

# **Saving the Face of Punjab Police: Learning from the Complexities of Zainab Case of Kasur**

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## **Introduction**

Kasur is the 24<sup>th</sup> largest district of Pakistan in terms of population and is spread over 3,995 square kilometers. It is located 55 Km. south of Lahore and is part of Sheikhpura Police Region (called a Range) of Punjab province. The 6<sup>th</sup> National census was held in Kasur district in April, 2017 during which the population was recorded at 3.46 million, with 25% being urban.<sup>2</sup> There are four sub-divisions and 19 Police Stations (PS) in the district.<sup>3</sup>

From 2015 onwards, Kasur has remained in an unenviable spotlight owing to notorious acts of sexual crimes against children. This even led to the change of the provincial head of Special Branch.<sup>4</sup> The first case to be reported was from the village of Hussain Khanwala where hundreds of clips relating to young boys and girls surfaced; this child pornography racket was busted.<sup>5</sup> The last, but not the least, was in September, 2020, when the district again drew attention after the remains of three boys were found; it appeared that they had been killed after suspected sexual acts in Chunian.<sup>6</sup> However, the most barbarous and challenging of the acts to work-out, and one that drew the attention of not only the district but of entire Pakistan was, when one 6-year old girl named Zainab Ameen Ansari went missing on the evening of 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2018; her dead body was recovered at around noon on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2018.<sup>7</sup>

This discovery sparked serious protests not only in the city but all across Pakistan, resulting in an emotionally charged mob attacking the office of Deputy Commissioner<sup>8</sup> Kasur. To make matters worse, the security personnel protecting the office resorted to firing that further resulted in loss of two precious lives. Above all, this was not an isolated incident. Rather, there were about a dozen suspected kidnapping-cum-rape-cum-murder cases of minor girls that were being attributed to the same perpetrator from 2015 onwards. The local police and two specially assigned Additional Inspector

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<sup>1</sup> Police Service of Pakistan, 115<sup>th</sup> NMC.

<sup>2</sup> [https://kasur.punjab.gov.pk/district%20\\_profile](https://kasur.punjab.gov.pk/district%20_profile) (accessed on 04 December, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.punjabpolice.gov.pk/kasur\\_directory](https://www.punjabpolice.gov.pk/kasur_directory) (accessed on 04 December, 2021).

<sup>4</sup> A non-uniformed intelligence gathering wing that is also responsible for special tasks including political affairs.

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.punjabpolice.gov.pk/kasur\\_directory](https://www.punjabpolice.gov.pk/kasur_directory) & <https://www.dawn.com/news/1199603> (accessed on 04 December, 2021).

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1505729> (accessed on 04 December, 2021).

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1382022> (accessed on 04 December, 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Throughout Pakistan, Deputy Commissioners are the heads of the district administration.

Generals (AIGs) of Punjab Police – the second tier police officers in the province – had remained unable to work out these heinous cases. This put, not only Punjab Police but the whole government under extreme pressure to solve the case and arrest the perpetrator, lest the gruesome act was repeated. Hence, it was essential to realize the point where conventional policing was not working; there was a need to think outside the box and try non-conventional approaches.

Indeed, when faced with extraordinary circumstances, those who are unwilling to think creatively will find themselves at the back of the pack or out of business.<sup>9</sup> In today's world, thinking outside the box and doing things in new ways has become essential in order to remain within the business.<sup>10</sup> So was the technique employed in working out the Zainab case, while *saving the institutional face of the Punjab Police*.

## **Statement of Intent**

The abduction and later recovery of the dead body of minor girl Zainab had brought in its wake a flood of public demands to trace out the perpetrator and extend exemplary punishment. This had put the Punjab Police and indeed the whole Punjab Government under pressure to tackle the issue seriously.<sup>11</sup> The real pressure was coming from media, political opposition, and society at large. Moreover, it was coming at a time when the investigation of the Model Town operation of 2014 was still haunting the government.

Undertaking policing under such extreme challenges reinforces the thought in civil service circles that while brushing things under the carpet may enable them to sail through a few smooth days, but eventually the storm blows back and it remains for the department to stem the tide. Hence the earlier serious action is undertaken the better.

A series of incidents involving the kidnapping-cum-rape (and sodomy)-cum-murder cases of minor girls in Kasur between 2015 and 2018 had shook the country to an extent that everyone was up in protest and calling for justice; this turned into a roar after the latest incident which occurred on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, 2018.

This case study covers the last incident, especially detailing how the case was worked out, by blending conventional and non-conventional out-of-the-box policing techniques, some of which were used for the first time in Pakistan. The study narrates, how the evidence that was available to the national media in an uninterpretable form was finally interpreted by the Joint Investigation Team (JIT). This was truly a case of finding a needle in a haystack. It was for the first time that in the history of Pakistan that a criminal case was worked out while blending DNA and census database analysis.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.companydirectors.com.au/director-resource-centre/publications/company-director-magazine/2012-back-editions/october/feature-thinking-outside-the-square> (accessed on 11 December, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/featured/11-ways-to-think-outside-the-box.html> (accessed on 11 December, 2021).

<sup>11</sup> <https://twitter.com/Punjab13to18/status/951126183390957568> (accessed on 11 December, 2021).

It was also a case where the highest offices of both provincial and federal governments had become involved. As it later became known, the perpetrator had been caught and set free at least twice by the police after the incident; he had been identified several times by the locals before the start of series of incidents in 2015, and yet these clues had not been shared by anyone.

The case is also unique in a sense that it was tried in court during the shortest period possible and ended in a conviction that finally led to the perpetrator being executed on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2018 at *Kot Lakhpat* Jail, Lahore – in just over nine months. If not the most widely followed crime incident, it certainly was one of the most intensively media covered cases in the history of Pakistan. It was trend setter for the police in terms of using unconventional means for working out serious cases. Finally, it was a case in which there was the least interaction of the JIT with the media – and one with the greatest focus on work rather than playing gimmicks to assuage public opinion.

## **The Scene Setter**

On 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2018, a Thursday afternoon, Regional Police Officer (RPO) Multan, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Muhammad Idrees Ahmed had applied for two days leave (Friday and Saturday), so as to attend a family gathering the next day to celebrate his daughter's passing her 1<sup>st</sup> Professional Examination of medical school (MBBS). Upon finishing office work, he had left for Lahore on Thursday afternoon, rather enthusiastically, and reached there around 9:00 pm. He had not even entered his house when his phone rang with a call from the provincial police chief, the IGP<sup>12</sup> Punjab, informing him that the government had notified him under Anti-Terrorism Act 1997 (ATA), as Convener of the Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to probe into the Kasur incident, in which a 6-year old girl had been kidnapped on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 2018, and later after being raped, sodomized and murdered, her dead body had been recovered on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2018.<sup>13</sup>

Without realizing that he had allowed him two days off work, the IGP wanted DIG Idrees to reach Kasur at first light the next morning. The IGP further told him that this was a make or break case for Punjab Police and had to be worked out at any cost, since there was apprehension that it was linked to the series of seven or eight incidents that had been pending unresolved since 2015. Hence DIG Idrees had no other option but to reach Kasur early on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2018, while asking his wife to look after the family gathering at Lahore. Life had extended him the opportunity to try and work out one of the most significant cases in the history of the country, a case in which at least two AIGs Investigation, Punjab and numerous other officers of Superintendent of Police level<sup>14</sup> had failed in past three years.

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<sup>12</sup> Inspector General of Police.

<sup>13</sup> The formal JIT notification was issued on 11.01.2018 and can be seen at Annexure "A".

<sup>14</sup> The police hierarchy in Pakistan starts with the Inspector General of Police at the top of the structure in every province and moves downwards through Additional, Deputy, Assistant inspectors general of police and below then

## **Background Information**

Kasur had in recent past experienced child pornography incidents which had invited considerable criticism against police inefficiency. Although the gang had been busted but the outcome had remained poor. While the policing process had proceeded through arrests, interrogations, court indictments (locally called “*challans*”) and prosecution, all this had not ended in solid evidence based convictions which could stand the test before higher judiciary during appeals. In the latest Zainab case, the same perpetrator involved in similar acts since 2015 was suspected and the incident was at least the ninth one that had been registered.

Since the start of these incidents, the first of which was registered on 23.06.2015 in PS Saddar Kasur, the local police had kept treating these as isolated cases. They were just following knee-jerk reactions and attempting to placate the most concerned families of victims and mollify the locals. When things were about to boil over after the third incident, the local police had resorted to the extra-judicial killing of a suspect on 24.02.2017, believing that this subterfuge would silence the apprehensions of the people.<sup>15</sup> However, much to their misfortune – and in spite of a possible innocent death – as the real target had slipped away, the incidents continued unabated, and soon increased in frequency. It appeared as if the real criminal involved had seen through the poor and ineffective working ability of the local police and had decided to enhance his criminality with an amplified frequency. Keeping with their usual *modus operandi*, the family of the deceased Mudassar who had been killed in cold blood had also been silenced through some “palm greasing” and an “out of court” settlement of sorts by the local Station House Officer(s) (SHOs) and Sub-Divisional Police Officers (SDPOs).

However, the undiminished perpetuation of the incidents, especially at dusk, sensitized the IGP office as well as the provincial government, who responded by adding section 7-ATA (Anti-Terrorism Act) to these incident reports, as these were not only gruesome in nature but did actually terrorize communities.

The responsibility of working out these cases was given to two senior police officers responsible for supervising investigations at the provincial level, i.e. Additional IGPs Investigation (AIGPI) Punjab who were also made convener of JITs. Already having more than their share of work-loads at their own offices located at Lahore, these officers could find little time to devote to working out cases occurring at Kasur. Other than just a few erratic visits to the district, they just made some conventional efforts. First they started asking the local police to come up with lists of suspects during their visits; after interviewing the suspects who had been rounded up, they would get some of them to undergo DNA testing. Since local police had also been passing the buck around while bringing the suspects without employing any professionalism, no match

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Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents of Police; below them are the Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors, Asst. Sub-Inspectors, and Constables.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1386066> (accessed on 15 December, 2021).

became possible while working with close to 100 tests that had been sent to the Punjab Forensic Science Agency (PFSA), Lahore. Another step initiated by the conveners of these JITs was to ask the local police to get CCTV cameras installed at some places of potential interest so that the culprit could be spotted and identified with the help of locals; in this process, they made use of the provisions Punjab Security of Vulnerable Establishment Act, 2015. They also made 'decoy deployments' that included female police officers, especially at dusk, to attempt catching the person involved. However, both these steps were taken as routine policing. Hence, the CCTV cameras that were installed were of poor quality and the decoy deployments were only on paper.

With every new incident, the government would come up with notifying a new JIT under the same AIGPI Punjab as convener; the process would begin anew so that the local police could show off to the locals that they were going the extra mile to work-out the case(s) and apprehend the criminal(s) involved. Even, the local police never gave an impression to others or themselves considered that it was just one perpetrator who was involved in the series of incidents, the number of which was now approaching a dozen.

## **Narrative**

*To maintain interest and flow, the following narration is built up in 11 scenes*

### **Scene 1**

In the city of Kasur, one 6-year old girl Zainab had gone to the house of her maternal grandmother located on a local street about 200 meters from her house on a winter evening (04.01.2018) at around 07:00 pm along with her 4-year old cousin for a *Qur'an* lesson. The road between her house and the house of her maternal grandmother was a busy street occupied by people throughout the day and till late hours. Her parents had gone to offer *Umra* (the lesser pilgrimage in Makkah) and her paternal uncle was taking care of the three children (Zainab, a brother and a sister). At about 08:15 pm, her cousin returned home but without Zainab. Upon being asked he intimated that while going towards her maternal grandmother's house, she had gone straight whereas he went on to take his lesson. With more than ten incidents of kidnapping of minor girls reported in the city since 2015, all of which happened close to twilight, the family was concerned over the absence of the girl.

All of the children missing earlier had been subjected to rape or sodomy and killed or seriously injured. With these activities of a serial kidnapper cum rapist and murderer, the city had been on a heightened level of panic in recent past. A recent unofficial confirmation from PFSA had suggested that the DNA of just one perpetrator had been identified from the vaginal / anal swabs of at least eight such victims in the series of incidents that were spread over at least three police stations of the city. Naturally being upset, the paternal uncle of the girl searched for her at the maternal grandmother's

house; upon his inability to find a clue, he called the police at the emergency response Rescue 15.

## **Scene 2**

Rescue 15 of Kasur, received a call from a person at 09:30 pm on 04.01.2018 who reported the missing status or possible kidnapping of a girl. The local police was immediately dispatched to the place of occurrence. District Police Officer (DPO) also visited the area and placed his force both in uniform and civvies to search for the missing girl. He called the office in-charge of the decoy deployment to know if he had come across any clue, but to no avail. The local police registered a case of child kidnapping u/s 363 Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), as there was a strong apprehension that it might be the act of the same serial criminal.

## **Scene 3**

Some 10 incidents had occurred within the Area of Responsibility (AOR) of the three city area police stations of the district over the past two and half years. In all of these, the kidnapped minor girls had been recovered, either dead or seriously injured from within an area of 0.5 km<sup>2</sup> from the point where they had been picked up – and within couple of hours – in either under construction or abandoned houses or from sites where debris had collected. Accordingly, the local police as well as area residents started to search for the girl in close vicinity to the point of her disappearance. All the past victims had been molested sexually and only three had survived the act. However, none had been able to identify the accused involved due to their tender age and the horrific act which they had undergone. One such victim (*Kainat Batool*) had become paralyzed and mentally retarded for the rest of her life – and still languished in a hospital.<sup>16</sup> Almost all victims came from poor to lower middle class financial backgrounds – a fact that could have been a possible lead. All such incidents had occurred close to twilight. Unfortunately, more than two hours had elapsed since the girl went missing before the crime had been reported to Rescue 15. Hence there were chances that if girl had been kidnapped by the same serial kidnapper-rapist-killer, the inevitable would have followed.

## **Scene 4**

One day had elapsed since the girl had gone missing. The local police had placed police officers/officials<sup>17</sup> in uniform in the busy street of the house of the missing girl. Half-heartedly, some police officials and locals had also tried to search the girl in nearby debris heaps spread over several acres as well as in under construction or abandoned

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.geo.tv/latest/191781-seven-year-old-kasur-rape-survivor-still-under-treatment> (accessed on 15 December, 2021).

<sup>17</sup> The distinction between “officers” and “officials” is a classical case of post-colonial rank-based discrimination: the “officers” are those functionaries who are in or above grade 17 in a 1-22 grade system while “officials” are below grade 17.

houses, but to no avail. The parents of the girl who were in Saudi Arabia were informed about the unfortunate incident; they were unable to return due to non-availability of a flight. Police officers brought along chairs and whiled away their time sitting in the busy street, eating oranges and peanuts and throwing away the peels and further messing up the road side. They were also seen and heard chatting with each other and loudly cracking jokes. This too was annoyingly noticed by family and friends of the still missing girl: *the police personnel hardly seemed to be sensitized about the bombshell that just lay underneath their feet.*

In the meantime friends and family of the missing minor had become active; they were trying to search for clues by checking CCTV cameras installed close to the house of the maternal grandmother of Zainab. One such CCTV camera possibly showed the missing girl following an unidentified person at the time of incident. Further tracking of such CCTV cameras exposed a couple of other footages which probably showed the girl walking along with the unidentified person, initially independently and later holding his finger for at least 25 minutes before disappearing in the last footage some 2.5 kilometers from her home. Unfortunately the quality of all CCTV camera was very poor and it was hard for even the close relatives of the girl to identify her, had it not been for her clothes and matching of the timing.

As noted above, when such incidents had started taking place in the city in the recent past, the local police had resorted to get a few CCTV cameras installed at important places; however, there had been no effective follow-up. The quality of imaging captured by the CCTV cameras was not of much concern to either the police or the owners of premises who had installed the substandard cameras – more by way of getting to comply with the police directives and getting them off their backs. Hence everyone was now paying a heavy price, as it was hard to identify the missing girl or the person accompanying her. Even the decoy deployments that had supposedly been made at sundown had failed to generate results. The local police had failed miserably in working-out things responsibly and in a professional manner. This had brought the city to a proverbial boiling point. The two JIT heads (AIGPI Punjab) had also failed to help the local police in their task.

## Scene 5

Over the next two days, the focus of search had shifted from the busy street where the girl had gone missing to the area where she had been last spotted in the CCTV footage along with the possible kidnapper some 2.5 kilometers away. Many under construction houses as well as debris collection points were searched but to no avail. The enthusiasm of the public as well as local police kept declining with every passing day. The DPO had failed to take up the investigation in a professional manner and was merely taking this as just another case in the series. *Perhaps he was also hoping that – as in the past – things will pass over and people will forget soon.* The people, for their part, had started to believe that since contrary to past experience, no dead body had been

recovered and as the quality of the CCTV footages did not clearly show the girl in an identifiable form, hence she might be safe at some place or might have lost her trail to house. Even the family of the missing girl had started *hoping against hope*. The parents of the missing girl were still in Saudi Arabia waiting for their scheduled flight back. The local police, sitting idly in the busy street of the missing girl, were still annoying the public with their clumsy presence.

## **Scene 6**

On the fifth day of the girl having gone missing (i.e. Tuesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of January), at around 12:30 pm, the local SHO while searching through a debris heap located some 500 meters from the busy street where the girl had gone missing found the dead body a minor girl lying face down between a pile of coloured plastic shopping bags. The body was draped in clothes matching the description of bright coloured attire that the missing girl had been reported to be in when last seen. The clothes were still neat and clean and without any wrinkles; the dead body appeared to be of a person about the same age as the missing girl. However, the face was not exposed and no one was allowed access close enough so as not to compromise the crime scene. The trouser of the girl had been pulled down slightly from the buttocks and the dead body did not show any advanced signs of putrefaction. Fortunately, the body was in one piece and no animal bites were seen as would have been likely if it had been there for some time. The news of the recovery of a missing girl's dead body spread throughout not just the town but far and wide like a jungle fire. People, including the paternal uncle and relatives of the missing girl, started to gather at the recovery point. However, the local SHO managed to keep the public away till a satellite team of PFSA had reached. After collecting all possible circumstantial evidence, and completion of crime scene photography that marked the crime scene including placement of dead body, it was shifted to the District HQ (DHQ) hospital for a post mortem examination and completion of the formalities u/s 174 Criminal Procedure Code (Cr.P.C.) by the Investigation Officer (IO). The uncle of the missing girl also identified the dead body.

Soon an angry crowd gathered outside the DHQ mortuary and started chanting slogans against local police as well as the government. As the police had gone on the defensive, the doctors at the hospital were also quite apprehensive of the developing situation. The postmortem was carried out by a young Woman Medical Officer (WMO) who did not have any experience of conducting postmortems. Unofficially, she was being assisted by the Medical Superintendent (MS) and the District Health Officer (DHO), both males, who while being fairly experienced were raw hands as far as forensic medicine was concerned and not entitled to see a naked female dead body. However, in order to cover-up her lack of knowledge, the female doctor took a few pictures of the dead body to serve for future reference. By late afternoon, the dead body had been handed over to the family, who brought it home. The burial was performed the next

morning (Wednesday) after the funeral prayer had been led by a known religious scholar.<sup>18</sup>

## **Scene 7**

After recovery of the dead body, panic had ensued amongst not just the local PS staff including the SHO but also the upper police command. The SHO was directed to work out the case at any cost – but, unfortunately, without any guidance extended by the local command. As the media had blown up the situation, the provincial government, with its own defensive stance, had taken notice of the long series of serious incidents which the local police had been unable to work out. The PFSA had previously confirmed to the provincial government, albeit unofficially, that just one serial perpetrator had been involved in at least seven to eight previous incidents within the jurisdiction of three police stations of the city. It was apprehended that this incident was a continuity of those crimes.

In order to show some progress to their seniors, the local police had haphazardly rounded up some two dozen persons from the area. In the night, two of those apprehended were set free after they exhibited poor health: one was set free due to his urge to get his (narcotic) drug shot whereas the other one, though young, had complained about experiencing chest pain in the lock-up. Yet, no interrogation report what so ever, was generated.

The next afternoon, after the burial, the mob exhibiting uninhibited rowdiness tried to enter the office of the Deputy Commissioner located in another Police Station's jurisdiction. As a consequence, the law enforcement personnel opened fire that resulted in the killing of two and injuries to several persons.<sup>19</sup> Media, opposition and independent groups highlighted the incident as poor performance of government. The shift from blaming the local police to criticism of the provincial government was now in full swing. Section 7 of the ATA was added to the case already registered on 04.01.2018. Coming under extreme pressure, the provincial government notified a JIT under AIGPI of the province (the same officer who had been heading other JITs formed over the past seven to eight months to investigate the cases perpetrated by the same serial rapist- cum-killer).

In the meantime, the parents of the unfortunate girl had also landed back and reached home. In order to placate the media as well as pacify the general public, the Chief Minister Punjab, accompanied by the IGP, visited the house of the victim after dawn on the second day after recovery of the dead body (January 11<sup>th</sup> 2018). On the demand of the father of the girl, the Chief Minister decided to change the JIT's convener. As a result, names of potential candidates for heading the JIT were collected through various

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<sup>18</sup> <https://dailytimes.com.pk/178056/kasur-two-dead-protests-tahir-ul-qadri-leads-zainabs-funeral-prayer/> (accessed on 16 December, 2021).

<sup>19</sup> <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1606568/chaos-kasur-third-day-running> (accessed on 17 December, 2021).

agencies and the IGP Punjab. This led to the RPO Multan, Mr. Muhammad Idrees Ahmed, being notified as head of the JIT two days after recovery of the dead body (notification dated 11.01.2018 is at Annexure “A”).

The IGP talked to the new convener and told him that the case had to be worked out at all costs. The new convener reached the city at first light on 12.01.2018 and established his office at the office of the SP Investigation. This was the third day after recovery of the dead body of the minor girl Zainab.

## **Scene 8**

One day after the post mortem and burial (as well as the violent mob attack), the female doctor issued a postmortem report, which may be seen at Annexure “B”.

## **Scene 9**

The new JIT head Mr. Idrees visited the father of the unfortunate Zainab along with the IGP on the evening of his arrival – the third day after recovery of the body – and assured him that no effort would be spared in resolving the case.

Setting out to the task immediately, Mr. Idrees associated one person from unfortunate family with the JIT in order to generate confidence and ensure sharing of any new knowledge that may be of interest to them. Details of the entire route and CCTV footages were collected. The 2.5 kilometer long trail was covered on foot by Mr. Idrees. Maps were drawn to show the full trail of the CCTV footages as well as the area from where the body had been recovered. The debris heap from where the body had been recovered was also visited. On the same map, past incidents, possibly from the same series, were plotted to bring out greater clarity. The last footage showed the girl accompanying the perpetrator some 2.5 km from the place of kidnapping, whereas the location from where dead body was recovered was located just around 500 meters from her house. CCTV footages did not show any reverse movement of the either the girl or the perpetrator. A Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) was also notified as part of the JIT to assist in writing of case file and preparation of the *challan* u/s 173 CrPC. A long list of questions to serve as the basis of the probe was developed; it included following lines of inquiry:

1. Had the girl been raped and murdered on the same day that she had been kidnapped? If yes, why did the postmortem suggest otherwise? If not, why were all the injuries ante-mortem?
2. Why were the clothes of the girl wrinkle free at the time of body’s recovery and the postmortem examination?

3. Had the girl been molested at the place from where dead body was recovered or had the body been dumped there later? If the sexual act was committed at some other place, how and when was the body transported to debris heap?
4. Why had sexual acts been committed both in the anal and vaginal cavities, especially if it was just one perpetrator, as indicated by the DNA extracted from both sites (according to the forensic report)? Were both cavities abused at the same time or at different times/ on separate days?
5. Why was the dead body lying face side down?
6. Was there any codified message in the depression caused by the laying of the dead body?
7. Why were the vaginal and anal tears on the posterior side alone?
8. Why did the unknown criminal choose to take girl 2.5 kilometers away while the dead body was found only half a kilometer away from her home?
9. How well versed was the criminal with the general area? Was he a local of the area or an outsider?
10. Why was no one able to identify the criminal despite having watched the footages?
11. Was the perpetrator suffering from some mental or other disorder?
12. Was there any role of black magic or spiritual charmers in the act?
13. Could there be any co-relation between the incident and the dates of the lunar cycle?
14. Was the victim girl known to the perpetrator (as she had walked comfortably a long distance with him)?
15. What should be the course of action that would yield certain results?
16. How long would be needed to work out the case?

The main question before Mr. Idrees and his team was with regard to the resources that would be required to solve the crime? There was an additional question also: if the case could not be proceeded against with conventional policing techniques, should they try with non-conventional policing techniques. After all, *to gain something one never had required something that never before had been tried.*

## **Scene 10**

Incidents similar to this had taken place over the past three years and, thus far, the local police had not been able to identify the serial criminal involved. As a result, Mr. Idrees was faced with a gigantic challenge for devising a strategy so locate the perpetrator who was either very naïve or too smart, as he was leaving his DNA signatures all over. While he needed to adopt some *out of the box solution*, at the same time, this new strategy could not undermine conventional policing steps required to be taken. A list of conventional and innovative policing techniques employed in working out the Zainab case appears at Annexure “C”.

Mr. Idrees knew that around a year back, the National Census had been conducted throughout the country, but its data had not been released; he called the local census officials to learn the precise data needed to figure out each the presence of every person present within a radius of three kilometers from the epicenter of the eight or nine similar incidents attributed to the same serial criminal. The data required involved some 19 census blocks which translated into a population of about 400,000. As Federal Secretary responsible for the census data had declined to share the same, the CM Punjab was asked to play his role and the needful was done within 36 hours. The strategy was to screen out each and every individual enrolled in census data within the extensive 3-kilometer radius and call only those meeting certain criteria for DNA testing. Based on the CCTV footages available and severity of the act, the criteria developed with the help of experts includes the following:

- (i) male (women, children, teen and elderly were excluded),
  - (ii) able bodied, grown up, strongly built, broad shouldered,
  - (iii) wheatish complexion,
  - (iv) age between 22 to 30/35, around 5’-7” tall,<sup>20</sup> beady eyes (small),
  - (v) fully grown mustaches and beard, opened lips, at least no physical deformity in his left hand; a normal gait,
  - (vi) wearing a jacket with buttons on the shoulder and back on neck
1. The original census team members (30 in all) were assigned to visit each household along with 2-3 police officers; every team comprised 5-7 officials. The teams were to personally meet / see each every person.
  2. While exercising exclusions, they had to bring along only those meeting the criteria for DNA profiling to the SP Investigation office, (the process of exclusion followed is explained at Annexure “E”).
  3. Dedicated PFSA teams were placed in the SP office; for every person of interest, a one page Interrogation Report was to be generated.

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<sup>20</sup> height measurement process of accused is explained at Annexure “D”.

4. The entire exercise was to be completed in 7 days.
5. To give confidence to the general public, the victim's family was requested to get the DNA testing of all their near and dear ones fulfilling the criteria; this was done on the first day – and more as a dry or practice run. However, since the show was organized by the local police (not the JIT) on day one, hence some of those brought in got away without getting their DNA profiling done despite entering the premises.
6. Public announcements were made through loudspeakers by family members and neighbours; locals also came out to assist.

## Scene 11

On the fifth day of the systematic exercise for DNA sampling, one young person was brought in from his house located some 500 meters from victim's house. After extraction of buccal swab sample (DNA sample No. 874), he appeared to suffer a heart attack. Earlier, he had also claimed to have undergone the testing on the first day of the practice run conducted through the local police. However, the DNA database developed (on CNIC basis) could not justify this claim. It transpired that those on duty had immediately allowed him to leave for medical attention without generating the required one-page *interrogation report*. This case of a young man suffering a heart attack was not reported to the JIT head until next afternoon when a discrepancy in the figures of those brought in for testing and those who actually underwent the DNA profiling was reported (as the tally of tests and interrogation reports generated that day did not match). Further surveillance revealed that the person was a labourer aged between 23 and 24 and used to work for construction of houses. Upon checking, he was reported to be hale and hearty at his residence (in spite of the earlier reported incident). Hence he was picked up for interrogation on the directions of the JIT head the next day.

During preliminary interrogation, he admitted to the act of taking the girl for someone else; during later investigation this proved to be wrong.<sup>21</sup> He was the sole culprit involved. As reported by PFSA, his DNA matched 100% (at all 16 loci). A formal arrest was made. That was on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2018. A press conference was convened by the CM Punjab along with Zainab's father to break the news to the media. The rest – interrogation, indictment ('*challaning*'), prosecution and pronouncement of the verdict from the Anti-Terrorism Court and the higher judiciary – is, as they say, history.

Accused Imran Ali was hanged on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2021 after his mercy petition was turned down by the President of Pakistan and his black warrant had been issued. (The detail of various courts decisions is given at Annexure "F").<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.geo.tv/latest/178449-zainab-murder-suspect-imran-used-to-lure-victims-promising-to-buy-sweets> (accessed on 21 December, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-45885686> (accessed on 22 December, 2021).

## **Analysis**

### **1. Why the Event Transpired**

This violent act transpired because of the evil desire of the accused to serially kidnap, rape and murder minor girls. He had been involved in this nefarious activity for over four years. The accused had initially started visiting prostitutes, but as he did not earn enough to support his lust and because the elderly women provided little pleasure to him, he turned towards minor girls who were otherwise available without spending anything. During his two initial unsuccessful endeavors, he was caught by the families and friends of the minor girls, yet he was set free after being abused and without being reported to police.

After the extrajudicial killing of Mudassar in 2017 by local police to support the claim that the perpetrator involved in these acts had been killed, the accused Imran Ali realized that the police was incompetent and could not catch him. That gave him impetus to push further with his malicious activity at a higher frequency. Hence the incidents kept on increasing with lesser intervals in between. That accelerated growth in incidents was a serious point of concern for the locals, who had started to agitate the issue. Finally after two agitators were killed by police firing when a protesting mob had protested after the burial of the Zainab, the CM Punjab had been forced to ensure that a strong professional be assigned to work out the incidents before further damage.

### **2. The Complications of the Case**

Working out this crime was not all that simple. The serial incidents had been taking place over three years with impunity; the frequency had gone up to an extent that the perpetrator had started to undertake his venture every couple of months. The last such act was committed by him only 50 days back in the AOR of the same PS (*less than seven days after the death of his father*). Some of the challenges in working out this case are as under:

- (a) The district police chief had been shifted out after the incident; the new one had no background knowledge of the area.
- (b) The incident was the most covered one in the recent media history of Pakistan; the media was hyping up the matters for its own ratings.<sup>23</sup> The JIT did not have any time to waste in interacting with media and instead needed to work out the case within shortest possible time.
- (c) The local police had not been able to seek out the same serial kidnapper in the past three years, creating a serious aspersion on its performance. The main reasons for

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1398484> (accessed on 25 December, 2021).

the failure of the local police was their lack of seriousness that had led to inaction and their lacking public trust. By the time of the Zainab case, the interval between the incidents was narrowing down. Shabby police presence – just sitting around and the cracking jokes – and acting aimlessly and unprofessionally was the real barrier and a serious breakdown of governance could have been ignited anytime.

- (d) Although the locals had caught the perpetrator Imran Ali twice – even before 2015 – but they had ever this reported to police.
- (e) In order to show a false success, the local police had killed an alleged criminal (Mudassar) in an “encounter” in 2017 and linked him with the first three or four cases; he was later found to be innocent. This incident had also promoted inaction amongst the local police. Public trust was also missing, as two innocent persons were killed during the agitations at DC office on 10.01.2018.
- (f) *Suo motu* notices were taken by the Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) and Lahore High Court. The head of the JIT was called twice by SCP to tender reports, while time was of the essence.
- (g) The Women’s Medical Officer had stated that the dead body was only 2-3 days old at the time of postmortem, whereas the girl had been missing for almost five days (116 hours); this also posed a serious challenge in working out the case, as were the lack of advanced putrefaction and animal bites on the dead body. Vaginal and anal tears were on posterior side with one seminal DNA located from both, and all injuries were ante-mortem. All these facts seemed to make it impossible for one perpetrator to perform the sexual act at different times. It was imperative to connect the missing threads and also to bridge the disconnects between the post mortem and other findings.
- (h) The previous JITs headed by two senior (pay-scale 21) officers had been unable to work out the serial criminal involved. It seems that they had more serious business at respective offices and neglected this case.
- (i) Electronic surveillance through CCTV and geo-fencing did not provide any lead. The IOs had nothing to offer. The criminal involved was required to be looked at from a new approach, which was missing before the latest JIT had been convened.
- (j) Media, government or pressure groups were not ready to give the team much time, which made it imperative for the JIT and the provincial police to work out the case in no time.
- (k) No independent witness was available and the CCTV footage was very poor.

- (l) Devising a trouble free connection between the census database and the DNA was a task; if the case had been handled professionally earlier by matching the same identifiable markers against census data over a spread of three kilometers' radius from its epicenter with a population of 400,000 in three police stations, quicker resolution would have been possible. This out of box approach required confidential information of the last census which in turn needed a push from an office no less than that of the chief executives of Punjab and the Federation. Census data of 400,000 persons required printing 50,000-60,000 pages, but effective segregation and assortment for assigning dedicated teams to undertake the searches helped a lot.
- (m) CCTV footages showed girl moving a distance of some 2.5 km from her place of kidnapping along with the criminal of her free will, whereas her dead body was recovered from debris heap located some 0.5 km from her home. This posed a formidable challenge towards working out a possible place where the girl was kept before her body brought to the debris heap. The clues being offered by the depression under the dead body, its placement, neatness of the clothes could also have offered clues.
- (n) Extracting information out of poor quality CCTV footages was a serious challenge (as the PFSA remained unable to enhance the quality); this did not assist in identification and arrest of the accused, and would not have been valid evidence in courts of law.
- (o) Preventing the next incident was another real challenge. The only acceptable solution was the arrest of the culprit. With poor quality CCTVs installed, poor decoy deployment, and a large number of targets (girls belonging to lower middle class), this was not easy.
- (p) After the arrest, the next challenge was not one of simple indictment ('challenging'), but of procuring a conviction in the absence of an ocular account and reluctant attitude of the father of the deceased girl.
- (q) To gain cheap popularity, a popular TV anchor (Dr. Shahid Masood) had invented his dark web theory, in which the accused was operating a pornography ring and was actually a billionaire having hundreds of bank accounts for his money transactions. This resulted in wastage of three days to scrutinize this claim.

## **Conclusion**

This case was a highly challenging one and a make or break situation for the police department. Fortunately, the team was able to successfully work out and identify the perpetrator by undertaking an out-of-the-box approach, thereby providing Punjab police with a face saving. It offers a wide range of lessons for departments and society

at large to address issues in unconventional ways and adopt a proactive approach in dealing with such challenges.

In the end, the effort was highly rewarding, not only for the persons involved in working out the case, but for the police and the community as a whole. The main takeaway was the lesson that *extraordinary challenges required an extraordinary effort*. A criminal who was active for three years, was worked out, arrested, challaned and got convicted mainly because of adopting the out of box approach by MIA. The rare combination of using census data and DNA profiling was used to work out the crime, that too without the assistance of any of intelligence agencies. The main lessons learnt include the following:

- (a) In order to dedicate more time to professional work and avoid needless entanglements, the media was neither engaged directly nor through press briefs, which left space open for speculation. In this respect, the reliance was placed only on the Punjab government. The media did undertake certain speculations that could have been averted by interactive briefings. However, the police should have a dedicated media department staffed by professionals.
- (b) The running of speculative programmes by Dr. Shahid were not countered; this resulted in the passing of stricture by the SCP that in case of extra-judicial killing of the accused, the IGP would be personally responsible. This made IGP extra conscious regarding security of arrested accused, making his interrogation cumbersome.
- (c) As the case was a make or break one for the Punjab police, the team lead did all planning himself which consumed precious time. Given an opportunity, planning of conventional steps could have been delegated to appropriate persons while the team lead could have focused on the non-conventional aspects. Police officers need to be trained in working out challenging crimes that can have major repercussions for the government.
- (d) In the period leading up to his arrest, the frequency of committing offences by accused had increased. Any further repetition would have been detrimental for the team lead, especially at a time when the local police was displaying complacency. Given an opportunity, effective measures should be made for the improvement in the quality of CCTV surveillance in urban areas – even when installed with private assistance.
- (e) Society has learnt the use of media to force the government to take action on genuine demands. In the present case, although several parents had lost their daughters, yet it was only the collective effort by media that had forced

the government to put all resources to work out the crime.<sup>24</sup> Law makers had also realized the importance of the issue and came up with Zainab Alert Bill in 2019.

- (f) The Anti-Terrorism Court announced the conviction and awarded the death penalty to the accused after only six (06) days of trial – almost certainly the shortest in the history of the country. The appeals made by the accused before the LHC and SCP were rejected on merit and his mercy petition before the President of Pakistan was rejected. Hence Imran Ali was hanged till death on 17.10.2018, within 10 months of his arrest, due to effective team work, which left every one wiser after the coordinated effort.

## **Recommendations**

The apprehension of Imran Ali was as difficult as it was to ensure his conviction. In policing, it is said that all steps entailed in controlling crime are equally important. These include identifying the accused, effecting arrest, interrogation, bridging the clues to complete the jigsaw puzzle, submitting the *challan*, prosecuting effectively and ensuring conviction. Any break at any of these steps can make the achievement of final goal, i.e. gaining conviction, impossible. In this case, both conventional policing and non-conventional techniques were employed. Some of the recommendations in averting such breaks are as under:

- (a) Departments like Police should have a mechanism for moving outside the box / comfort zones; capacity building in this regard should negate apt knee jerks; seniority and experience of the team lead conducting investigation can only matter, if s/he is able to think outside the box.
- (b) Creating community trust is possible through community policing and effective documentation; locals residents should be educated not to take things for granted; even seemingly trivial incidents should be reported to the local police;
- (c) In working out cases, resources do matter, but after only after a strong plan.
- (d) Creating a criminal database can be a great help in pursuing crime.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.geo.tv/latest/178449-zainab-murder-suspect-imran-used-to-lure-victims-promising-to-buy-sweets> (accessed on 21 December, 2021).

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Identifiable features of the accused workout by MIA and his team while carefully studying the poor quality footages procured during investigation.

## Annexures

### Annexure "A"

### JOINT INVESTIGATION TEAM NOTIFICATION ISSUED VIDE HOME DEPARTMENT'S NO. SO (JUDL-III) 11-KASUR/2018 DATED 11.01.2018 THROUGH WHICH MIA WAS NOTIFIED AS CONVENER TO THE JOINT INVESTIGATION TEAM OF ZAINEB CASE OF KASUR

✓



GOVERNMENT OF THE PUNJAB  
HOME DEPARTMENT

Dated: Lahore, the 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2018

**CORRIGENDUM**  
**OEDEE**

No. SO (JUDL-III) 11-Kasur/2018. In pursuance of the request made by Inspector General of Police / Provincial Police Officer Punjab vide letter No. 633/ Inv / HA dated 11.01.2018 and in exercise of powers under Section 19 (f) of Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, the Convener of Joint Investigation Team (JIT) constituted vide this department's order of even number dated 10.01.2018 to conduct and finalize investigation in case FIR No. 06/18 dated 4.01.2018 is substituted with Mr. Muhammad Idrees, Deputy Inspector General of Police / Regional Police Officer, Multan Region.

**MAJ. (RETD) AZAM SULEMAN KHAN**  
Additional Chief Secretary, Home

**No. & Date Even**

A copy is forwarded for information and necessary action to:

1. The Provincial Police Officer/ IGP, Punjab, Lahore w/r to their letter referred above.
2. The Additional Inspector General of Police, Special Branch, Punjab.
3. The Secretary, Public Prosecution Department, Punjab, Lahore.
4. Members of the JIT.
5. Regional Police Officer, Sheikhupura Region.
6. Deputy Commissioner Kasur.
7. District Police Officer, Kasur.
8. PSO to Chief Secretary, Punjab.
9. PS to Additional Chief Secretary (Home), Punjab.

  
(ABDUL GHAFOOR) 11.01.18  
SECTION OFFICER (JUDICIAL-III)

**Annexure “B”**

**POST MORTEM FINDINGS IN THE CASE OF THE ZAINEB AMEEN  
RECORDED BY DR. QURATULAIN, WMO, DHQ, KASUR DATED  
09<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY AND 16<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2018**

One day after post mortem and after burial / rowdyism of the mob, the female doctor issued the postmortem report, which would run as under:-

**Description of injuries:-**

*“(No ligature mark seen) around neck. External Genitalia’s are stained with the blood from front side and fecal matter was coming out. Eyes closed and mouth semi opened (small amount of clotted blood in right nostril and on the lower lip).*

*The black mud is present on the right side of the face. The postmortem staining was present. Anterior abdominal wall was greenish, tongue is protruding out from the teeth.*

*Hyoid bone fractured, the muscles attached were congested with blood ooze from the neck muscles on dissection”.*

**All injuries were termed as “ante-mortem”, with time between injury and death “almost immediately” and the time between death and postmortem “2-3 days”.**

**Postmortem / Final Opinion (by WMO on 7<sup>th</sup> day of postmortem after having received FSA report):-**

**Regarding Toxicology:-** *“Drugs and poisons were not detected”.*

**Regarding death:-** *“Asphyxia due to throttling, which is sufficient to cause death in ordinary course of nature and caused by blunt weapon”.*

**Regarding sexual assault:-** *“Hymen is ruptured (torn). Swelling is present around labia minora. Posterior vaginal tear is present extending up-to 3cm. Swelling is also present around the anus. A tear measuring 1/2cm x 1cm is present at 8 O'clock position. From the foregoing observations I am of the opinion that both rape and sodomy has been done”.*

## Annexure “C”

### LIST OF CONVENTIONAL AND NON-CONVENTIONAL TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED IN WORKING OUT THE ACCUSED OF ZAINEB AMEEN CASE

#### Conventional Steps

During the course of investigation, following routine / conventional police investigation steps were employed:-

1. Past record of police, Jail and health department were scrolled through
2. Ground surveillance teams were put in place
3. Mobile Data analysis (Call Data Record – CDR) was undertaken
4. Geo fencing was done (traffic of more than 24,000 numbers were analyzed)
5. Public requested to share information (Rs.10 million announced as reward leading to the arrest of the one involved)
6. Decoy deployment to avert next incident was made at important places
7. CCTV installed at various places were got checked for their operation the quality of the footage
8. Following databases are being searched to work out those present or missing from the affected areas to further trace the criminal involved:-
  - I. Pictorial NADRA data for the Tehsil Kasur
  - II. Pictorial Traffic licenses data issued since 1st September, 2015
  - III. Voter lists from last election 2013
  - IV. Criminal database of the district as well as the Prison department (u/s 376/377/302/363/511 PPC)
  - V. Scrutiny of hotel lodgers through “Hotel Eye”
  - VI. Immigration record from FIA after date of incident
  - VII. AIDS infected persons from DHQ
  - VIII. Labour points (eight in number in the city)
  - IX. Workers at Graveyards and the residents at shrines, etc.
  - X. Other related persons surveilled through included labourers, masons, theurgist / charmers, *malangs*, unsound minds, balloon sellers, vagabonds, nomads, drug paddlers, cable operators, milk sellers, hawkers, contractors, ice cream sellers, shop keepers, meter readers, baggers, sweepers from slum areas, rickshaw drivers, barbers, truck drivers, petrol pump workers, garbage collectors, gym owners / runners, runners of internet cafes, etc.

#### Non-conventional steps

During the course of investigation, following out of box / non-conventional police investigation steps were employed, many of which were altogether new for the police investigation in the country:-

1. Laying and over-laying the past 9 crime incidents being attributed to the accused on Google map, for convenience of study and working with the census database
2. Census data of 2017 was procured. Based on the 3 km radius from the epicenter of at-least 8 incidents, some 19 census identified blocks with a population of 400,000 people was

identified to work with. The purpose was to start the process of elimination (explained separately).

3. Sub Committees formed to look after the shortlisting of suspects based on the identifiable features and DNA collection of suspects
  - a. Pointing out the missing ones
  - b. House to house search
  - c. Activation of out of order CCTVs
  - d. Raids on suspects
  - e. Analysis teams
4. Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission, Pakistan (SUPARCO) was consulted – however, were unable to offer anything significant
5. Dovetailed all relevant institutes including the Census staff as well as the Psychiatrist Team from King Edward Medical University (KEMU) with regard to study the nature of the accused involved and working out the possible personality traits, etc.
6. PFSA was engaged – DNA profile of 1,179 persons were collected in 6 days
7. Intelligence Agencies were kept on board
8. List of Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) infected persons from DHQ to see any possible attempt by any infected / affected one to get rid of his disease by doing such rituals of raping and killing minor girls.

**Annexure “D”**

**PROCESS OF COMPUTING THE HEIGHT OF THE ACCUSED INVOLVED IN THE CASE OF THE ZAINEB AMEEN**

In this case before the identification and arrest of the accused, the JIT only had an access to the height of the deceased victim Zaineb Ameen. The height forms very important part of the identifiable features, which play vital role in shortlisting and identifying any known or unknown accused. JIT had with them the meniscus scale based pictures of the accused with victim while walking procured through the CCTV footages. The same footages, which otherwise were of little use to identify the accused, were still good enough to divulge about the height related information of the accused through comparison between the heights of accused and the victims. Hence the following principle was applied to gain an access to the possible height of the accused:-

- Height of deceased (Zaineb Ameen) on Form 25-35(1)(b) of Police Rules 1934 at serial No. 18 was 3'0" (the same was recorded in her post mortem profile sheet too by the WMO)
- Equation between accused : victim height (using the meniscus scale reading)
  - 1.8611 : 1.0 ratio
  - 5'7" : 3'0" (by multiplying 3' with 1.8611 ratio come to 5.5833. Now multiply 0.5833 with 12 to get additional inches after 5', which comes to 6.9996". So 5' and 6.9996 inches, gets to 5'7"). This gave the height of accused close to 5 feet and 7 inches

## **Annexure “E”**

### **PROCESS OF EXCLUSION EMPLOYED DURING THE SEARCH OF THE ACCUSED OF THE CASE OF THE ZAINEB AMEEN AGAINST THE IDENTIFIABLE FEATURES FORMULATED BY THE JIT IN CONSULTATION WITH PFSA**

The process of exclusion was designed to weed-out unwanted persons from the suspect list, so that only the one qualifying against the identifiable features are brought for the DNA testing. There was a database of some 400,000 population living within the perimeter of the area selected within the 3 police stations of Kasur, where the presence of the suspect / accused was almost confirmed while drawing from his activity during past 9 plotted incidents on the Google map. The process of exclusion would run as under:-

1. Each Census team would comprise officers of Education Department, Census Commission, local Police Officers and PFSA – each one with dedicated assignment and to strengthen the others
2. All females, elderly, children were excluded from the list of suspects (except this stage, rest all able bodied males were to be presented before the census teams to physically meet and see the persons before deciding whether to go for DNA test or not)
3. Physical meeting and shortlisting based on qualifying downwards:-
  - a. Those males under the age of 20 and above 34 were excluded from the list
  - b. Those males under 5’6” and above 5’8” were excluded from the list
  - c. Those males having some deformity in left hand were excluded from the list
  - d. Those males without fully grown beard and mustaches were excluded from the list
  - e. Those males having lean body were excluded from the list
  - f. All remaining were to be presented before the Census teams and taken for DNA testing, followed with interrogation report preparation (at the end of each day, a consolidate comparative statement was prepared and presented to the JIT convener next morning):-
    - i. Updating the List “A” of persons found suitable and sent for DNA
    - ii. Updating the List “B” of persons received at DNA center and their buccal swab samples were collected
    - iii. Updating the List “C” of persons who after buccal swab sample were interrogated through one proforma sheet to see, if those qualify the identifiable features and that the team maintaining the List “A” had not resorted to a mistake
  - g. Those not available or avoiding a meeting will be chased
  - h. Final catch & 100% match with DNA at all 16 loci.

**Annexure “F”**

**DETAIL OF VARIOUS COURTS VERDICTS ANNOUNCED IN THE ZAINEB AMEN CASE AND THE EXECUTION OF PUNISHMENT AGAINST THE ACCUSED IMRAN ALI**

Challan against accused was submitted before the Anti-Terrorism Court, Lahore-1 within shortest possible time. The rest of the details of the trial, appeals before various courts and the execution of punishment is as under:-

1. After 6 days trial on day to day basis, ATC Lahore-1 convicted / sentenced the accused as follows:-
  - a. U/S 364-A PPC; Sentenced to Death
  - b. U/S 376 PPC; Sentenced to Death. Along with fine of Rs.10-Lac, in default therefore, convict shall further undergo six months SI
  - c. U/S 302-B PPC; Sentenced to Death. He shall have to pay Rs.10-Lac as compensation u/s 544-A Cr. PC to the legal heirs of deceased in default thereof, he shall further undergo six months SI
  - d. U/S 7(a) ATA 1997; Sentenced to Death with fine of Rs.10-Lac and in case of non-payment of fine, he shall further suffer six months SI
  - e. U/S377 PPC; Sentenced to imprisonment for life with fine of Rs.10-Lac and in default thereof, he shall further undergo six months SI
  - f. U/S 201 PPC; Sentenced to imprisonment for seven years RI with fine of Rupees One Lac, in default thereof, he shall further undergo three months SI.
2. Lahore High Court (LHC) within one month of original verdict dismissed the appeal of the accused on following grounds:-
  - a. The witnesses have absolutely no grudge or ill will to falsely implicate the appellant in the case
  - b. During cross examination the prosecution evidence could not be shaken
  - c. The evidence is straight forward, trust worthy and confidence inspiring
  - d. The admission of the accused that he committed rape, sodomy after kidnaping Zainab Ameen deceased and thereafter also committed her murder in his reply to charge sheet before trial court
  - e. The prosecution proved its case beyond any shadow of doubt
  - f. The accused also admitted commission of occurrence during his statement recorded u/s 242 CrPC (charge to be framed), 243 CrPC (conviction on admission of truth of accusation), 342 CrPC (power to examine the accused) before trial court
  - g. LHC unable to find out any mitigating circumstances in favor of the appellant
  - h. The appellant does not deserve any leniency
  - i. LHC confirmed the death sentence awarded to appellant on all counts
3. Apex Supreme Court of Pakistan (SCP) within 2 months dismissed the petition and refused leave to appeal on the following grounds:-
  - a. While framing of the charge before the trial court the petitioner had pleaded himself guilty of the charges and got recorded detail confessional statement, and admitted almost every aspect of the case against him

- b. In his statement under section 242 CrPC (charge to be framed), 342 CrPC the petitioner once again admitted almost all the vital pieces of evidence produced by the prosecution against him as correct and again admitted his guilt
  - c. The learned counsel for the petitioner only prayed for some lenience to be shown to the petitioner in the matter of his sentence and no arguments were advanced challenging the matter of conviction
  - d. The CCTV footages, photographs, DNA tests reports and the medical evidence confirmed every aspect of the confession made by the petitioner
  - e. The confession made by the petitioner was not only voluntary but also true
  - f. The SCP observed that on the basis of evidence available on the record we have found no occasion to take a view of the matter different from that concurrently taken by the courts below
  - g. As provision of section 412 CrPC when the accused pleads guilty to the charge and convicted, he can file appeal only to the extant or legality of sentence and cannot file an appeal challenging his conviction
  - h. The petitioner had admitted committing similar offences with eight other minor victims therefore did not deserve any sympathy in his sentences
  - i. The SCP dismissed the petition and refused leave to appeal
4. The accused preferred mercy petition before the President of Pakistan, which was rejected and he was executed within 10 months of his arrest (hanged at Kot Lakhpat Jail, Lahore on the evening hours of 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2018, in the presence of the father and uncle of victim Zaineb Ameen).