PRE PROMOTION STATUTORY TRAINING PROGRAM

FOR

SENIOR CIVIL JUDGES/JUDICIAL MAGISTRATES/ ALLA ILLAQA QAZI

(February 16, 2026 – April 10, 2026)

BOOK REVIEW

Book Title

"Criminal Investigation and Criminal Trial"

Author

Hafiz M. Azhar Siddique

Nature of Assignment

A critical review of the book examining the fundamental principles governing criminal investigation and criminal trial, along with ancillary topics, supported by relevant citations from the superior courts.

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BOOK REVIEW

Introduction

The author of the book, Hafiz M. Azhar Siddique, is a notable advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan, Human Right Activists, pro-bono public lawyers, writer and columnist. He hails from Lahore and has studied LLM from USA.[1] The book titled "Criminal investigation and Criminal Trial" encompasses not only the very basic principles of criminal proceedings but also topics ancillary thereto with the help of relevant citations of superior courts. It is indeed an adroit facility for the legal practitioners and judicial officers with topics and key words in an organized and sequential manner.

Biref Summary

The book in hand is a true example of ocean in a pitcher delivering profound and to the point knowledge to the practicing lawyers, Judicial officers and students of law. The quintessential endeavor is to enable the reader to comprehend and differentiate the two cardinal divisions of criminal procedure i.e. criminal investigation and criminal trial. Both the two stages are decoded in a sequential and chronometrical way for all-out proficiency and clarity. The entire eco-system of the criminal law is being described in the book that too with the help of citations collected outrightly on each point. In this doctrinal approach, while focusing on procedural law and reported judgments, the reader often faces repetition of similar topics. The defining trait of the book is production of only-citations both supporting and contrary on each topic; which not only leads to baffling effect but turns the book into a compendium of criminal law instead. Besides, the edition is published in 2011 and fundamentally is more than a decade old thus missing contemporary and up-to-date knowledge. On the whole, the book is a palpable effort of the author to provide an alternate of voluminous editions on subject with enriching experience.

Critical Analysis

Primarily, the book canvases two key aspects of the criminal proceedings commencing from criminal investigation and leading to criminal trial. In the former

[1] https://x.com/AzharSiddique

component, it accentuates the first information report, investigation in cognizable and non-cognizable cases; pre and post FIR investigation, police diaries, arrest, remand, statement under 161 CrPC, confessional statements, dying declaration, recoveries, site plan, enquiry into cause of death, absconding accused, report submission, challan and finally leading to cancellation of FIR and discharge.

Correspondingly, in the latter section, beginning from criminal administration of justice it contemplates judicial proceedings launching either from complaint or FIR and culminating into the acquittal or conviction. Essentially highlighting cognizable cases, bail, witnesses comprising of eye, expert, stock, court, neutral, intentional, chance, female, interested, impartial, natural, hostile and child witness, evidence including oral, documentary, direct, circumstantial, real and scientific. Then underscoring the basic principles i.e. motive, statement of the accused, transfer of cases, contempt of court, compounding, acquittal, conviction, appeal and miscellaneous provisions.

The two sections of the book cover firstly, Investigation phase followed by trial, elucidating each step connected thereto in detail through citations. Criminal Administration of Justice is outlined as the backbone of judicial system that rests on elemental pillars like police, prosecution and judiciary. The role of each stakeholder is individually and in tandem comprehensively described in an event-based-chronometric manner. With the sole support of relevant citations, commencing from the functions of the police; when receiving information to loading FIR leading to investigation and then submission of report; are assiduously compiled. Similarly, the duty and functions of prosecution and role of judicial officers in adjudication are also featured in the same sequential manner through references. Moreover, referral to the Police Rules through celebrated judgment motes is also ensured. The pedagogics is not only restricted to the Pakistan Penal Code but Narcotics substances, Zina Ordinance, Anti-corruption and NAB laws thus making it more exhaustive solution.

The author has methodically underlined the basic principles of criminal dispensation of justice and prioritized these as, the accused is innocent unless proved guilty; prosecution to withstand on the edifice of its own evidence; accused is favorite child of law and even if he fails in proving his version the prosecution can’t be benefited; doubt, if not proved artificial, shall favour the accused and punishment is awarded when it is proved that the accused is the only person responsible for the commission of offence. Likewise, it is also underlined that

Evidence in criminal cases are gauged on the yardstick of quality and not quantity. The most striking part is where the author chose a judgment of All India Reporter (AIR) a premier, century old legal publication (est. 1922) to define the criminal administration of justice as "the expression means exercise of judicial power to maintain rights and punish wrongs"[2] reported in AIR-1961-SC-1669.

Conversely, in the pursuit of covering a very vast and voluminous subject, the reader often faces multiple repetitions and confusion worse confounds with divergent and conflicting views on almost every topic. Too often, citation in favour of a topic will directly lead to its contra thereafter. For example, FIR is mentioned as an integral part on one hand whereas on the other it is termed as evidence of weak corroboration and such an impasse is repeated time and again. Similarly, there is a collection of authorities and no derivative or opinion based thereon to guide with certainty towards basic principles of criminal law. The methodology primarily used is the collection of multiple pro and contra judgments on all topics rather than sifting and conveying a preferential version thereof. Lastly, proof reading hasn't been paid careful attention as there are many grammatical and spelling errors.

Conclusion

En masse the book in hand is a clear manifestation of writer's candid effort to ensure clarity and precision on criminal investigation and criminal trial. It adds pro and contra views of the superior courts on every integral concept encompassing the above bi-facet stages. Akin, the endeavour is not only restricted to the offences under PPC but circumscribes special laws and its procedural side. Citations related to the grand norm and Police Rules wherever necessary are also supplemented for elucidation and legal assistance enabling it a convenient tool for facilitation of practicing criminal lawyers and Judicial officers. Nevertheless, it may bewilder a student of law who starts reading from page one till end owing to contradictory versions on almost every point, conspicuous repetition of similar topics, and an old edition. Regardless thereof, the book is magnum-opus on such a hulky and voluminous subject exceedingly beneficial for both Bench and Bar, and with careful revision, it can unfold into a dependable and enduring reference in the realm of criminal litigation.

[2] Page 393, M. Azhar, Criminal Investigation & Criminal Trial.