specializing in Law, Social Sciences, and Business, reflecting a shared commitment to advancing human rights education.



#### 5. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Labour & Human Resources Department

SHRC signed an MOU with the Labour & Human Resources Department, Government of Sindh, and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) Pakistan, focusing on the Pakistan Labour Academy 2024. The collaboration aims to enhance government infrastructure for labor training programs, fostering a commitment to workers' rights, industrial relations, and social justice.

## Trainings & Capacity Building

### 1. Training on Generalized System of Preferences Plus (GSP+)

Chairperson Detho conducted a training session at NILAT Karachi on GSP+ covenants, with an emphasis on labor, minority, and women's rights. Participants, including daily wage workers, management personnel, government officials, and civil society members, engaged in discussions on compliance and advocacy for human rights.



### 2. Lecture on Anti-Rape Act to Medico-Legal Officers

Mr. Detho delivered a lecture at the Sindh Judicial Academy during a training session on gender-based violence, organized by UNODC Pakistan. The training aimed to empower professionals in conducting effective investigations, medico-legal examinations, and handling forensic evidence in GBV cases.





### 3. Training on Human Rights Frameworks for Legal Stakeholders

Chairperson Detho shared his expertise on international commitments and constitutional rights impacting religious minorities during a training organized by the Legal Aid Society and AAN Consulting at the Sindh Judicial Academy. The session aimed to build capacity among civil and legal system stakeholders.



### 4. Child, Early, and Forced Marriage Project Launch

At the launch event for the project "Supporting Civil Society to Prevent and Respond to Child, Early and Forced Marriage," Mr. Detho emphasized the importance of legislative reforms, including the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act 2013. He highlighted the need for grassroots engagement, informed action, and comprehensive measures to protect children's rights.

## Empowerment and Advocacy for Women Workers

### 1. Empowerment of Women Agriculture Workers in Sindh

SHRC, alongside Awaz Foundation Pakistan, NARI Foundation, and Forum Asia, hosted a meeting for the Provincial Stakeholders Alliance to advocate for the rights of women agricultural workers. The meeting aimed to create an enabling environment for women in the agriculture sector, addressing issues like harassment and ensuring equal rights.



### 2. Steps for Equality for Women Farm Workers

At a Provincial Stakeholders Alliance event, SHRC and other local organizations highlighted the challenges faced by rural women in Pakistan's agriculture sector, such as lower wages, malnutrition, and exploitation. The alliance stressed the need for effective implementation of laws to empower women farm workers.





# Legal Interventions and Public Engagements

## 1. Addressing Workplace Harassment Laws

Chairperson Detho provided insights on the legal framework addressing workplace harassment, emphasizing Section 509 of the Pakistan Penal Code. He also discussed the Sindh Domestic Violence Act 2013 and called for the establishment of Protection Committees and the appointment of Women Protection Officers.



## 2. Promoting Inclusivity in Public Spaces

SHRC took decisive action to address complaints regarding the lack of female toilets in parks, bus stops, and markets. A letter was issued to the Regional Director of Local Government, Mirpurkhas, resulting in directives to the Municipal Commissioner to address this issue and create more inclusive public spaces for women.



# March 2024

## Key Conferences and Interactive Sessions



### Interactive Session on Combatting Trafficking in Persons and Bonded Labor

On March 1st and 2nd, SSDO Pakistan, in collaboration with SHRC, organized an interactive session of the Stakeholders Working Group of Sindh with US experts on combatting trafficking in persons and bonded labor of women and girls in Sindh. Attended by parliamentarians, law enforcement agencies, and representatives from various sectors, the session focused on amplifying women's voices, citizen involvement, and strengthening the legal framework. Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho emphasized the importance of implementing existing laws like the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act and the Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, along with increasing sensitization efforts within government departments, especially among law enforcement.

## Collaborations and Strategic Meetings

### 1. Visit from Community World Service Asia and Pakistan Legal United Society (PLUS)

On March 5th, SHRC hosted Mr. Joseph Masih, Senior Technical Advisor at Community World Service Asia, and Mr. Altaf Khoso, Chairman of Pakistan Legal United Society. The meeting with Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Member Judicial-II, Mr. M. Aslam Sheikh, focused on exploring collaborations for empowering minorities, protecting child rights, and providing essential legal aid.







## 2. United States Institute of Peace Visit

On March 11th, Mr. Imran Khan, Country Director, and Mr. Rana Hamza Ijaz, Program Manager, from the United States Institute of Peace, visited SHRC. Chairperson Detho provided an overview of SHRC's work, discussing potential future collaborations to address shared human rights concerns.



## 3. Meeting with SAFWCO and Sindh Agricultural University Representatives

On March 15th, Mr. M. Suleman Ali Abro, Chief Executive of SAFWCO, and Dr. Muhammad Ismail Kumbhar from Sindh Agricultural University, Tando Jam, visited SHRC. They discussed various human rights issues, focusing on SAFWCO's initiatives in organizing rural and urban communities for sustainable development. Chairperson Detho shared his recent visit to the Sindh Agricultural University and highlighted SHRC's ongoing initiatives.

# Public Engagement and Community

## 1. Reaching Out to Marginalized Communities in Karachi

On March 7th, Superintendent Complaints Mr. Adnan Ali Khaskhaly represented SHRC at a public assembly held by the Hindu Marwari Community in Lyari, Karachi. The event allowed community members to voice their human rights concerns directly to government officials, emphasizing the need for redress and support.



## 2. Public Hearing on Human and Labor Rights in Ghotki

On March 7th, SHRC, in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Pakistan, organized a public hearing at the Deputy Commissioner's office in Ghotki. The hearing addressed issues such as environmental degradation, inadequate minimum wages, and water contamination by factories. Chairperson Detho highlighted the lack of female representation in labor unions and emphasized the need for better implementation of policies and agreements.





# Site Visits and Inspections



## 1. Inspection of Judicial Lockup in Malir Court

On March 8th, SHRC Judicial Member Justice (Retd) Arshad Noor Khan and his team visited the Malir Court judicial lockup to assess conditions for inmates and staff. They focused on the lack of clean drinking water and inadequate heat stroke prevention measures, discussing these issues with District and Session Judge Mr. Abdul Razaq.



## 3. Inspection of Police Stations in Larkana

On March 10th, Mr. Detho, along with his team and SSP Larkana Syed Abdul Rahim, inspected Shaheed Abdul Malik Bhutto Police Station and the Women Police Station in Larkana. The visit highlighted the commitment to improving conditions within law enforcement agencies, including the need for building improvements at the Women Police Station.



## 5. Visit to Darul Atfaal, Hyderabad

On the same day, SHRC, along with the DC and Commissioner of Hyderabad, visited Darul Atfaal, which houses 20 children but has a capacity of 35. They highlighted the need for increased support and raised concerns about the lack of emergency exits. Chairperson Detho emphasized the importance of the Child Protection Unit operating separately for better child safeguarding.



## 2. Visits to Educational Institutions in Shikarpur

On March 10th, Chairperson Detho visited Government Boys Degree College and Government Girls School in Madeji, District Shikarpur. The visits aimed to evaluate the educational environment and identify areas for improvement in facilities and conditions for students.



## 4. Inspection Visit to Women Police Station in Hyderabad

On March 19th, SHRC Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed led an inspection of the Women Police Station in Hyderabad, joined by SSP Mr. Amjad Sheikh and SHO Ms. Azra Mujtaba. He emphasized the need for training women police officers in family law issues and discussed plans for providing legal aid to ensure access to justice for all.



## 6. Visit to Dar-ul-Aman, Hyderabad

On March 19th, SHRC visited Dar-ul-Aman in Hyderabad with Commissioner Syed Khalid Hyder and DC Mr. Tariq Qureshi. They noted the lack of a permanent vocational trainer and emphasized the need to reactivate the dormant Management Committee, inactive since 2014, to better support women facing domestic violence.



## 7. Comprehensive Visit to Central Jail, Hyderabad

On March 20th, SHRC, led by Chairperson Mr. Detho and DC Mr. Tariq Qureshi, inspected Central Jail Hyderabad as part of its mandate under Article 4(iv) of SPHRA 2023. The facilities, including classrooms and the kitchen, were in commendable condition. Discussions centered on providing legal aid to undertrial prisoners, the District Legal Empowerment Committee's functions, and issues related to Arsh, Diyat, and Daman. SHRC is also exploring using funds from the Committee for the Welfare of Prisoners to meet legal aid needs.



## 8. Visit to Cowasjee Jehangir Institute of Psychiatry

On March 21st, Mr. Detho and his team visited the Cowasjee Jehangir Institute of Psychiatry, interacting with patients across various units, including the OPD, narcotic ward, and forensic ward for UTPs. Mr. Detho emphasized the need for improved support services for patients, including collaboration with NADRA to identify and locate family members. The visit also highlighted the importance of establishing an old age home within the institute to cater to senior citizens needing specialized care.

# Events and Awareness Initiatives



## Celebration of International Women's Day

On March 8th, SHRC, in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Pakistan, and the Ministry of Labour & Human Resource, hosted an event at NILAT Karachi to celebrate International Women's Day. The event focused on the rights of women workers, highlighting labor and human rights due diligence under EU and German Supply Chain Laws.

# Human Rights Advocacy and Community

## 1. Response to Complaint from KhawajaSira Community

On March 25th, SHRC addressed a complaint from Khawaja Sira Bindya Rana about police assault near Teen Talwar. Chairperson Detho met with the SSP South District and reiterated concerns to the IG Sindh Police about harassment of Khawaja Sira/Transgender individuals. Despite NADRA's notifications, barriers to obtaining CNIC cards remain, leading SHRC to contact the NADRA Regional Head in Karachi for a resolution.

## 2. Meeting with Global Rights Compliance and PILER

On March 28th, Ms. Lara Strangways from Global Rights Compliance and Mr. Karamat Ali from The Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research visited SHRC's Karachi office. Chairperson Detho discussed SHRC's labor rights initiatives, including the Pakistan Labour Academy and SOHRIS.com. The meeting highlighted the need for comprehensive employer training on labor laws to protect workers' rights.

## 3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Provincial Stakeholders Alliance (PSA) for Women Agricultural Workers

On March 28th, SHRC, along with the NARI Foundation and AWAZ, held the second meeting of the Provincial Stakeholders Alliance for the Empowerment of Women Agricultural Workers. The focus was on implementing "The Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act 2019" and developing strategies to empower women in agriculture through targeted advocacy and partnerships.



April  
2024

## Suo-Moto Notices and Advocacy

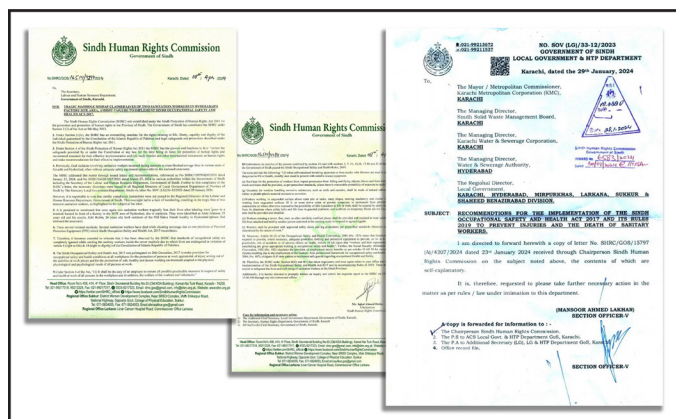


### 1. Suo-Moto Notice on Sanitation Workers' Deaths

On April 9th, SHRC took suo-moto notice of the deaths of two sanitation workers in Hyderabad. Chairperson Detho called for an investigation by the Secretary of the Labour and Human Resource Department. SHRC stressed the implementation of the Sindh Occupational Safety and Health Act-2017 and reiterated previous recommendations to enforce safety regulations in correspondence with local government authorities.

### 2. Suo-Moto Notice on Sindh Textbook Board's Failure to Provide Free Textbooks

On April 4th, Chairperson Detho issued a suo-moto notice concerning the Sindh Textbook Board's failure to provide free textbooks to many schools across the province. He accused the board of deliberately neglecting to fulfill its mandate under Article 25(A) of the Constitution and the Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013. SHRC dismissed the board's excuses and urged the Chief Secretary of Sindh to ensure compliance and accountability.



### 3. Suo-Moto Notice on Sanitation Workers' Deaths

On April 9th, SHRC took suo-moto notice of the deaths of two sanitation workers in Hyderabad and requested an investigation by the Secretary of the Labour and Human Resource Department. Chairperson Detho emphasized the need for strict implementation of the Sindh Occupational Safety and Health Act-2017 and the associated rules laid down in 2019, reiterating recommendations previously communicated to local government authorities in January 2024.



# Collaborations and Strategic Meetings

## 1. Meeting with Sindh Women Lawyers Alliance

Chairperson Iqbal Detho met with Shazia Nizamani, Chairperson of the Sindh Women Lawyers Alliance, to discuss developing institutional linkages between government departments and civil society organizations working on child, women, and human rights issues. The meeting focused on tapping into various legal aid mechanisms within government departments to provide legal assistance to those in need.



## 4. Call for Increased Funding for Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Institute of Psychiatry

Following SHRC's inspection on March 20th, Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho urged the provincial health secretary to increase budgetary allocations for the Sir Cowasjee Jehangir Institute of Psychiatry. The call for additional funding aims to address critical deficiencies and improve mental health services at the facility. SHRC stressed the need for prioritizing resource allocation and expediting the recruitment process to enhance the institute's capacity to serve the community.

## 2. Meeting with UNDP on Human Rights Initiatives

SHRC briefed Mr. Malik Zulifqar Ahmed, UNDP Senior National Technical Advisor, on the commission's work, particularly in business and human rights. Chairperson Detho introduced SOHRIS.com, a resource hub designed to enhance human rights knowledge in Sindh, and discussed SHRC's interventions for promoting and protecting human rights.





### 3. Meeting with National Lobbying Delegation on Education and Health

SHRC hosted the National Lobbying Delegation on Education and Health. Chairperson Detho, along with Mr. Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani, Board Member for Minority of SHRC, engaged in discussions focusing on economic, social, and cultural rights of minorities. The meeting addressed issues such as discriminatory practices, the Sindh Minority Commission Bill, and the need for legislation on graveyards in Sindh. Mr. Hemnani highlighted SHRC's proactive efforts, including conducting Open Kacharies with Christian and Hindu communities, to address grievances and promote minority rights.



### 4. Joint Meeting with National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC)

Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Barrister Rida Tahir of the Sindh Human Rights Commission met with NCRC Members Mr. Pirbhu Lal and Ms. Mehak. The meeting underscored the shared commitment of both institutions to safeguard child rights and promote the well-being of children. Discussions focused on establishing a formal referral mechanism to prioritize the best interests of the child and addressing concerns of violence against children in Tharparker. SHRC also extended Sindh's 'Human Rights Policy' to NCRC, highlighting its comprehensive approach to upholding child rights.





## 5. Meeting with UNFPA on Women's Health and Rights

Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Barrister Rida Tahir convened a meeting with Ms. Renuka from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The discussion centered on key issues including Family Planning 2030 (FP2030), child marriage, and the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence against women. Both parties emphasized the priority of these issues and the need for collaborative initiatives to address them effectively.



## 6. Meeting on Sindh Hindus Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2018

On April 18th, a meeting was chaired by Ms. Anjum Iqbal Jumani, Secretary of the Minority Affairs Department, Government of Sindh, and co-chaired by Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Chairperson of SHRC. The session focused on the implementation of the Sindh Hindus Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2018. Key topics included raising awareness among UC staff, establishing proper record-keeping mechanisms, resolving disputes regarding Panchayatnama, and standardizing fee structures. Representatives from various key departments, including the Local Government Department, NADRA, and Minorities Affairs Sindh, contributed to the discussions, reflecting a collective effort to address the Act's implementation challenges.



## 7. Meeting on Sindh Youth Policy 2018

On April 17th, Chairperson SHRC, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, met with Mr. Jalaluddin Mahar, Secretary of the Sports and Youth Department, Government of Sindh, and Mr. Noor Bajeeer from CSSP, a CSO working on youth rights. Discussions focused on advancing youth development through the implementation of the Sindh Youth Policy 2018, covering social, political, and economic dimensions. The meeting highlighted the importance of linking youth with technical and vocational education through STEVTA and other skill development organizations, ensuring that youth are equipped with necessary skills and opportunities.

# Milestones and Achievements



## Establishment of Darul Aman in Jacobabad

On April 5th, SHRC celebrated the handover of a new building to the Women Development Department for the establishment of a functioning Darul Aman in Jacobabad. Chairperson Detho pledged ongoing support for staffing and security, advocating for immediate deployment of police constables and infrastructure improvements to ensure a safe environment for residents.



# May 2024

## Events and Public Engagements



### 1. Labour Day - Backing our Workers' Rights

On May 1st, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Chairperson of the Sindh Human Rights Commission, served as the Chief Guest at the Labour Day event organized by the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER). In his speech, he highlighted SHRC's efforts with the Sindh Labour Department to implement the minimum wage of PKR 32,000 for laborers. He emphasized the importance of legal assistance in the labor judiciary and discussed future training sessions at NILAT for emerging trade unions. Additionally, Mr. Detho shared SHRC's plans to hold public hearings for employees across Sindh, underscoring the significance of social security, EOBI, and social protection.

### 2. Panel Discussion on International Labour Standards

On May 9th, SHRC partnered with the Sindh Labour Department and SZABIST, Karachi, to host a panel discussion titled "Adherence to International Labour Standards in Sindh" at SZABIST University. This event gathered representatives from trade unions, civil society, and human rights organizations to discuss Sindh's compliance with international labor standards. SHRC launched its briefing paper, "Pakistan's GSP+ Obligations: Navigating the Human and Labour Rights Compliance in Sindh," as part of its continued commitment to informed dialogue on labor rights.



### 3. National Labour Conference 2024

On May 11th, Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho shared the stage with Governor of Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at the 3rd National Labour Conference, organized by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Pakistan. Discussions at the conference centered on Pakistan's GSP+ obligations and the complexities of labor rights compliance, with a particular focus on Sindh. This conference provided a platform for stakeholders to address pressing issues and strategize on labor rights protection and promotion.



# Consultative and Collaborative Meetings



## 1. Consultative Session on Pakistan's 4th Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho participated in a consultative session organized by the Ministry of Human Rights and the Treaty Implementation Cell of the Human Rights Department, Government of Sindh, on May 2nd. The session focused on developing indicators for the recommendations from Pakistan's 4th UPR submitted in 2022. Topics included the UPR reporting cycle, international best practices, and the significance of reporting for Pakistan.



## 2. Meeting with UNICEF Pakistan Delegation on Child Rights

SHRC, represented by Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho and Team, met with the UNICEF Pakistan delegation, including Ms. Veronica Kamanga Njikhoo, Regional Gender Advisor, Ms. Fahmida Iqbal, Gender and Development Specialist, Ms. Mehwish Maria, Child Protection Officer, and Mr. Asif Abrar, Education Specialist. The meeting covered topics on child rights, including the Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act 2013, the Sindh Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Act 2018, and the Sindh Child Protection Authority 2011. Mr. Abrar emphasized the importance of youth involvement in school parliaments for promoting education rights.

## 3. Meeting with Labour and Human Resources Department

On May 24th, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Mr. Rafique Ahmed, Labour Consultant (SHRC), and Barrister Rida Tahir, Legal Consultant (SHRC), met with Mr. Hafeezullah Abassi, Secretary of the Labour and Human Resources Department, to discuss upcoming initiatives outlined in the MOU with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Pakistan. Mr. Detho emphasized the success of CSR and Labour Union public hearings in Ghotki, with plans to expand to Dadu, Sanghar, Badin, and Tharparkar. The focus of this partnership is labor education, workers' rights, and social justice in Sindh.



## 4. Collaboration with Musawi on Human Rights Reforms

On May 30th, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Chairperson of SHRC, visited the Musawi office in Lahore to discuss potential collaboration with Musawi's CEO, Fatima Yasmin Bokhari. The meeting culminated in the signing of an MOU between SHRC and Musawi to strengthen rule of law and human rights reforms in Sindh.





## 5. MOU with Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO)

SHRC signed a Memorandum of Understanding with SSDO Pakistan on May 13th to jointly combat human trafficking, bonded labor, and other human rights issues in Sindh. Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho and SSDO Executive Director Syed Kausar Abbas signed the MOU, focusing on capacity building, advocacy, research, and policy-making to promote human rights across the province.



## Awareness Sessions on the Sindh Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2018

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) conducted a series of training sessions for local government officials in Umerkot, and Mithi, Tharparkar, aimed at promoting community awareness and understanding of the Sindh Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2018. These sessions were part of SHRC's ongoing efforts to protect civil rights for the Hindu community in Sindh.

### Highlights of the Sessions:



# Advocacy for Minority Rights

## 1. Meetings on the Sindh Hindu Marriages (Amendment) Act, 2018

In collaboration with the Legal Aid Society Sukkur Division, SHRC held district-wise meetings across Sindh to address challenges in implementing the Sindh Hindu Marriages (Amendment) Act 2018. On May 9th, Board Member Mr. Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani chaired a meeting in Ghotki with district officials and representatives from the Hindu and Sikh communities. The next day, on May 10th, Mr. Hemnani led a similar session in Khairpur, hosted by Deputy Commissioner Syed Ahmed Fawad and attended by SSP Khairpur. Mr. Hemnani emphasized the importance of the right to family as a fundamental right and the role of the amended Act in protecting this right.



- On May 16th in Umerkot, SHRC collaborated with the Local Government Department and Minority Affairs Department to host an awareness session. Key speakers included SHRC Member for Minority Rights Mr. Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani, Director of Local Government Mr. Abdul Nasir Siddiqui, and National Lobbying Delegation (NLD) representatives Ms. Pushpa Kumari and Mr. Jai Parkash. The speakers underscored the significance of marriage registration, noting that 25 pandits had successfully registered with the local government, a milestone reflecting growing community engagement.
- On May 17th in Mithi, Tharparkar, SHRC held an additional training session led by Board Member Mr. Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani. This session aimed to empower local government officials in implementing the Act. Key participants included Kamla Bai, Vice Chairperson Tharparkar; Musharaf Ali Shah, District Officer, District Council Tharparkar; Waqas Durrani, DSP City Mithi; and Asif Ali Khaskhaly, Additional Deputy Commissioner-I, Tharparkar. The training highlighted collaborative efforts to uphold civil rights protections under the Act.

## 2. Call for Empowering Local Governments on Sindh Hindu Marriage Act Implementation

On May 18th, SHRC renewed its call for empowering Local Governments to implement the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act, 2018, fully. Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho has actively advocated for these measures, emphasizing the need for comprehensive marriage registration and civil rights protections for the Hindu community.



## 3. Engagement with the National Lobbying Delegation on Minority Rights

Chairperson Mr. Detho and SHRC team met with the National Lobbying Delegation to discuss minority rights. Delegates included Adv. Muhammad Bux Kumbhar, Deebea Parwaiz, Erum Jawed, Khalid Ishaque, and Muhammad Eidal. The conversation focused on enhancing minority protections under the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act and addressing gaps in existing legislation, such as the Domestic Violence Act.



# Stakeholder Meetings and Public Policy Dialogues

## 1. Quarterly Stakeholders Meeting on Combatting Trafficking and Bonded Labour

SSDO Pakistan, in collaboration with the Sindh Human Rights Commission, organized a Stakeholders Quarterly Meeting focused on combatting trafficking in persons and bonded labor in Sindh. Led by dedicated professionals and advocates, this pivotal meeting brought together government officials, NGOs, law enforcement agencies, and community leaders to strategize and coordinate efforts in tackling this pressing issue, emphasizing a united approach in safeguarding human rights.



## 2. Consultative Meeting on Muslim Family Law Ordinance (MFLO-1961)

On May 28th, SHRC welcomed the National Lobbying Delegation to discuss reforms related to the Muslim Family Law Ordinance (MFLO-1961). The delegation highlighted the need for proper completion of the Nikkah Nama, including CNIC details, and called for Nikkah Registrar training by the Local Government department. Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho shared SHRC's proactive role, including a recent letter to the Additional Chief Secretary of the Local Government & Housing Town Planning Department, advocating for reforms. Mr. Detho also discussed collaboration with Community World Service to strengthen minority rights, while SHRC Legal Advisor Ms. Rida Tahir highlighted legislative gaps in the Domestic Violence Act 2013 and the importance of comprehensive enforcement.



### 3. Provincial Public Policy Dialogue on Women's Development

Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Chairperson of SHRC, addressed parliamentarians at a Provincial Public Policy Dialogue organized by HomeNet Pakistan. He emphasized the critical role of the Women's Development Department (WDD) in promoting women's rights and highlighted SHRC's contributions, including drafting the Sindh Child Marriages Rules 2024. He called for the establishment of inter-departmental coordination committees and improved oversight to ensure effective implementation of policies for women's empowerment.



## Initiatives in Health and Juvenile Justice

### 1. Call for Establishing a Child Nutrition Board

Responding to concerns over malnutrition and stunting, Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho urged the Sindh government to establish a child nutrition board. In a letter to the Health Secretary, Mr. Detho highlighted the role of breastfeeding in preventing malnutrition and recommended the appointment of inspectors to enforce the breastfeeding and nutrition law. This initiative reflects SHRC's dedication to tackling childhood malnutrition.



### Govt urged to set up child nutrition board to implement breastfeeding law

SHRC asks health dept to appoint inspectors, devise rules

By Faiza Ilyas

KARACHI: As the Sindh government leads towards a multi-sectoral strategy to eliminate all forms of malnutrition and stunting in the province, it is yet to set up a board and appoint inspectors required under the breastfeeding and nutrition law,

is emerged on Saturday. The government has not formed rules for the Sindh Breast Feeding and Young Child Nutrition Act despite the fact that the law was passed by the Sindh Assembly around a year ago.

Source said that matter has recently been raised by the chairperson of the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) in a letter to the health secretary.

The letter refers to several clauses of the Sindh Protection and Promotion of Breast Feeding and Young Child Nutrition Act, 2023, including Section 3, which

mandates establishment of an "Infant and Young Child Nutrition Board" with the purpose to advise and propose guidelines to the government on policies for the promotion and protection of breast feeding and matters relating to designated products, especially infant and young child nutrition, among other things.

"Further, under Section 6, the 'Appointment of Inspectors' has been mandated. As per Section 7, the powers of the inspectors include (but are not limited to) inspect any premises where any designated product is imported, manufactured, sold,

stocked, exhibited for sale, supply, advertised or otherwise promoted and all relevant records," the letter written by SHRC chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho states.

He also refers to Section 22 and Section 30 (1) of the Act, requiring establishment of a subject called "The Infant and Young Children Nutrition Board" and making rules for implementation of the law.

"The SHRC under Section 40(a) and 40(c) refers to your good office and recommends the establishment/fortification of 'Infant and Young Child Nutrition Board', 'Appointment

of Inspectors', 'the Infant and Young Children Nutrition Board' and 'along with the Rules of Implementation of the Sindh Protection and Promotion of Breast Feeding and Young Child Nutrition Act, 2023', the letter says.

Breastfeeding's role in malnutrition

The letter also refers to the Sindh Infant & Young Child Feeding (IYCF) 2018-19, according to which, less than one in four newborns (23 per cent)

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Continued from Page 13

received breast milk within one hour of birth and only 47pc of children under six months of age were exclusively breastfed.

Further, the figures show, infant and young children feeding practices vary greatly between divisions in Sindh.

Only six per cent of children aged six months to around two years

in Shaheed Benazirabad division received minimum diet diversity compared to 23pc in Larkana division. Similar differences are noted for early initiation of breastfeeding.

"The letter is written in the light of studies indicating that breastfeeding has an important role in the prevention of different forms of childhood malnutrition, including wasting and stunting," Mr

Detho said.

The SHRC was an oversight body with powers to review, assess laws and recommend measures to improve implementation of the law, he added.

It might be recalled that the provincial government had initiated work on a multi-sectoral convergence strategy on stunting and malnutrition in the province in collaboration with foreign partners.

### 2. Advocacy for Remand Homes for Juvenile Offenders

Mr. Detho emphasized the need for remand homes to provide appropriate care for juvenile offenders during his visits to juvenile and women's jails with the Sindh Prison and Correctional Services. The initiative aims to uphold dignity and rehabilitation, ensuring a fair and just environment in the prison system.



# Community Awareness and Cultural Diversity Initiatives

## 1. Panel Discussion on Embracing Cultural Diversity at Iqra University

At a recent panel discussion held at Iqra University Karachi, Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho emphasized the importance of respecting cultural diversity, as outlined in Article 27 of the Constitution. He addressed the challenges posed by social norms and power dynamics that perpetuate practices like honor killings, advocating for a balanced approach to protect individual and group rights. His remarks underscored SHRC's commitment to promoting inclusivity and respecting everyone's rights, regardless of gender or religion.



## 2. Awareness Session on Women's Marriage Rights at Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University

On May 29th, SHRC, in collaboration with Musawi and Begum Nusrat Bhutto Women University (BNBWU), organized an awareness session on women's marriage rights and legal aid. The event, inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor Tehmina Mangan, included esteemed speakers such as Peer Muhammad Shah, DIG Sukkur, SHRC Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, and Barrister Khadija, Director of Musawi. Mr. Detho announced the establishment of the Nusrat Bhutto Sindh Human Rights Centre at BNBWU to support gender equality initiatives. Barrister Rida, who moderated the session, presented strategies for economic empowerment, while Barrister Khadija addressed GBV prevention and women's rights under Muslim marriage laws.





# June 2024

## Launch Event for Report on Flood Rehabilitation and Human Rights



**Event Date:**

**June 6th, 2024**

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) hosted the launch of a comprehensive report titled, "Rights of People and State of Flood Rehabilitation in Sindh", at Mehran Hotel, Karachi. The event featured an essential panel discussion, "Human Rights at Risk: Addressing Flood-Related Challenges and Strategies for Upcoming Monsoon Seasons in Sindh", gathering experts, policymakers, and community leaders to drive actionable solutions.

The report, based on research in Khairpur Mirs, Dadu, and Mirpurkhas districts, highlights the continuing struggles for millions affected by the 2022 floods. It calls for accelerated rehabilitation to restore fundamental rights such as access to clean drinking water, housing, education, and healthcare. This event aims to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights, particularly in preparation for future monsoon seasons, through strategic insights and collective efforts.



## Key Highlights from the Panel Discussion:



# Awareness Campaigns on Women's Marriage Rights

## 1. Awareness Event in Larkana

On June 5th, SHRC and Musawi organized an event in Larkana to raise awareness about women's marriage rights, focusing on the importance of accurately completing the Nikahnama (marriage contract). Keynote speaker Barrister Khadija Bokhari, Director of Musawi, educated participants on essential marriage rights, empowering them with knowledge of the critical role the Nikahnama plays in safeguarding these rights. Law Consultant Advocate Ahmed provided Sindhi translation, ensuring accessible information for all attendees.



## 2. Collaborative Event with Dreams of Youth Welfare Society in Lyari

Also on June 5th, SHRC joined Musawi and Dreams of Youth Welfare Society in Lyari to increase awareness of marital rights and the judicial role in family cases. Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho addressed the severe consequences of child marriage, calling it a societal taboo. He was joined by speakers Barrister Khadija, Advocate Mahjabeen Zulfiqar, and Muhammad Rehan, who explained legal processes for marriage dissolution and the rights of wives, dispelling misconceptions about filing for dissolution. The event was lauded for effectively informing the community about marital rights.





## Evaluation and Impact Assessment

At both Larkana and Lyari events, pre- and post-assessment surveys were conducted to gauge participants' understanding of marriage rights. These assessments showed a significant improvement in awareness, affirming the effectiveness of the sessions in empowering women with knowledge to protect their rights.



## Key Events and Advocacy Initiatives

### 1. Provincial Steering Committee on Business and Human Rights Meeting

**Date: June 7th, 2024**

The Treaty Implementation Cell (TIC) of the Human Rights Department, Government of Sindh, convened the 2nd Provincial Steering Committee meeting on Business and Human Rights. The session, chaired by Secretary Tahseen Fatima and co-chaired by SHRC Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, brought together representatives from key organizations, including the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry, Karachi Chamber of Commerce & Industry, UNDP Pakistan, and the International Labour Organization - Pakistan.



Mr. Detho presented SHRC's briefing paper on Pakistan's GSP+ obligations, with recommendations to strengthen treaty compliance, retain GSP+ status beyond 2027, and improve labor and human rights policy design. He highlighted the need to leverage committees for enhanced policy delivery and oversight, calling for the Labor and Human Resources Department's capacity development to ensure labor laws' implementation.

## 2. World Day Against Child Labour 2024

**Date: June 10th, 2024**

In collaboration with SPARC and Terre des hommes, SHRC organized an impactful event in Karachi for the World Day Against Child Labour 2024, themed "Let's act on our commitments: End Child Labour!" Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho opened the event, emphasizing the importance of human rights education in schools from grade 7 onwards. He pointed to budget allocation issues that hinder educational support, underscoring the urgent need for strategic resource distribution to eliminate child labor.



### Speakers and Highlights:

- o Mr. Gul Mastoi, Board Member of SPARC, addressed the current state of child labor in Pakistan, stressing the collective responsibility in eradicating this issue.

- o Ms. Fozia Hameed, MPA-Sindh, delivered an inspiring message, asserting that every child should be equipped with education to fulfill their dreams. She highlighted inflation, poverty, lack of family planning, and unemployment as major causes of child labor, advocating for technical education and skills training to empower youth and break the cycle of exploitation.



## 3. Tenth TIC Meeting on Pakistan's Report on the ICESCR

**Date: June 13th, 2024**

The tenth meeting of the Treaty Implementation Cell (TIC) discussed the List of Issues adopted by the UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights regarding Pakistan's Second Periodic Report on the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The meeting, chaired by Secretary Tahseen Fatima and co-chaired by Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, served as a platform for dynamic discussions on socio-economic rights.



Mr. Detho presented SHRC's briefing paper, "Pakistan's GSP+ Obligations: Navigating Human & Labour Rights Compliance in Sindh," sharing insights on critical human and labor rights compliance issues in Sindh. SHRC's Legal Advisor, Barrister Rida Tahir, also presented SHRC's report on the ICESCR, offering perspectives aimed at advancing socio-economic rights across Pakistan.





# Advocacy for Transgender Rights and Inclusivity

## 1. 3rd Consultative Session on Transgender People's Access to Justice

**Date: June 27th, 2024**

SHRC Chairperson, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, served as the Guest of Honor at the 3rd Consultative Session on the Technical Assistance Needs Assessment (TANA) Study on Transgender People's Access to Justice, organized by UNODC Pakistan. In his address, Mr. Detho highlighted the challenges arising from outdated colonial laws that limit transgender people's rights, asserting that human rights are a fundamental entitlement, not a privilege. He also addressed the Federal Shariat Court's recent decision on the Transgender Act, 2018, which is now under review by the Supreme Court's Shariat Bench, emphasizing the need for equal opportunities for transgender individuals across social, cultural, and economic domains.

## 2. District-Level Convention on Inclusivity

**Date: June 29th, 2024**

At a convention on inclusivity organized by Sub Rang Society, Mr. Detho delivered a powerful address advocating for the replacement of 'Sex' with 'Gender' in legal and constitutional frameworks to foster a more inclusive society. He committed SHRC's support in challenging colonial-era laws that discriminate against transgender people, declaring, "Trans people are not aliens; they deserve all the rights provided to everyone in our constitution." The event underscored SHRC's role in supporting equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender identity, in partnership with organizations like the Sub Rang Society.





# Collaborations for Child Rights and Legal Advocacy

## 1. Visit from RASTI Pakistan Delegation

**Date: June 29th, 2024**

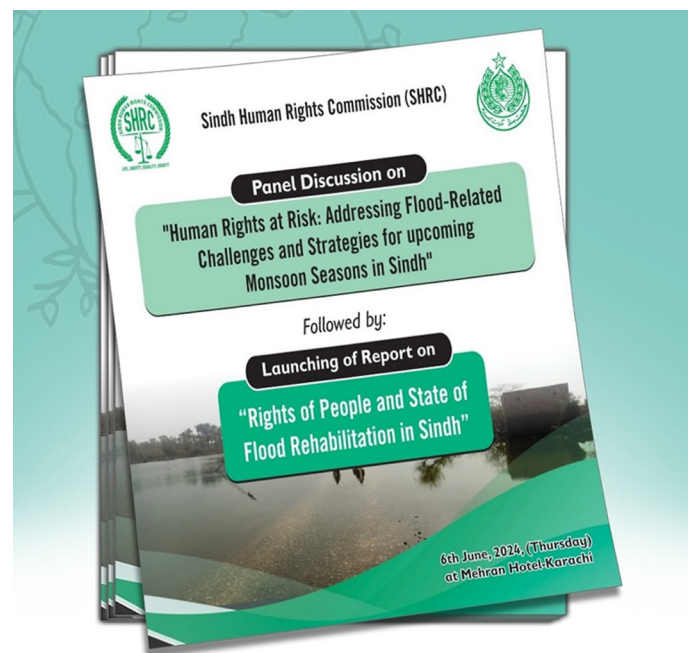
A delegation from the Research Advocacy and Social Training Institute (RASTI) Pakistan, led by Project Coordinator Mr. Atif Abbas, visited the SHRC office to discuss child rights advocacy. Mr. Abbas outlined RASTI's initiatives, including upcoming meetings with relevant departments and children to advance their mission. Chairperson Mr. Detho highlighted Sindh's unique Human Rights Policy, which includes child protection but lacks a dedicated legal aid policy. He shared SHRC's recent recommendations to the Education Minister for establishing a book bank for children and raised concerns about the outdated PPC 374 law. SHRC Judicial Members Mr. Arshad Noor and Mr. Aslam Shaikh contributed their perspectives, emphasizing the shared commitment to children's rights and advocacy.

## Publications and Policy Recommendations



### • Human Rights Report on Flood Rehabilitation

SHRC launched a comprehensive report on flood rehabilitation earlier in June, spotlighting urgent human rights needs in flood-affected districts. The report reflects SHRC's commitment to promoting human rights resilience, especially for vulnerable populations impacted by natural disasters in Sindh.



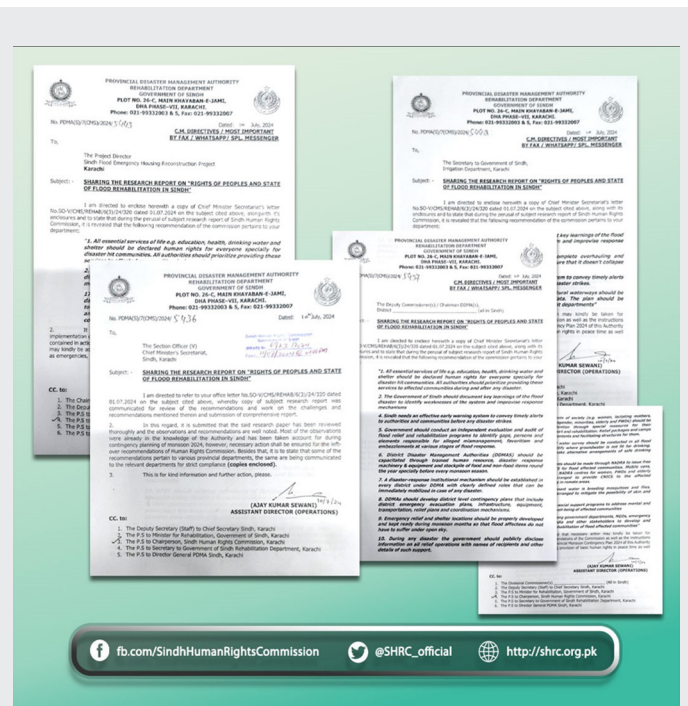


July  
2024

# Human Rights Advocacy and Disaster Preparedness

## 1. Flood Rehabilitation in Sindh

SHRC Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho presented the SHRC report, "Rights of People and State of Flood Rehabilitation in Sindh." Highlighting the 2022 floods' devastating impact on rural areas, Mr. Detho emphasized the Commission's commitment to safeguarding human rights, including access to education, healthcare, and clean drinking water. He shared insights from SHRC's visits to flood-affected districts, such as Dadu, Larkana, and Khairpur, asserting that flood victims have a fundamental right to comprehensive rehabilitation.



## Report Release and Government Response

The Chief Minister's Office has directed the Rehabilitation Department and Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) to review the report's findings and develop a comprehensive action plan ahead of the monsoon season. The Irrigation Department has also instructed its Chief Engineers and the Project Director of the Sindh Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Project to provide actionable feedback. These developments signal a collaborative effort to ensure better preparedness and address the challenges faced by flood-affected communities.

# Business and Human Rights

## 1. Human Rights Due Diligence Framework Meeting

**Date: July 4th, 2024**

SHRC Chairperson, Mr. Detho, co-chaired a session on the Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) Framework alongside Secretary Human Rights Department, Ms. Tahseen Fatima. The session explored integrating the HRDD Framework into corporate practices in Sindh.

Mr. Detho emphasized the importance of ensuring human rights compliance in business operations to promote sustainable development and social justice. The HRDD Framework aims to identify, prevent, and address human rights impacts in the corporate sector, driving ethical and equitable economic growth in Sindh.

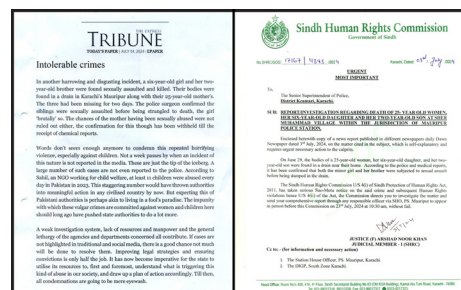


## Suo Moto Action

### Investigation into Mauripur Tragedy

**Date: July 5th, 2024**

SHRC has taken suo moto notice of a tragic incident in Mauripur, where a 25-year-old woman and her two young children were found dead in a drain. Disturbing post-mortem findings confirmed that the children, aged six and two, had suffered sexual assault before their deaths. The Commission has directed SSP Keamari to conduct a thorough investigation and ensure justice is served. This case highlights the need for urgent action to protect vulnerable individuals and uphold human rights in Sindh.



## Review of the Sindh Youth Policy, 2018

**Date: July 10th, 2024**

SHRC, in collaboration with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and UNFPA Pakistan, held a consultative session to assess the political economy of Youth Departments and the Sindh Youth Policy, 2018. Chaired by SHRC Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, the session addressed gaps in implementation and barriers hindering the policy's effectiveness.

Key recommendations included:

- o Integrating human rights into school syllabi.
- o Organizing student guidance sessions.
- o Enhancing collaboration between Sports Officers, Youth Affairs, and Education Departments.
- o Strengthening human resources and creating regular progress reports for policy implementation.
- o Representatives from education, labor, health, STEVTA, and civil society organizations contributed to actionable solutions aimed at empowering Sindh's youth.





# Protecting Vulnerable Groups

## 1. Meeting with Women Development Department

**Date: July 4th, 2024**

Chairperson SHRC, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, met with Mr. Rashid Ahmed Zardari, Secretary, Women Development Department Sindh. Discussions focused on:

- o Activating Darul Aman Management Committees.
- o Establishing a founding law for these committees.
- o Amending the Workplace Harassment Act draft.
- o Addressing challenges faced by the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women.

In a positive development, the Secretary announced the appointment of 32 Assistant Directors (Women Empowerment & Protection) across all districts of Sindh to strengthen women's rights and protection. He assured continued cooperation with SHRC to promote human rights.



## 2. Reforms for Women and Children Protection Centers

**Date: July 17th, 2024**

IG Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon conducted a briefing session on reforms at Women and Children Protection Centers. SHRC Chairperson, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, joined senior officials, including Sindh Police Surgeon Dr. Summaiya Syed and Advocate Rubina Brohi, to discuss the establishment of 40 centers across the province.

SHRC is actively advocating for dedicated Women and Children Police Stations (WCPCS) to provide specialized support and ensure the safety of vulnerable groups in Sindh.



## 3. Delegation Visit from Umerkot Citizen Forum

**Date: July 25th, 2024**

A delegation from the District Women Group and Umerkot Citizen Forum met with SHRC Chairperson, Mr. Detho, to address socio-economic and legal challenges. The discussion included activating District Vigilance Committees, coordinating with local police, and addressing identity card issues.

Mir Hassan Areesar highlighted the urgency of these issues, while Mr. Detho reaffirmed SHRC's commitment to collaborative solutions ensuring human rights are upheld for all.



# Inclusive Democracy and Minimum Wage Advocacy

## 1. National Consultation on Accessible Elections

**Date: July 30th, 2024**

Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho participated in a UNDP-hosted consultation on "Making Elections Accessible and Meaningful for People with Disabilities in Pakistan." The session urged provincial and federal governments to implement the Accessibility Code of Pakistan 2006, ensuring barrier-free voting and public infrastructure for persons with disabilities.



## 2. Minimum Wage Board Recommendations

**Date: July 31st, 2024**

SHRC welcomed the Sindh Minimum Wages Board's recommendation to raise the minimum wage from PKR 32,000 to PKR 37,000. Chairperson Mr. Detho expressed hope for its swift approval by the Sindh Cabinet after the stakeholder review process. The proposed changes aim to support workers and promote social justice across Sindh.





# August 2024

## Empowering Women in Agriculture



### 1. 3rd Meeting of the Provincial Stakeholders Alliance (PSA)

**Date: August 1st, 2024**

SHRC, in collaboration with the National Advocacy for Rights of Innocent (NARI) Foundation and AWAZ, hosted the 3rd PSA meeting on the empowerment of women agricultural workers. This meeting focused on the effective implementation of the **Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act, 2019**, advancing labor rights, and advocating for equitable opportunities for women in agriculture.

### Highlights:

#### o Legislative Updates:

Mr. Reejhu Mal, Law Officer of the Labour Department, emphasized Sindh's commitment to women's rights through landmark legislation like the Women Agricultural Workers Act and the forthcoming Sindh Domestic Workers Law.

#### o SHRC Chairperson's Address:

Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho reiterated the province's focus on integrating social security and protection laws into new regulations.

#### o Next Steps:

SHRC will facilitate consultations on the Sindh Bonded Labour Act and Tenancy Act.

Meetings with the Social Security Department and Social Protection Authority to discuss creating an Endowment Fund for agricultural workers.



## 2. 28 August

With the **AWAZ Foundation Pakistan** and **National Advocacy For Rights of Innocent (NARI) Foundation** to organize a **Provincial Advocacy Forum for Women Agricultural Workers**.



## Key Highlights from the Forum:

### o Legal Aid Mechanism Expansion:

Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho detailed the SHRC's efforts to broaden legal aid mechanisms to include labor rights and domestic violence, going beyond its initial focus on inmates.

### o Training and Resources:

SHRC has provided training to judicial magistrates and police inspectors on critical laws like the Bonded Labour Abolition Act 2015 and child labor regulations.

### o Draft Rules for Women Agricultural Workers Act:

Submitted to the Law Department, SHRC called for technical consultations to refine these rules.

### o Bench Book for Labor Laws:

Developed to assist judges in understanding and applying labor-related laws.

# Advancements in Civil Registration Systems

## 1. CRMS and CRVS Focal Persons Appointed

**Date: August 2nd, 2024**

Following SHRC's consistent advocacy with the Local Government Department, two significant milestones were achieved:

### o Appointment of District Focal Persons:

These individuals will oversee Civil Registration Management System (CRMS) and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) activities, ensuring transparency, resolving ID issues, and coordinating with NADRA.

### o Formation of a Core Committee for CRVS By-Laws Review:

The committee will review and finalize the CRVS manual and by-laws, aligning them with Sindh's legal framework and international best practices. SHRC looks forward to their recommendations to strengthen CRVS frameworks in Sindh.





# Health and Nutrition Advocacy

## 1. World Breastfeeding Week

**Date: August 3rd, 2024**

SHRC recommended establishing an Infant and Young Child Nutrition Board, appointing inspectors, and creating a Nutrition Board Fund to implement the **Sindh Protection and Promotion of Breast-Feeding and Young Child Nutrition Act, 2023**.

- o The Sindh Cabinet approved the creation of the Infant and Young Child Nutrition Board.
- o Objectives include increasing breastfeeding awareness, supporting mothers and infants, and improving workplace policies to balance work and breastfeeding.

## Environmental Conservation and Media Engagement

### 12 August - Tree Planting for Shaheed Jaan Muhammad

At an event organized by the Sukkur Union of Journalists, Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho planted a tree in honor of the late Shaheed Jaan Muhammad.



# Refining Training Modules for Local Government Officers



A crucial meeting chaired by Syed Khalid Hyder Shah, Additional Chief Secretary of the Local Government & Housing Town Planning Department, was held to review and refine the draft training module prepared by the Sindh Civil Services and Local Government Academy.

### Expert Panel:

The session was attended by prominent experts, including:

- Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, Chairperson, Sindh Human Rights Commission
- Mr. Farooque Ahmed Siddiqui, Former Senior Chief, Planning and Development Department
- Mr. Abdul Ghani Shaikh, Director (M&EC), Local Government & Housing Town Planning Department
- Syed Arif Raza, Retired Provincial Director, Local Government Audit, Sindh

### Discussion Points:

- The role of municipal officers and town officers in local governance.
- Enhancing coordination between local government and line departments.
- Integrating provisions of the Local Government Act into officer training.

The meeting aimed to create a comprehensive training framework to equip newly appointed SCUGS officers with the knowledge and tools needed to serve effectively and uphold governance standards.

# Introductory Meeting of the Provincial Steering Committee on Sindh Human Rights Policy

The First Introductory Meeting of the Provincial Steering Committee on the Sindh Human Rights Policy was convened under the chairmanship of Ms. Tahseen Fatima, Secretary, Human Rights Department.

## Key Contributions:

- **Jamil Junejo**, Executive Coordinator of the Treaty Implementation Cell, presented an overview of the Sindh Human Rights Policy, detailing its objectives and frameworks.
- **Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho**, Chairperson, Sindh Human Rights Commission, provided critical insights into:
  - Constitutional and international human rights obligations, including GSP+ compliance, SDGs, and treaty-based commitments.
  - Strategies for effective dissemination of the Sindh Human Rights Policy.

## Reports Presented:

Mr. Detho highlighted pressing human rights issues through detailed reports on:

- Transgender Rights: Advocacy and challenges in implementation.
- Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Inclusion and empowerment initiatives.
- Child Rights and Minority Rights: Progress and areas requiring focused intervention.

# Healthcare Facility Inspections



## Visits to Healthcare Facilities

Justice (Retired) Arshad Noor Khan, Judicial Member, SHRC, conducted inspections of multiple healthcare facilities in Karachi and Keamari, addressing critical issues:

- o Sindh Government Dispensary, Keamari Town:
  - The dispensary's location on a second floor without a lift was found unsuitable. Justice Arshad Noor Khan recommended its relocation for better access to over 4,000 monthly patients.
- o Sindh Government Dispensary, Machhar Colony:
  - Issues like poor sanitation, inadequate medical supplies, and lack of functional infrastructure were flagged. Immediate actions were directed, including the installation of solar systems and the renovation of waiting rooms and restrooms.
- o Dr. Ruth Pfau Civil Hospital Karachi:
  - Despite serving over 1.4 million patients annually, the hospital faces staff shortages. Justice Arshad Noor Khan commended the online monitoring of treatments but called for improved sanitation and staffing.
- o Dow University Hospital, Ojha Campus:
  - The hospital provides care for over 300,000 patients annually, with a dedicated disaster unit. Justice Arshad Noor Khan urged compliance with minimum wage laws and immediate resolution of staff grievances.

## Indus Hospital Karachi

- Acknowledged its innovative measures, like WhatsApp token systems to reduce wait times.
- Highlighted the need for additional resources to meet growing patient demands.



## Safeguarding Minority Rights

### 16 August - Follow-Up on the Sindh Hindus Marriage Act

SHRC conducted a follow-up meeting at its Sukkur office, chaired by Board Member Mr. Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani.

#### • Key Outcomes:

- Reviewed the establishment of a regional desk by the Minority Affairs Department.
- Formed a sub-committee under Mr. Hemnani to identify and address challenges in implementing the law.



## Enhancing Child Protection Mechanisms

### 1. 18 August - Collaborative Meeting on Child Rights

Chairperson SHRC, Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho, engaged with child protection experts:

- Farah Ilyas (UNICEF), Valerie Khan (Development Practitioner), Mehvish Maria (UNICEF), and Advocate Umar Sajjad.

#### Discussions revolved around:

- Drafting the Child Marriage Restraint Rules to better enforce existing laws.
- Strengthening Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) mechanisms.
- Scaling up collaboration to improve child protection frameworks in Sindh.



### 2. 20 August - Consultation on Bonded and Child Domestic Labor

SHRC partnered with Obun2 to host a consultation involving representatives from government agencies and civil society.

#### • Objective:

Develop strategies to address bonded labor and child domestic labor.

- **Outcomes** included identifying gaps in existing policies and planning advocacy efforts to push legislative reforms.



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# Youth Engagement and Advocacy

## 1. 24 August - Youth Training Workshop in Hyderabad

SHRC, in collaboration with the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP), held a workshop to raise awareness about human rights, minority protections, and the Sindh Youth Policy, 2018.

- Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho stressed the importance of youth understanding their social, political, and economic rights.
- Sarfaraz Jamali (SHRC) educated participants on how to report human rights violations.
- Abdul Wahid Sangrasi (CSSP) shared efforts to create district-level youth networks and train over 2,000 young people.

# Collaborative Efforts for Governance & Justice

## 19 August - Meeting with SAFWCO on Gender-Inclusive Governance

Mr. Suleman G. Abro (SAFWCO President) and Ms. Nadia Larik (SAFWCO Consultant) met with SHRC Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho.

- **Focus Areas:**

- Enhancing local governance policies to include a gender perspective.
- Creating responsive governance systems to address women's needs at the grassroots level.

## 22 August - Visit by PAC Chairman Nisar Ahmed Khuhro

- SHRC Board Member Mr. Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani briefed the Chairman on SHRC's complaint-handling mechanisms and regional offices.
- Highlighted SHRC's efforts in ensuring inter-departmental coordination for compliance with international human rights treaties.
- Mr. Khuhro praised SHRC's work on addressing minority issues and enhancing law implementation.

# Strengthening Local Governance Policy

## 29 August - Provincial Conference on Local Governance

Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho attended a Provincial Conference on Strengthening Local Governance Policy Design and Delivery, hosted by SAFWCO and DAI Pakistan.

- **Participants:** The event brought together over 150 attendees, including parliamentarians, government officials, local representatives, and civil society leaders.

- **Focus Areas:**

- Enhancing service delivery at the local government level.
- Developing innovative policy designs to improve governance in Sindh.
- Strengthening leadership within Union Councils as part of the Strengthening Leadership Within Union Council (LUC) Project.



# September 2024

## 2nd September

### Action Against Child Marriages in District Dadu

The SHRC took cognizance of an alarming surge in child marriages in District Dadu, Sindh. Letters were issued to the Director General of the Sindh Child Protection Authority and the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in Dadu District, urging immediate intervention.

- Response: The Sindh Child Protection Authority formed a Special Fact-Finding Committee to investigate the rise in child marriages, as reported by the media.
- SHRC's Role: The commission reaffirmed its commitment as an oversight and monitoring body to ensuring the protection and safety of children.



### Two-Day Training for Police Probationary Inspectors (Investigation)

In collaboration with SSDO Pakistan and the Training Branch Sindh Police, SHRC organized a two-day training session at the Central Police Office Karachi. The session aimed at enhancing understanding of human rights laws.



#### • Topics Covered:

- The Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022
- The Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 2015
- The Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018
- The Sindh Domestic Violence (Prevention & Protection) Act, 2013
- The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010
- The Sindh Child Marriage Restraint Act, 2013
- The Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act, 2018

#### • Key Speakers:

- Iqbal Ahmed Detho (SHRC Chairperson)
- Syed Kausar Abbas (Executive Director, SSDO)
- Barrister Rida Tahir (Gender & Child Rights Expert)
- Shahid Shafiq (District & Session Judge)
- Barrister Mahar Aashir Masood (Advocate High Court)

During the closing ceremony, Additional IG Khadim Hussain Rind expressed gratitude to SHRC Chairperson, Mr. Detho, and stressed the importance of sensitivity towards victims and professionalism in police work.

## 9th September

### Collaboration with NADRA on Registration Initiatives

SHRC Chairperson Mr. Iqbal Ahmed Detho held a meeting with Mr. Ehtasham Shahid, Director General NADRA (Regional Head Office, Karachi).

#### • Key Outcomes:

- o SHRC will participate in NADRA's Identity Week (September 16–20) to promote "Identity for All."

- o Emphasis on enhancing registration processes for marginalized groups such as women, persons with disabilities, religious minorities, and transgender individuals.

#### o SHRC recommended:

- Free birth registration
- Waivers or reductions in fees
- Enhanced marriage registration mechanisms.



## 16th September



### 1. Consultation on Bonded Labour

SHRC, in collaboration with SPARC and Aga Khan University, held a consultation on the Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 2015, focusing on gaps in implementation and strategies for rehabilitation.

#### • Key Takeaways:

- o Iqbal Ahmed Detho stressed the importance of legal aid for kiln workers and raising the legal working age.

- o Miandad Rahjoo (SESSI Commissioner) called for:

- Reduced working hours
- Minimum wage implementation
- Formal agreements and rehabilitation programs.

- o Tehseen Fatima (Secretary, Human Rights Department, Sindh) highlighted SPARC's valuable data and called for a multi-sectoral approach.

- o Agha Fakhar (Director, Human Rights Department) proposed transferring District Vigilance Committees' responsibilities to the Human Rights Department for better oversight.

## 11th September

### HeForShe Awareness Program at Hamdard School of Law

Mr. Adnan Khaskhaly, Superintendent of Complaints at SHRC, addressed law students during the HeForShe awareness program, organized in collaboration with the Legal Aid Society, SHRC, and UN Women Pakistan.

#### • Key Highlights:

- o Discussed SHRC's mechanisms and the importance of human rights advocacy.
- o Stressed the role of men and boys in addressing gender power imbalances and challenging traditional masculinity.
- o Introduced the SOHRIS portal (<https://sohris.com>) as a resource for human rights education.



## 2. Justice for Polio Worker in Jacobabad

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has been closely following the case involving the harassment and assault of a polio worker in Jacobabad, with significant progress achieved.



### Case Background and Developments:

#### 1. FIR Registered:

- o A First Information Report (FIR No: 195/2024) was officially registered at PS Airport Jacobabad against the accused individuals.

- o This critical step came after SHRC's persistent follow-up and advocacy efforts.

#### 2. Arrests and Charges:

- o In a separate FIR, the husband Naseer Unar, brother-in-law Nazeer Unar, and nephew Basheer s/o Nazeer were apprehended.

- o They face charges under Sections 310A, 506/2, and 34 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) for their role in declaring the victim subject to "honor killing."

#### 3. SHRC Advocacy:

- o The Commission's relentless engagement with law enforcement ensured swift action.

- o SHRC remains committed to securing justice for the victim and safeguarding the rights of vulnerable workers.

# 17th September

## Field Visit to Jacobabad: Strengthening Women's Rights Infrastructure

Chairperson Iqbal Ahmed Detho, alongside the SHRC team, conducted a field visit to Jacobabad, meeting with stakeholders, including SSP Jacobabad, DC Jacobabad, and civil society representatives, to discuss critical human rights concerns.

### Focus Areas:

#### 1. Pressing Women's Rights Issues:

- o The discussions centered around karo kari (honor killings), rape, domestic violence, and other systemic violations against women in Jacobabad.

#### 2. Breakthrough in the Polio Worker Case:

- o The SHRC's continuous follow-up culminated in the registration of FIR (No. 195/2024) and the arrest of key suspects.

#### 3. Infrastructure Development for Women's Rights:

- o The team emphasized upgrading the Darul Aman (women's shelter) and Women's Police Station in Jacobabad, calling for similar improvements across Sindh.

- o SHRC stressed the importance of establishing safe and resourceful spaces for women facing violence and societal neglect.



# 18th September

## Revolutionizing Identity Access: Launch of Pakistan's First Mobile CNIC Registration Vans

In collaboration with NADRA and organizations like SPARC, SHRC launched mobile CNIC registration vans, targeting marginalized communities such as brick kiln workers, who often lack legal identity.

### Key Takeaways:

**1. Scope of Services:** The vans provide access to Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs), social security cards, EOBI benefits, and senior citizen allowances.

**2. Geographical Reach:** The mobile service operates in underserved regions, including Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas, and nearby areas, ensuring that vulnerable groups receive essential registration services.

**3. Impact:** Workers now have access to legal identities, empowering them to claim their social and economic rights, including healthcare, education, and labor protections.



# 20th September

## 1. Engaging Men and Boys in Gender Equality: The HeforShe Program at the University of Karachi

The SHRC, in collaboration with Legal Aid Society and UN Women Pakistan, organized a transformative session at the University of Karachi's Political Science Department under the global HeForShe movement.

### Key Discussions:

#### 1. Human Rights Awareness:

o Mr. Adnan Khaskhaly, Superintendent of Complaints at SHRC, delivered an enlightening lecture on fundamental human rights, SHRC's mechanisms, and the importance of male allyship in gender equality.

#### 2. SOHRIS Portal:

o Mr. Khaskhaly introduced the **SOHRIS** portal ([www.sohris.com](http://www.sohris.com)), an SHRC initiative offering comprehensive human rights resources, including laws, policies, and organizational support systems in Sindh.

#### 3. Actionable Insights:

o Men and boys must:

- Recognize privilege and challenge patriarchal norms.
- Raise inclusive environments that promote gender equality.
- Advocate for policy reforms ensuring women's empowerment.





## 2. Public Hearing on Human & Labour Rights in Tharparkar

In a significant step toward promoting human rights and labor protections, the SHRC, in collaboration with Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Pakistan, organized a **Public Hearing on Human and Labour Rights Due Diligence and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** contributions in Tharparkar.

### Key Participants:

- **Iqbal Ahmed Detho**, Chairperson, SHRC
- **Abdullah Dayo**, Program Officer, FES Pakistan
- **Ms. Tahseen Fatima**, Secretary, Human Rights Department, Government of Sindh
- **Abdul Haleem Jagerani**, Deputy Commissioner, Tharparkar
- **Shabir Sethar**, Senior Superintendent of Sindh Police, Tharparkar
- **Stakeholders: Labour Department**, Police, Local Government, Health and Education Departments, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Labour Unions, and CSR representatives



### Core Issues Discussed:

#### 1. Human and Labour Rights Compliance:

- o Emphasis on labor laws, such as the Bonded Labour Abolition Act 2015, to protect workers' rights in Sindh.
- o Importance of aligning with United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the GSP+ Scheme for international compliance.

#### 1. Critical Gaps Identified:

- o Insufficient healthcare, education, infrastructure, and communication services in Tharparkar.
- o Limited CSR contributions to address socio-economic disparities.

#### 1. Commitments and Way Forward:

- o Chairperson Detho reiterated SHRC's dedication to resolving community challenges, advocating for better health-care, education, and labor rights.
- o SHRC and FES pledged to join forces to promote sustainable business practices, emphasizing equity, sustainability, and social responsibility.



# 24th September

## Global Identity Day: NADRA Mobile Registration Vans at Brick Kilns

In collaboration with NADRA, the SHRC marked Global Identity Day by facilitating mobile registration vans at brick kilns in rural areas such as Panhwarabad, Hyderabad. This initiative targeted marginalized communities, particularly brick kiln workers, who lack legal identity.



### Key Attendees:

- Justice (R) Arshad Noor Khan, Judicial Member, SHRC
- Ehtesham Shahid, Regional DG, NADRA
- SPARC (Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child)



### Achievements:

- The initiative provided essential identity services such as CNIC registration, social security cards, EOBI benefits, and senior citizen allowances.
- Residents expressed gratitude for NADRA's doorstep services, facilitated by SHRC and SPARC.

### Impact:

- The mobile registration campaign reached underserved areas across **Tharparkar, Umerkot, Mirpurkhas,** and **Hyderabad,** ensuring legal recognition and access to essential services for vulnerable communities.





# 30th September

## 1. Appointment of Hindu and Sikh Marriage Registrars

In a landmark development, 16 marriage registrars from the Hindu and Sikh communities were officially recognized and awarded certificates during a ceremony at SHRC's Sukkur office.



### Key Participants:

- **Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani**, SHRC Board Member
- **Raja Mohammad Bakhsh Deharejo**, Deputy Commissioner, Sukkur

### Key Highlights:

- This initiative is part of the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act's implementation, a milestone for the registration of marriages in Sindh's large Hindu population
- For the first time, pandits from minority communities have been formally recognized as marriage registrars, ensuring legal documentation and rights for minority marriages.

THE EXPRESS  
**TRIBUNE**  
TODAY'S PAPER | SEPTEMBER 29, 2024 | EPAPER

**KARACHI**

**Hemnani:** In a first, pandits will officially register Hindu marriages in Sindh

**16 registrars appointed to register Hindu, Sikh marriages**

**OUR CORRESPONDENT SUKKUR**

Sixteen marriage registrars have been appointed to register the marriages of Hindu and Sikh communities under the Hindu Marriage Act 2018.

These registrars were awarded certificates at a ceremony organised by the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) at its Sukkur office on Saturday. Attendees at the event included SHRC Board Member Sukhdev Assardas Hemnani and Sukkur Deputy Commissioner Raja Mohammad Bakhsh Deharejo, who gave away the certificates to the participants.

The implementation of the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act marks an important milestone, as for the first time in Sindh's history, pandits from minority communities have been officially recognised as marriage registrars. This is crucial for the registration of marriages within the large Hindu population of Sindh.

On the occasion, Hemnani expressed satisfaction with the SHRC's efforts, highlighting the proactive measures taken to implement this important legislation. He acknowledged the extensive engagement with local government agencies, the women development department, social welfare, and civil society across Sindh. "These efforts culminated in the successful registration of marriage registrars in Sukkur," he added.

Hemnani also announced plans to extend the registration of marriage registrars to other districts in Sindh, prioritising areas with larger populations of minority communities.

"Effective implementation of the laws like the Sindh Hindu Marriage Act 2018 is essential to protecting the fundamental rights of these communities," he said.

The Hindu Marriage Amendment Act 2018 represents a crucial framework for legal marriages within the Hindu community. The certified marriage registrars will play an instrumental role in upholding these legal standards, ensuring that marriages are properly registered and recognised, thereby safeguarding the rights and interests of minority communities.

## 2. Technical Working Group Meeting on One-Stop Protection Centers (OSPCs)

The **Technical Working Group-IV**, under the **Multisectoral Coordination Committee (MSCC)**, convened to discuss the piloting and operationalization of **One-Stop Protection Centers (OSPCs)** in Sindh.

### Key Attendees:

- **Shahnawaz Soomro**, Additional Secretary, Home Department
- Representatives from Women Development Department, Sindh Police, Health Department, UNFPA, Pathfinders, and Legal Aid Society



### Key Decisions and Actions:

#### 1. Notification of Women and Children Police Stations (WCPS):

- SHRC, represented by Barrister Rida Tahir, highlighted that 3 out of 10 WCPS in Sindh remain unnotified.
- The Additional Secretary committed to notifying the remaining WCPS and expanding the network across all districts in Sindh.

#### 2. OSPC Piloting in Hyderabad:

- The Hyderabad WCPS will serve as the pilot OSPC, offering integrated support for victims of gender-based violence and other human rights violations.

#### 3. Addressing Domestic Violence:

- SHRC presented its "Roadmap for Addressing Domestic Violence in Sindh", highlighting the urgent need for a governing law on shelter homes.

#### 4. Observations from UN Committees:

- International bodies, including the ICCPR, ICESCR, CEDAW, and UNCRC Committees, have raised concerns about domestic violence and lack of shelter homes in Sindh.



# Editor's Note



**As we conclude this edition of the SHRC Newsletter, I want to leave you with a thought—human rights are not just policies or laws; they are the foundation of a just and dignified society. Each public hearing, each initiative, and each collaborative effort we have highlighted in these pages is a step towards that vision.**

**From advocating for labor rights in Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur Ghotki and Tharparkar to shaping the Human Rights Due Diligence (HRDD) Framework, SHRC has been at the forefront of critical conversations that matter. The Pakistan Labour Academy (PLA), our engagements with UNDP, FES Pakistan, SSDO, LAS, MUSAWI and NARI Foundation, and our push for gender inclusivity in labor unions are not just activities—they are part of a larger movement towards accountability, equity, and social justice in Sindh.**

**But progress does not happen in isolation. We need you. Whether you are a policymaker, a business leader, an activist, or a concerned citizen, your role in this journey is crucial. Engage with us, share your insights, and help shape the discourse around human rights. Let's work together to build a Sindh where rights are protected, voices are heard, and justice is not a privilege but a norm.**

**Thank you for being part of this conversation. Stay connected, stay informed, and most importantly—stay involved.**

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