Advertisement

DNA helps police catch suspect in Zainab case

Amjad Mahmood | Afzal Ansari | Published January 24, 2018



IMRAN Ali was taken into custody by police twice, but released over health complaints.

COMMENTS JOIN OUR WHATSAPP CHANNEL

Add to Preferred Sources

KASUR / LAHORE: The nearly two-week-long manhunt for the culprit behind the rape and murder of eight-year-old Zainab in Kasur came to end on Tuesday, as investigators revealed that the DNA from tissue samples collected from a 23-year-old resident of the same vicinity as the victim had matched samples obtained from the crime scene.

Relying on the DNA profiles of 1,150 men between the ages of 20 and 45 years, the investigators finally zeroed in on Imran Ali, a resident of Road Kot and a labourer by profession. He was the 814th suspect whose tissue samples were sent for DNA testing. The police had earlier taken him into custody twice but then released him over health complaints.

Addressing a room full of reporters in Lahore on Tuesday evening, a visibly pleased Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif, accompanied by the victim's father Haji Ameen, announced that law enforcement agencies had worked round-the-clock to track down the culprit. He added that he had gotten the suspect's DNA rechecked in his presence, and had Imran undergo a

According to JIT report, seven girls were raped and killed by the same 23-year-old perpetrator

Special Branch SSP Muhammad Irfanullah Khan, a senior member of the JIT, claimed that the suspect had been arrested based on information provided by Special Branch officials.

According to the report prepared by the joint investigation team probing the grisly crime, the suspect was first identified from the available surveillance video footage. The report, available with Dawn, adds that the police had taken him into custody twice but then released him after learning about his epileptic episodes.

Muhammad Sajid, a public relations officer at the DPO's office, told Dawn that the suspect was first taken into custody on Jan 9 when Zainab's body was recovered. However, the police released him after he pretended to have heart problems and started vomiting during the interrogation.

Mr Sajid added that the police had then released him without obtaining tissue samples for DNA testing because they had wanted to avoid a death in custody.

once again, because of his health condition. He was finally arrested on Jan 22 (Monday) at around 11pm after police received the report that matched his DNA with samples obtained in at least seven other similar cases. According to the JIT report, seven girls had been raped and killed by the same perpetrator, while two other victims had survived.

The JIT report says that several residents of Road Kot had identified Imran as the most likely suspect.

At the press conference held in Lahore, Haji Ameen thanked the Supreme Court chief justice, the army chief and the Punjab chief minister for their help in tracing out the culprit.



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Shahbaz Sharif accompanied by Haji Mohammad Ameen, Zainab's father, addresses a press conference here on Tuesday.—M. Arif / White Star

Mr Sharif said that since the suspect had been identified, he would now form a committee that would

The Punjab chief minister added that he wanted to personally monitor the prosecution of the case, just as he had overseen the investigation of it. He seconded the demand for a public hanging of the culprit after conviction in court, and stressed that this is what Zainab's family, he himself, and the entire nation want.

He also vowed to amend the relevant laws in this regard when and wherever needed.

Responding to a query, the Punjab CM admitted that law-enforcement agencies had shown negligence in the earlier seven rape-and-murder cases, and promised to hold accountable those found responsible for dereliction of duty.

While some looked at Haji Ameen's presence at the press conference as a political gimmick by the Punjab government, Mr Sharif requested an end to the politicising of sensitive issues like sexual assault. He also offered services of the Punjab Forensic Lab Agency to law enforcement agencies working in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh governments, to trace the culprits in similar cases.

Separately, the victim's paternal uncle Muhammad Mudassar told Dawn that the family had not pointed out Imran as a possible suspect, but intelligence agencies had insisted on keeping an eye on the 23-year-old man.

character but no one had suspected his involvement in such a heinous crime.

According to some residents of the area, Imran belonged to a poor family and was unmarried. His father, a mason by profession, had passed away a month-and-a-half back. He has a younger brother, who works as an electrician, and five sisters.

Those around him first became suspicious after he shaved his beard off soon after Zainab's body was recovered. They said that Imran had not even attended the chehlum of his father, Mistri Arshad.

A Punjab police report reveals that at least 137 girls under age of 10 years were raped and killed during last year.

Published in Dawn, January 24th, 2018

NEWSPAPER

0

Amjad Mahmood is a Lahore-based reporter for Dawn with over three and a half decades of experience. He covers agricultural issues, as well as Punjab's politics and governance. He can be found on X at @Amjad012345.



Read more

‘emergency’ districts

control’ on judiciary

Most Popular

01 Makkah pact allies move from defence to diplomacy

02 Microsoft offers voluntary exit packages to 60,000 staff

03 Former army chief Abdul Waheed Kakar passes away in Rawalpindi

04 Pezeshkian urges 'regional unity' in meeting with Makkah pact countries in Tehran

05 Regional trade deficit widens sharply

06 Govt to end slab system punishing power consumers crossing 200-unit threshold

07 Remembering former army chief Gen Abdul Waheed Kakar

08 Pakistan for all

09 Chromebook scheme

Latest Stories

'Not defence ministry's mandate': Asif responds to Fazl's remarks about his absence at Tehran huddle

Lahore ranks world’s most polluted major city as Punjab battles poor air quality

ATC sentences Imaan, Hadi to 10 years in security breach case

Death toll from Thar ambulance fire rises to nine: district official

Afghanistan opium poppy cultivation surges despite Taliban govt ban: UN

Singapore foreign minister to undertake official visit to Pakistan on Oct 30

Opinion

Moscow's Afghan outreach

Asif Durrani

Russia's close ties with Kabul won't automatically ensure action against anti-Pakistan terrorists.

Updated 29 Oct, 2026

A huddle in Tehran

Khurram Husain

29 Oct, 2026

From such seeds

F.S. Aijazuddin

29 Oct, 2026

Elusive quality

Shahzad Sharjeel

Updated 28 Oct, 2026

The Tehran opening

Zahid Hussain

Editorial

Updated 29 Oct, 2026

Restructuring plans

The primary reason for governance failure in Pakistan is not the geographical size of the existing provinces but the reluctance of provincial capitals

29 Oct, 2026

Polluted priorities

LAHORE is choking again, and the government's answer is to send more machines onto its streets. On Wednesday, its...

29 Oct, 2026

Continuing genocide

FOR the people of Gaza, despite the 'ceasefire' reached last October, the genocide never really ceased. This ...

Updated 28 Oct, 2026

Regional security

Iran and the Makkah pact states should pledge not to let external actors use their soil to launch aggression against each other.

28 Oct, 2026

Rate hike

THE SBP's decision to raise its policy rate by 50 basis points to 12pc was largely expected. It is also justified...

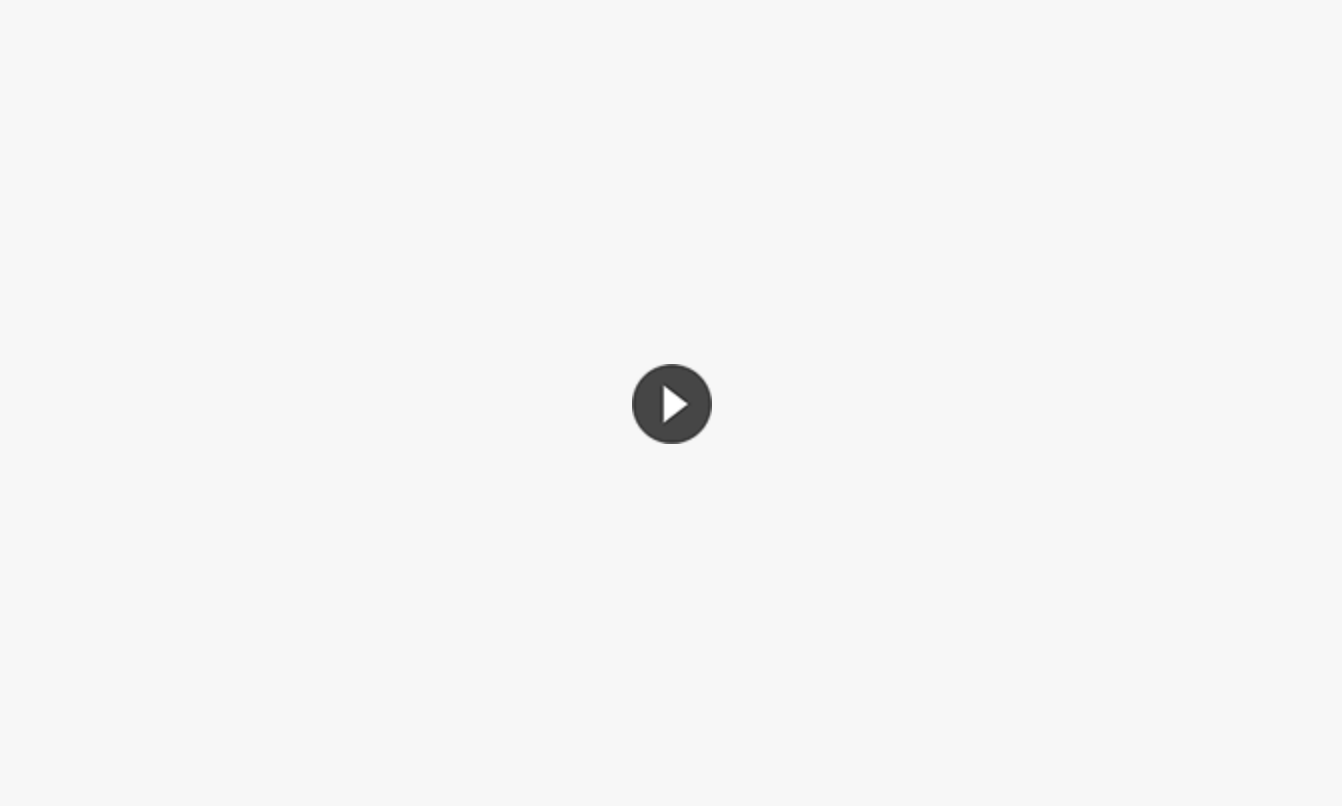
28 Oct, 2026

Press solidarity

PAKISTAN'S journalists have seldom lacked organisations speaking in defence of press freedom. What has been ...

DAWN NEWS ENGLISH PODCASTS

Subscribe



Can Pakistan's Judicial Independence Survive the 27th Amendment?

DAWN

EXPLORE IT ON AppGallery

CONTACT
CONTRIBUTION GUIDELINES
CODE OF ETHICS
AI POLICY
TERMS OF USE
PRIVACY
COMMENT MODERATION

SUBSCRIBE TO NEWSPAPER
REPRODUCTION COPYRIGHTS
ADVERTISE ON DAWN.COM
BRANDED CONTENT
CAREERS
OBITUARIES

PRAYER TIMINGS
STOCK/FOREX/GOLD
WEATHER
DESKTOP

DAWN
PRISM
IMAGES
SPECIAL REPORTS
AURORA
DAWN NEWS

EOS/ICON/YOUNG WORLD
CITYFM89
HERALD
TEELI

Copyright © 2026, Dawn
NewsKit Publishing Platform