

# Chambers

Asia-Pacific —————

2022

The leading lawyers  
and law firms in Asia-Pacific

Pakistan



## How lawyers are ranked

Every year we carry out thousands of in-depth interviews with clients in order to assess the reputations and expertise of business lawyers worldwide. The qualities we look for (and which determine rankings) include technical legal ability, professional conduct, client service, commercial awareness/astuteness, diligence, commitment, and other qualities most valued by the client.

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## Banking & Finance

Banking & Finance
<b>Leading Firms</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Haidermota & Co
Mohsin Tayebaly & Co
<b>Band 2</b>
Ahmed & Qazi
Chima & Ibrahim
Cornelius, Lane & Mufti
Ijaz Ahmed & Associates
Kabraji & Talibuddin
Orr, Dignam & Co
RIAA Barker Gillette
<b>Band 3</b>
Akhund Forbes
LMA (Liaquat Merchant Associates)
Mandviwalla & Zafar
<b>Senior Statespeople &amp; Eminent Practitioners</b>
<b>Senior Statespeople:</b> distinguished older partners
Kabraji Kairas N Kabraji & Talibuddin
<b>Eminent Practitioners</b>
Tayebaly Irfan Mohsin Tayebaly & Co *
<b>Leading Individuals</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Ahmed Ijaz Ijaz Ahmed & Associates
Haidermota Khozem A Haidermota & Co
<b>Band 2</b>
Ahsan Farees Jafarey LMA (Liaquat Merchant *)
Akhund Rabel Akhund Forbes *
Anwer Mohammad Haidermota & Co
Chima Salman Chima & Ibrahim
Elahi Shehzad Ata Cornelius, Lane & Mufti
Ibrahim Khalid Chima & Ibrahim
Khalid Vaseeq Mohsin Tayebaly & Co *
Mandviwalla Mehmood Mandviwalla & Zafar
Nasim Asim Orr, Dignam & Co
Shaukat Bilal RIAA Barker Gillette *
<b>Band 3</b>
Abid Zahra Haidermota & Co
Ahmed Sheeza Mandviwalla & Zafar
Maaz Syed Ali Kabraji & Talibuddin
Manto Mehreen Mohsin Tayebaly & Co *
* Indicates individual with profile.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

The editorial is in alphabetical order by firm name.

### Ahmed & Qazi

**What the team is known for** Karachi-based Ahmed & Qazi has strong experience in syndicated loans, restructuring and Islamic finance. Additionally active in privatisations and sukuk deals. Increasingly active on inbound financing

Banking & Finance: Capital Markets
<b>Leading Firms</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Haidermota & Co
Mohsin Tayebaly & Co
<b>Band 2</b>
Ahmed & Qazi
Akhund Forbes
Ijaz Ahmed & Associates

in the energy, power and infrastructure sectors, including acting for Chinese lenders and construction companies. Acts for a number of prominent local and international banks in the region, including advising the National Bank of Pakistan.

### Notable practitioners

Managing partner Nadeem Ahmed is a key contact for clients.

### Akhund Forbes

**What the team is known for** Akhund Forbes is a Karachi-based firm regularly advising clients on syndicated loans and project financings, among other matters. Also known for handling capital markets mandates, including equity offerings. Clients include high-profile domestic and international banks. Notable activity advising foreign investors on the financing of major infrastructure and utilities projects. Additionally offers expertise regarding payment systems in the e-commerce sector and cryptocurrency regulations. Clients include Credit Suisse, Deutsche Bank and UBL Fund Managers.

**Strengths** One client says the lawyers are “thorough and competent in their approach.”

Another client notes the team is “very hands-on, responsive, attentive to detail – an excellent guide through often complicated Pakistan law issues.”

**Work highlights** Akhund Forbes assisted China Development Bank with taking further security in relation to a USD1.5 billion loan.

Advised Arif Habib Dolmen REIT Management on the operation of its REIT scheme.

### Notable practitioners

**Rabel Akhund** (see p.633) maintains a wide-ranging finance practice, handling capital markets and Islamic finance transactions, in addition to fund management matters. He garners praise from numerous clients for his knowledge, collaborative approach and work ethic, with one interviewee stating: “He is a very capable and knowledgeable adviser. A very safe pair of hands, he’s a straight shooter and a pleasure to work with.”

### Chima & Ibrahim

**What the team is known for** Chima & Ibrahim is a Lahore-based firm serving an impressive roster of blue-chip domestic and international companies, banks and financial institutions. Frequently advises on syndicated loans, refinancings and Islamic financing matters.

**Strengths** Market commentators note Chima & Ibrahim is strong on borrower-side work and confirm that the team has “good lawyers.”

### Notable practitioners

**Salman Chima** offers significant experience in the field. He leverages over three decades of experience of legal practice and is well placed to advise on an expansive range of financing transactions. One market commentator refers to him as “a thorough gentleman and a very intelligent person.” **Khalid Ibrahim** is Chima & Ibrahim’s co-founding partner and draws on considerable experience acting on finance mandates. He is particularly highly regarded for his handling of transactions relating to the telecoms and technology sectors. A market commentator describes him as “a very good lawyer.”

### Cornelius, Lane & Mufti

**What the team is known for** Cornelius, Lane & Mufti has a respected practice, active on a range of banking and finance transactions in Lahore. Particularly well known for Islamic financing, including sukuk issuances.

**Strengths** Cornelius, Lane & Mufti is well regarded by market commentators and recommended by financial service sector clients.

### Notable practitioners

**Shehzad Ata Elahi** maintains a wide-ranging corporate and finance practice, with additional expertise in handling regulatory mandates. He offers particular strength in acting on structured finance, Islamic finance and project finance transactions. Market sources praise him as “a very good lawyer.”

### Haidermota & Co

**What the team is known for** Haidermota & Co is widely credited as a pre-eminent team for banking and finance work, particularly project finance and trade finance transactions. Increasingly active in advising financial institutions on restructuring and refinancing mandates. Works with state institutions on regulatory and branchless banking developments in the market. Also offers capital markets expertise including advising on bond offerings, securitisation and delistings. Increasingly mandated on Islamic finance

work. Haidermota has offices in Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi.

**Strengths** Clients note that Haidermota is a top choice for complex work, with one source commenting: *"They are solution-oriented, have excellent understanding of regulatory issues and relationship with regulators. I go to them for all the difficult and out-of-the-box deals."* Another source notes: *"I find them to be technically impressive and thoughtful as well as able to problem-solve."*

One source notes: *"Haidermota is a very professional firm. They give proper time to a brief and cover its legal and contractual implications. We are extremely satisfied with their approach."*

**Work highlights** Acted for United Bank and Habib Bank in the establishment of Pakistan's first corporate restructuring company, Pakistan Corporate Restructuring Company.

Advised Habib Bank on K Electric's issuance of shirkat-ul-milk sukuk valued at PKR25 billion.

#### Notable practitioners

**Khazem Haidermota** is considered a first-rate banking lawyer with impressive knowledge of capital markets regulations and practice. One client calls him *"dedicated and hard-working,"* while another praises his thoroughness and ability to give *"good practical advice."* **Mohammad Anwer's** practice covers acquisition financing, bridge financing and Islamic financing transactions. One interviewee describes him as *"a senior lawyer"* whose *"main expertise is in the banking sector,"* adding that *"he is a very dedicated and energetic guy."* **Zahra Abid** advises on complex financing transactions and M&A for the financial services sector. One source describes her as *"sound and dedicated"* while another comments that she *"takes initiative in understanding the various transactional aspects and is quick to provide comprehensive legal guidance accordingly."*

#### Ijaz Ahmed & Associates

**What the team is known for** Ijaz Ahmed & Associates maintains a solid reputation for advising mostly international banks on complex, cross-border transactions from its Karachi office. Varied slate of finance expertise covers debt restructuring, real estate finance and microfinance transactions. Particularly active on project finance matters. Additionally noted for its expertise advising on regulatory and legislative issues and litigation relating to capital markets. Frequently represents the Stock and Commodity Exchange on regulations and other parties on debt issuances. Numbers National Bank of Pakistan and Barclays among clients.

**Strengths** An interviewee says that a lawyer at Ijaz Ahmed & Associates is *"skilful in suggesting a way forward every time the deal appears to be in limbo."*

One client notes team members' knowledge on developing areas of capital markets, commenting: *"It's a frontier market jurisdiction and derivatives transactions are a relatively nascent business,"* adding that the team was *"very responsive and knowledgeable."*

**Work highlights** Ijaz Ahmed & Associates acted for Allied Bank in the restructuring of Descon's facilities.

The team advised Pakistan Mortgage Refinancing Company and Pak Kuwait Investment Company on the issuance of a secured fixed-rate mortgage refinance bond.

#### Notable practitioners

**Ijaz Ahmed** receives recognition from sources for his enduring reputation as a leading name in the banking and finance market. He is best known for his expertise in financing work, is particularly active in the project finance space and also handles matters relating to recovery of debt and reorganisations. One client comments: *"He is very smart and can bring unique insights thanks to his litigation experience. He is well respected and thorough."*

#### Kabraji & Talibuddin

**What the team is known for** Kabraji & Talibuddin demonstrates considerable experience in project finance matters, with expertise including credit facilities and related regulatory issues. Caters to both international and domestic banks and financial institutions. Especially active in public sector lending as well as financing for the infrastructure, aviation and energy sectors. Based in Karachi, the team's clients include the IFC, Bank Alfalah and Commercial Bank of China.

**Strengths** A source says of Kabraji & Talibuddin: *"They are very thorough and solution-oriented. Many issues that we face may not be just plain or vanilla. And they are always a call away."*

The same source also notes that the team is *"quite well known with foreign banks investing in Pakistan."*

**Work highlights** Kabraji & Talibuddin acted for China Development Bank on a USD1.16 billion equity project financing.

#### Notable practitioners

**Kairas Kabraji** is a highly experienced lawyer who brings to bear over four decades of legal practice handling transactions. He has acted on behalf of several major international and domestic banks on structured finance, project finance and acquisition finance mandates. Market sources describe him as a *"highly respected lawyer."* **Syed Ali Maaz's** practice focuses on project financing, aircraft financing and transactions in the financial services sector. He is a well-regarded lawyer who is endorsed by market sources and clients, with one commenting: *"Ali is very thorough and helpful."*

#### LMA (Liaquat Merchant Associates)

**What the team is known for** LMA has a notable banking practice regularly instructed on large-scale rupee lending and Islamic finance transactions. Advises prominent Pakistani and international banks on structured finance, syndicated financing, corporate banking and restructurings from its Karachi office. LMA has a strong client following among local lenders and microfinance banks in particular and also advises borrowers on project finance matters. JS Bank, United Bank and Habib Bank are among its clients.

**Strengths** An interviewee notes: *"LMA has in-depth knowledge and vast experience in the banking industry and has the acumen to align conventional laws with Shari'a jurisprudence."*

**Work highlights** LMA advised Pak Brunei Investment on a long-term finance facility and an Islamic diminishing musharaka facility being extended to Martin Dow.

#### Notable practitioners

**Faresa Jafarey Ahsan** (see p.633) is highly regarded for her strength in the banking and finance field. She offers wide-ranging expertise, with experience in capital markets, Islamic banking and project finance matters. Sources note she is *"a good listener"* who is able to *"quickly identify the missing link."*

#### Mandviwalla & Zafar

**What the team is known for** Mandviwalla & Zafar is well respected for experience working with domestic lenders on banking matters. Expertise covers acquisition finance, Islamic finance and banking regulatory issues. Based in Lahore and Karachi, the team is also able to advise on project finance matters.

#### Notable practitioners

**Mehmood Mandviwalla** draws on almost four decades of legal practice and is recognised by peers for his enduring reputation in the banking and finance market. In addition to transactional work, he also has extensive experience in handling regulatory mandates. One client says he is a go-to when dealing with certain regulatory bodies, explaining: *"Mehmood has experience in Securities Exchange and State Bank matters."*

**Sheeza Ahmed** advises lenders on structuring, drafting and closing a range of financing transactions. She can provide an adept handling of structured, corporate and project finance mandates.

#### Mohsin Tayebaly & Co

**What the team is known for** Mohsin Tayebaly & Co has a deep bench with an impressive reputation for tackling complex transactions for prominent lender clients from its Lahore and Karachi offices. Offers expertise in Islamic finance, restructuring, syndicated financing, electronic bank guarantees and regulatory issues, among other matters. Notable activity in the capital markets space, advising on sukuk issuances, bonds and rights issues. Clients include Allied Bank, National Bank of Pakistan and MCB Bank.

**Strengths** Clients say of Mohsin Tayebaly & Co: *"We find they are very professional, have a good team and understand dynamics of corporates and banking industries. They have good rapport with the banking sector."*

**Work highlights** Mohsin Tayebaly & Co advised The Bank of Punjab on phase one of the funding relating to the construction of apartment buildings in Lahore covering 4,000 flats under the Prime Minister's Naya Pakistan Housing Program. Acted for TPL Trakker in the issuance of notes in the form of commercial papers valued at PKR1.4 billion.

#### Notable practitioners

**Irfan Tayebaly** (see p.636) draws on over three decades of experience of advising clients on banking and finance matters. He is highly regarded by clients in the financial services sector. **Vaseeq Khalid** (see p.634) offers expertise across a wide range of mandates, including capital markets and Islamic finance transactions, in addition to acquisition and project financing. One client notes that he is well acquainted with the banking sector and is *"very approachable."*

**Mehreen Manto** (see p.635) wins praise from both clients and market sources for her work on finance and capital markets transactions. She is particularly well versed in handling syndicated lending and Islamic finance transactions. One interviewee says: *"Mehreen is a good name in the industry."*

#### Orr, Dignam & Co

**What the team is known for** Orr, Dignam & Co is a longstanding full-service firm in Karachi that advises both lenders and borrowers on financing and debt restructuring work. Advises on lending in a wide range of sectors including oil and gas,

consumer goods and transport. Active on Islamic finance matters, with clients including domestic and international banks.

#### Notable practitioners

**Asim Nasim** wins praise for his longstanding reputation in the market. He handles a broad range of financing transactions, including aviation, project and asset finance mandates.

#### RIAA Barker Gillette

**What the team is known for** RIAA Barker Gillette is a leading project finance firm with offices in Lahore and Karachi. Offers a good deal of experience with clients in the energy sector and acts for an array of domestic and international financial institutions, including Chinese lenders. Often

acts on major term and syndicated loan transactions. Capabilities in Shari'a-compliant banking, including sukuk, and restructuring. Well placed to handle cross-border work due to its network of international offices in the USA, the UK, China, Afghanistan and the UAE. Demonstrates further expertise in shipping finance matters. MCB Bank, Bank of Punjab and Habib Bank are clients of the team.

**Strengths** A client states about the team at RIAA: "We find them to be extremely professional and responsive. They are meticulous in raising all the right legal points but at the same time are very solution-oriented in helping to structure the transactions in the right way to fully protect our legal rights."

**Work highlights** RIAA advised Lakeside Energy on a USD33 million foreign facility and a PKR6 billion local facility for the development of a 50 MW wind-power project in Jhimpir, Sindh.

#### Notable practitioners

**Bilal Shaukat** (see p.635) receives praise for the depth of his knowledge and his ability to handle both the legal and commercial aspects of transactions. He maintains a highly active practice representing energy companies in their project finance deals. One client observes: "Bilal is a very capable lawyer with a good project financing documentation skill set. He has clarity on the requirements and a problem-solving approach."

## Corporate/Commercial

Corporate/Commercial
<b>Leading Firms</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Chima & Ibrahim
Haidermota & Co
Mohsin Tayebaly & Co
RIAA Barker Gillette
<b>Band 2</b>
Akhund Forbes
Cornelius, Lane & Mufti
Kabraji & Talibuddin
Orr, Dignam & Co
Vellani & Vellani
<b>Band 3</b>
Ahmed & Qazi
Axis Law Chambers
Ijaz Ahmed & Associates
LMA (Liaquat Merchant Associates)
Mandviwalla & Zafar
<b>Band 4</b>
ABS & Co
Khan & Associates
Lexium Attorneys-At-Law
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

### Band 1

#### Chima & Ibrahim

**What the team is known for** Chima & Ibrahim is an eminent boutique based in Lahore and particularly active on M&A and commercial contracts work. Also ably advises on related regulatory issues. Regularly instructed on deals in the manufacturing, technology, telecoms and consumer goods sectors.

**Strengths** One market commentator describes Chima & Ibrahim as a "fantastic boutique firm," adding that the firm stands out for its focus on quality: "The things they do, they do really well."

#### Notable practitioners

**Salman Chima** is highly rated for his work advising financial institutions. He assists with a range of transactions, acting for both domestic

Corporate/Commercial
<b>Senior Statespeople &amp; Eminent Practitioners</b>
<b>Senior Statespeople: distinguished older partners</b>
Kabraji Kairas N Kabraji & Talibuddin
Mandviwalla Mehmood Mandviwalla & Zafar
Riaz Zahir Orr, Dignam & Co
Rizvi Ahsan Zahir RIAA Barker Gillette *
<b>Eminent Practitioners</b>
Haidermota Khozem A Haidermota & Co
Tayebaly Irfan Mohsin Tayebaly & Co *
Vellani Badaruddin F Vellani & Vellani
<b>Leading Individuals</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Chima Salman Chima & Ibrahim
Harianawala Shabbir Haidermota & Co
Ibrahim Khalid Chima & Ibrahim
<b>Band 2</b>
Akhund Rabel Akhund Forbes *
Elahi Shehzad Ata Cornelius, Lane & Mufti
Khalid Vaseeq Mohsin Tayebaly & Co *
Nasim Asim Orr, Dignam & Co
Shaukat Bilal RIAA Barker Gillette *
Vasi Ali Akber Haidermota & Co
Yusuf Aliya Orr, Dignam & Co
<b>Band 3</b>
Ahmed Ijaz Ijaz Ahmed & Associates
Hassan Mian Tariq Axis Law Chambers *
Jamal Mujtaba MJLA LEGAL (ORL) ◇
Khan Mansoor H Khan & Associates
<b>Band 4</b>
Bangash Mazhar RIAA Barker Gillette *
Bhadra Ferzeen Vellani & Vellani
Iqbal Sahar Akhund Forbes *
Maaz Syed Ali Kabraji & Talibuddin
<b>Up-and-coming individuals</b>
Hashmi Fehem Ahson Vellani & Vellani

and international clients. Market sources praise him for the quality of his advice and experience. **Khalid Ibrahim** has a fantastic history as one of Pakistan's leading corporate lawyers. He is widely viewed as a prominent figure in the market, advising on range of transactional and advisory mandates. He frequently assists clients in the telecommunications sector.

#### Haidermota & Co

**What the team is known for** Haidermota & Co is a market-leading firm with a stellar reputation in M&A, corporate restructurings and joint ventures involving listed companies. Additionally sought after for its expertise in advising on private equity investments, privatisations, strategic partnerships and distribution arrangements. Frequently active on complex cross-border transactions, representing both domestic and international clients from a range of industries including banking, power and telecoms. Clients benefit from Haidermota's full-service offering and nationwide coverage. Clients include Cargill, ArcelorMittal and Vitol. Haidermota has offices in Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi.

**Strengths** A client enthuses: "They are thoroughly professional and manage all issues expertly. The firm has experienced lawyers on board who have vast experience in dealing with cross-border and international elements which they expertly utilise in issues that they pursue for our company."

Another client notes that "Haidermota is a strong local corporate law firm in Pakistan and handle most of our corporate needs. They usually have the expertise in all areas we are involved in."

**Work highlights** Haidermota & Co assisted DEG with its PKR466.5 million subscription of 19% shares in TPL Insurance.

#### Notable practitioners

**Khozem Haidermota** is a distinguished authority in the Pakistan legal market who offers clients extensive experience in transactional corporate matters, including M&A and market entry. One client says: "No one meets him when work ethic is concerned." **Shabbir Harianawala** has longstanding experience in the corporate arena, advising on a range of acquisitions, joint ventures and investments. A client comments: "I find Shabbir's technical skills to be impressive and I am very pleased with his responsiveness and flexibility at short notice." Another source notes he is "very detailed and solution-oriented" and appreciates that he "provides multiple structural options." **Ali Akber Vasi** is a seasoned practitioner who has a

stellar reputation for his work on corporate transactions, including advising an impressive list of multinational clients on inbound investments. A market source remarks: “I respect him as a lawyer – he provides good client service and is clear-thinking.”

### Mohsin Tayebaly & Co

**What the team is known for** Mohsin Tayebaly & Co has a well-reputed team based out of Lahore and Karachi handling a raft of high-profile M&A, corporate restructuring, rights issue and private equity transactions. Continues to be a popular choice of counsel among major banks and financial institutions and also has experience advising media and energy companies. Additionally proficient in assisting clients with setting up their businesses in Pakistan. Pakistan Stock Exchange, Agha Steel Industries and YB are clients of Mohsin Tayebaly & Co.

**Work highlights** Mohsin Tayebaly & Co advised Artistic Fabric and Garment Industries on the company's merger with Artistic Fabric Mills, the demerger of certain assets and liabilities and the merger of the entire Artistic Corporation with Artistic Fabric and Garment Industries.

#### Notable practitioners

**Irfan Tayebaly** (see p.636) has forged a formidable reputation as one of the country's leading corporate lawyers, offering extensive experience in M&A and joint ventures. A source applauds him as “one of the top corporate lawyers” in Pakistan. **Vaseeq Khalid** (see p.634) is admired for his adept handling of complex M&A mandates and has an impressive track record on some of the country's top deals. A client observes that “he is very innovative and works with the client to structure deals,” and a market commentator describes him as “a very smart lawyer.”

### RIAA Barker Gillette

**What the team is known for** RIAA Barker Gillette frequently advises blue-chip clients from the power, energy and infrastructure sectors, drawing upon the firm's extensive expertise in projects work. Situated in Lahore and Karachi, the team routinely handles M&A, private equity investments, corporate restructuring, land transactions and tax advisory mandates. Increasingly active in competition and anti-dumping matters as well as privatisations. Sought after by clients in the technology, media and telecommunications sectors. Clients include VINCI, VentureDive and Daelim Industrial.

**Strengths** A client enthuses: “RIAA are responsive, professional and polite in explaining their advice, well researched in their opinions, and reliable in their response time. Apart from legal advice, they also share commercial and operational consequences of the options presented in their advice. We are very happy with their support and with the performance of their partners and associates.”

Another interviewee finds that “RIAA Barker Gillette are very proficient, knowledgeable and efficient.”

**Work highlights** RIAA Barker Gillette advised the Privatisation Commission of the government of Pakistan on the privatisation of SME Bank.

#### Notable practitioners

**Ahsan Zahir Rizvi** (see p.635) is acknowledged for his precise legal work and local expertise, with interviewees labelling him one of Pakistan's top corporate lawyers. He offers clients exten-

sive experience on major M&A transactions. **Bilal Shaukat** (see p.635) is a distinguished practitioner with substantial experience on energy sector M&A. A client lauds his excellent commercial understanding and communication skills to match: “His strength is patiently listening to issues, honing in on what is relevant and significant, identifying the risks and clearly explaining the associated risks and solutions whilst weighing financial, commercial, operational and relationship risks and consequences.” **Mazhar Bangash** (see p.633) specialises in international trade and acts for exporters on advisory and contentious matters relating to trade remedies and tariffs. He also heads RIAA Barker Gillette's Kabul office.

## Band 2

### Akhund Forbes

**What the team is known for** Karachi-based Akhund Forbes has a notable practice, active on a number of big-ticket cross-border corporate transactions including mergers, acquisitions and venture capital investments. Also active in advisory work in relation to shareholders' agreements, distribution agreements and licensing issues. Clients range from multinational private equity firms to leading domestic corporates including Pakistan Kuwait Investment Company, Sumitomo Chemical Asia and Novartis Pharma. Often advises clients in the banking, technology and energy sectors.

**Strengths** Clients of Akhund Forbes rate the team highly: “The personal time and attention that senior partners give to a transaction, their responsiveness, availability and willingness to find solutions for new and complex problems makes them stand out from other firms. They can also take a view on industry regulations and provide up to date practical legal advice.”

**Work highlights** Akhund Forbes acted for the government of Pakistan's Privatisation Commission in the privatisation of two RLNG-based power plants through a strategic sale. The transaction was valued at USD1 billion approximately.

#### Notable practitioners

**Rabel Akhund** (see p.633) is well regarded for his broad corporate practice, which covers M&A and private equity investments. He is praised by market commentators, with one describing him as a “very mature lawyer” and another stating: “I think he is commercially sound, has the relevant experience and is considered to be a good player in the market.” **Sahar Iqbal** (see p.634) specialises in corporate/M&A and private equity transactions and also assists with corporate agreements and regulatory advice. A market source notes she is a “diligent and hard-working individual” who is “able to work with the counterparty and take the deal through.”

### Cornelius, Lane & Mufti

**What the team is known for** Cornelius, Lane & Mufti has a highly reputed and experienced team operating out of Lahore. Regularly assists high-profile clients with acquisitions and corporate advisory issues, and noted for its experience advising on corporate restructuring.

**Strengths** One client reports they “find Cornelius, Lane & Mufti to be very thorough and able to provide top-notch legal advice,” while another notes the team is “very good.”

#### Notable practitioners

**Shehzad Ata Elahi** offers clients a wealth of experience across a range of different matters including corporate/M&A and tax. Market sources endorse him as a “very good lawyer.”

### Kabraji & Talibuddin

**What the team is known for** Kabraji & Talibuddin is a highly regarded firm based in Karachi with a strong track record for handling complex M&A and joint venture mandates, with complementary expertise in competition law matters. Routinely sought out to advise high-profile multinationals on inbound foreign investment into Pakistan, in particular from Chinese investors. Acts for an impressive roster of clients from a broad range of sectors including aviation, power and banking. Often wins referrals from international firms to advise on local regulatory and employment issues. The corporate team's clients include IFC, Proparco and China Machinery Engineering Corporation.

**Strengths** A source says: “Kabraji & Talibuddin is constantly available to meet our needs and to answer any questions we may have,” adding that the team stands out for its “work ethic, time spent, advice given, and knowledge.”

**Work highlights** Kabraji & Talibuddin acted for BSN Medical International on its PKR28.62 million acquisition of shares in Essity Pakistan.

#### Notable practitioners

**Kairas Kabraji** is a seasoned practitioner who has a stellar reputation for his work on corporate transactions. He is also well equipped to advise clients from the banking and energy and natural resources sectors. **Syed Ali Maaz** enjoys a solid reputation for his work on corporate transactions, advising clients on M&A and inbound investment into Pakistan. He acts for a range of domestic and multinational corporates from a range of sectors, including energy, as well as private equity firms.

### Orr, Dignam & Co

**What the team is known for** Orr, Dignam & Co has an accomplished team, spread across Karachi and Islamabad, handling high-profile M&A, corporate governance and regulatory work. Also attracts mandates on complex cross-border transactions and joint ventures. Clients include blue-chip international and domestic companies in the oil and gas, power and banking industries. Also experienced advising on competition law matters.

**Strengths** A market source observes that Orr, Dignam & Co “continues to be a go-to firm” with “good lawyers.”

#### Notable practitioners

**Zahir Riaz** is widely viewed as a prominent figure in the market and he offers extensive experience in corporate transactions. He is best known for advising on deals in the energy sector and he regularly assists major domestic and international clients. **Asim Nasim** is praised for the high quality of his work. He is frequently sought out for representations in relation to transactions in the oil industry, including advising on antitrust matters. **Aliya Yusuf** is a distinguished practitioner with substantial experience in corporate work. She regularly assists multinational corporates on investments, divestments and other transactions and is described by one market commentator as “a seasoned lawyer.”

### Vellani & Vellani

**What the team is known for** Vellani & Vellani is a respected firm with capability to handle M&A, investment and joint venture work from its offices in Islamabad and Karachi. Also known for its handling of competition matters and experience advising on corporate restructurings and property acquisitions, and has a strong following among energy and resources clients. Additionally able to advise on related antitrust mandates. Askari Cement and Pakistan Gas Port Consortium are clients of the firm.

**Strengths** A client states: *"I find the lawyers at Vellani & Vellani to be highly capable and some of the best in the country. They are dedicated and thorough and help the company navigate numerous legal challenges. They give their clients ample time and support and consistently provide prompt assistance whenever required by us."*

**Work highlights** Vellani & Vellani assisted Engro Powergen Thar with the restructuring of an operations and maintenance contract for a 660 MW coal-fired power plant in Sindh.

#### Notable practitioners

**Badaruddin Vellani** is widely acknowledged as a top choice for corporate and restructuring mandates, assisting clients with a range of investments and joint ventures. He also regularly assists clients with antitrust matters. A client refers to him as *"one of the leading legal minds in Pakistan and always a pleasure to work with,"* adding that *"in spite of his busy schedule, he will always give his clients time and thorough legal advice, which is a great source of comfort and surety."* **Ferzeen Bhadha** is well regarded for her corporate practice, with market sources variously describing her as *"thorough"* and *"very well organised."* One client notes that her *"dedication and legal acumen is evident in all of our interactions,"* adding: *"She brings complex transactions to a successful conclusion and is highly dependable and always willing to help."* **Fehem Ahson Hashmi** is described as a *"a good upcoming lawyer"* by market commentators. He assists clients with real estate and corporate transactions and technology agreements.

### Band 3

#### Ahmed & Qazi

**What the team is known for** Ahmed & Qazi serves an impressive roster of clients from a range of sectors including the banking, steel and pharmaceutical industries. Based in Karachi, areas of focus include acquisitions, disposals, joint ventures and contractual issues. Regularly instructed by international clients to provide market entry and employment advice.

**Strengths** One client recommends the Ahmed & Qazi team for *"difficult situations or difficult legal interpretations"* where an *"out-of-the-box solution"* is needed and rates members of the team highly, noting their *"deep knowledge"* and *"thoroughness."*

#### Notable practitioners

Saim Hashmi is a key contact for clients.

#### Axis Law Chambers

**What the team is known for** Axis Law Chambers is a Lahore-based firm that covers a range of transactional mandates as well as corporate advisory and regulatory work. Often instructed on takeovers, mergers, shareholders' rights issues and joint ventures. Especially active in the real estate, infrastructure and telecoms sectors. Other

areas of focus include employment, insurance and competition work. Clients include Pakistan Tourism Development, Karandaaz and Pakistan's Ministry of Privatisation.

**Strengths** A client comments about Axis Law Chambers: *"The opinions provided are extremely thorough and cover all aspects of the transactions as contemplated. The firm is very approachable and accommodating and overall is a very professional and highly competent unit."*

An interviewee remarks: *"I am impressed with their turnaround time, as that matters a lot to companies. Their legal opinions reflect in-depth analysis and legal research."*

**Work highlights** Axis Law Chambers acted for Careem on the transfer of 100% shares in one of its entities to another.

#### Notable practitioners

**Mian Tariq Hassan** (see p.634) offers clients a wealth of experience across a range of different matters including real estate and corporate investments. An interviewee observes: *"Tariq has a great grasp over corporate matters and has a very well-rounded approach taking into account all aspects and areas when providing advice. He is thoroughly professional and extremely approachable, which makes him one of the top choices for companies."*

#### Ijaz Ahmed & Associates

**What the team is known for** Ijaz Ahmed & Associates is a robust practice that assists domestic and international clients in the banking, telecoms and consumer goods sectors from its Karachi office. Well equipped to advise on a range of corporate and commercial transactions, in addition to regulatory requirements, market entry and licences. Bank Alfalah, Pak China Investment Company and SIMA Funds are clients of the team.

**Strengths** A client greatly appreciates the easy access to senior lawyers at Ijaz Ahmed & Associates and their depth of knowledge on shareholder matters.

**Work highlights** Ijaz Ahmed & Associates assisted Pakistan Microfinance Investment Company with the situation of having its not-for-profit corporate status and licence revoked.

#### Notable practitioners

**Ijaz Ahmed** is active across the commercial sphere, on a range of corporate mandates, including M&A and foreign investments. One enthusiastic client comments: *"His availability, advice and support is the reason why we've chosen to stay with the firm this long. He is wired to our way of thinking and understands the client. At the same time, he can offer a fresh perspective."*

#### LMA (Liaquat Merchant Associates)

**What the team is known for** LMA has a respected practice well regarded for advising major corporate clients and banks on M&A, restructuring, commercial agreements and regulatory work out of Karachi. Also provides complementary advice in areas such as competition law, tax and IP. Regularly sought after by multinational corporations and banks, with a notable following among natural resources companies. Clients include Sui Southern Gas, Bank Al Habib and Hascol Terminals.

**Strengths** One source remarks: *"I have great experience to date with LMA – they are excellent people and provide resolution of legal issues."*

**Work highlights** LMA advised GO Petroleum's sponsors on the repurchase of investors' shares

in the company.

#### Notable practitioners

Faresa Jafarey Ahsan is a key contact for the team.

#### Mandviwalla & Zafar

**What the team is known for** Mandviwalla & Zafar is a respected full-service firm offering expertise across a diverse range of corporate issues out of its Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad offices. Areas of focus include M&A, joint ventures and regulatory work, particularly those in the financial services sector. Clients further benefit from its national footprint.

#### Notable practitioners

**Mehmood Mandviwalla** is a highly respected practitioner with excellent experience in corporate and financing transactions. He acts for a range of clients including both domestic and multinational corporates.

### Band 4

#### ABS & Co

**What the team is known for** Islamabad-based firm ABS & Co is a robust group, regularly engaged by multinational and domestic clients to advise on cross-border M&A and investments. ABS & Co also provides advisory services in relation to a wide range of ancillary matters, including assisting clients with regulatory and tax compliance. Acts for clients in a range of sectors including finance, manufacturing and energy.

#### Notable practitioners

Ahmer Bilal Soofi and Sarjeel Mowahid are key contacts for the firm.

#### Khan & Associates

**What the team is known for** Khan & Associates regularly acts on mergers and acquisitions and advises a number of large multinationals in relation to their investments in Pakistan. Client base includes leading companies from the technology and energy sectors. Khan & Associates has offices in Islamabad and Lahore.

#### Notable practitioners

**Mansoor Khan** is very well established, particularly in the field of corporate work. He acts for corporates active across a range of sectors including TMT and energy.

#### Lexium Attorneys-At-Law

**What the team is known for** Lexium Attorneys-At-Law is a respected firm in Lahore with a solid track record in M&A, asset finance and cross-border investment. Additionally active advising on joint ventures and employment issues. Caters to clients from a variety of sectors including telecoms, energy and banking. Also offers expertise to clients in establishing new businesses in the country.

#### Notable practitioners

Walid Iqbal is a key point of contact for clients.

### Other Ranked Lawyers

**Mujtaba Jamal** of MJLA LEGAL is acknowledged for his precise legal work and local expertise, acting on a range of corporate matters. He often assists multinational corporates with investments into Pakistan.

PAKISTAN: An Introduction to Dispute Resolution: General Commercial

Contributed by FGE Ebrahim Hosain

As per The World Bank’s Doing Business Report (2020) (the “2020 DB Report”), which assesses countries’ ease of doing business on the basis of certain quantitative indicators, Pakistan ranks 108th out of 190 economies. This is a significant improvement over last year’s ranking, yet it must be acknowledged that Pakistan’s legal system continues to struggle to keep pace with its economic ambitions.

In October last year, the Federal Law Minister told the press that his ministry had proposed cutting the duration of civil litigation by amending the existing law in such a way that the final decision in a civil suit may be passed and implemented in less than five years. However, as per the 2020 DB Report, Pakistan ranks 156th out of 190 on the enforcement of contracts indicator and it takes approximately 1,071 days to enforce a contract in Pakistan.

Although overcrowded dockets, legal costs and delays are problems lamented almost all over the world, Pakistan is making steady efforts to restore people’s confidence in the judicial system by improving procedural delays, as well as by encouraging modes of dispute resolution as alternatives to litigation as an actionable recourse for redress of grievance.

The establishment of commercial courts through the Punjab Commercial Courts Ordinance 2021 for expeditious disposal of claims arising from commercial transactions, the operation of electronic courts at the Islamabad High Court and the implementation of an e-hearing system at the Supreme Court of Pakistan are encouraging signs for foreign investors.

Also noteworthy are the various investor-friendly reforms by Pakistan’s regulatory authorities such as (i) online company incorporation procedures, (ii) service delivery time-frames for obtaining electricity for businesses, (iii) efficient and transparent property registration processes, (iv) online payment modules for

value-added tax and corporate income tax, and (v) the Web-Based One Customs (WEOC) electronic system to simplify cross-border trade etc.

Businesses have also realised the benefits of opting out of the traditional legal dispute resolution mechanism of approaching domestic courts and instead agreeing on arbitration as the preferred means. However, the most immediate test of an arbitration clause comes when one party seeks to avoid arbitration by initiating legal proceedings in courts. Although the legislature has lagged behind, the superior courts in Pakistan have strived hard to honour arbitration clauses, especially foreign arbitration clauses. The Supreme Court has repeatedly held that “unless there are compelling reasons, an arbitration clause should be honoured.”

Such a progressive attitude by the superior courts ought to be reassuring for foreign investors, especially since the New York Convention 1958 has been implemented by way of local legislation and given permanent life as an act of Parliament. This definitive legal architecture for enforcement of foreign awards in Pakistan may have come late to Pakistan, but we can benefit from the global experience in dealing with this celebrated arbitration law.

Alternatively, parties can also opt for mediation as a more conciliatory and less adversarial mode of dispute resolution. Recent amendments to the Civil Procedure Code give discretion to the courts to refer matters to mediation, should they deem fit, at any stage of the proceedings and, in the event of a settlement, pronounce judgment in terms of the mediated settlement agreement. Such measures will not only reduce the time but also the cost of dispute resolution between parties, thereby promoting a healthy culture of cooperation and conciliation.

Dispute Resolution

<b>Dispute Resolution: General Commercial</b>
<b>Leading Firms</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Bhandari Naqvi Riaz (BNR)
Fazle Ghani Advocates
<b>Band 2</b>
ABS & Co
Axis Law Chambers
FGE Ebrahim Hosain
Mohsin Tayebaly & Co
Orr, Dignam & Co
Raja Mohammed Akram & Co
RIAA Barker Gillette
<b>Band 3</b>
Cornelius, Lane & Mufti
Haidermota & Co
Mandviwalla & Zafar
MCA Law Associates

Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

Band 1

**Bhandari Naqvi Riaz (BNR)**

**What the team is known for** Bhandari Naqvi Riaz has a notable team which is a mainstay of the disputes market. Based in Lahore, its impressive bench strength and courtroom experience make it a natural choice for many domestic and international entities. Disputes team frequently works alongside senior counsel, representing clients from the media, manufacturing, banking and hospitality industries. Strong on regulatory disputes concerning tax and competition authorities and frequently entrusted with disputes relating to construction contracts, distribution agreements and sale and purchase agreements. The Sindh Revenue Board, Wateen Telecom and Sui Northern Gas Pipelines are key clients.

**Strengths** Clients say about Bhandari Naqvi Riaz: “I find them to be extremely knowledgeable, not only on the law side but also on the industry. I am pleased with their ability to provide a number of skilled associates and lawyers for our needs.”

Interviewees say “BNR is an extremely professional and committed firm and we always find them on top of their job in the cases.”

**Work highlights** Bhandari Naqvi Riaz acted for Echo West International in a construction dispute with the Evacuee Trust Property Board in relation to the construction of the latter’s office complex in Islamabad.

**Notable practitioners**

**Uzair Bhandari** retains a successful practice handling domestic and international commercial litigation and arbitration proceedings. He acts on behalf of clients in the oil and gas, manufacturing and telecoms sectors. A market source enthuses on his advocacy skills: “He is quick on his feet and an excellent advocate – you know you’ll have your hands full.” **Feisal Hussain Naqvi** is the firm’s founding partner and draws on over 20 years’ experience in handling contentious work. He offers particularly impressive expertise in international arbitration and has a lead role in some of the firm’s most high-profile disputes. A source comments: “Feisal is considered one of the best lawyers

Dispute Resolution: General Commercial
<b>Leading Individuals</b>
<b>Star individuals</b>
Ali Khan Makhdoom <i>Fazle Ghani Advocates</i>
<b>Band 1</b>
Ahsan Aitzaz <i>Aitzaz Ahsan &amp; Associates (ORL) ◇</i>
Bhandari Uzair <i>Bhandari Naqvi Riaz (BNR)</i>
Malik Muneer A <i>MCA Law Associates</i>
Naqvi Feisal Hussain <i>Bhandari Naqvi Riaz (BNR)</i>
Raja Salman <i>Raja Mohammed Akram &amp; Co *</i>
Riaz Iftikharuddin <i>Bhandari Naqvi Riaz (BNR)</i>
<b>Band 2</b>
Ahmed Ijaz <i>Ijaz Ahmed &amp; Associates (ORL) ◇</i>
Alizai Taha <i>Orr, Dignam &amp; Co</i>
Bilal Soofi Ahmer <i>ABS &amp; Co *</i>
Ebrahim Zahid <i>FGE Ebrahim Hosain *</i>
Hasan Kazim <i>Haidermota &amp; Co</i>
Tayebaly Arshad <i>Mohsin Tayebaly &amp; Co *</i>
Zafar Syed Ali <i>Mandviwalla &amp; Zafar</i>
Zahid Sajid <i>Orr, Dignam &amp; Co</i>
Zuberi Abid <i>Abid Zuberi &amp; Co (ORL) ◇</i>
<b>Band 3</b>
Elahi Shehzad Ata <i>Cornelius, Lane &amp; Mufti</i>
Hamid Asma <i>Asma Hamid Associates (ORL) ◇ *</i>
Kazi Mayhar Mustafa <i>RIAA Barker Gillette *</i>
Khan Mansoor H <i>Khan &amp; Associates (ORL) ◇</i>
Khosa Sameer <i>Axis Law Chambers *</i>
Qutub Syed Shahab <i>Axis Law Chambers *</i>
Soomro Omer <i>RIAA Barker Gillette *</i>
Waheed Haider <i>Haider Waheed and Partners (ORL) ◇</i>
<b>Up-and-coming individuals</b>
Almani Ali <i>Fazle Ghani Advocates</i>
Awan Jhanzeb <i>Haidermota &amp; Co</i>
Chaudhry Umer Akram <i>Raja Mohammed Akram &amp; Co *</i>
Mir Waqqas <i>Axis Law Chambers *</i>
ud-Din Mian Sami <i>Bhandari Naqvi Riaz (BNR)</i>
* Indicates individual with profile.
◇ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

in the country and has lived up to this reputation whenever we have needed his advice and guidance on our legal matters. He is reachable and, most importantly, available to us whenever required." Iftikharuddin Riaz receives praise from clients for his involvement in cases at senior partner level. His work includes acting for international and domestic clients in high-value commercial arbitration and litigation cases. He is based in Lahore. Mian Sami ud-Din handles both arbitration and litigation cases, on a domestic and cross-border basis. His experience covers disputes about technology and concession agreements and other contractual disputes. A client notes he is "very diligent in his work," and adds: "I am particularly impressed by his ability to form his opinion and our case in a very simple yet effective manner."

### Fazle Ghani Advocates

**What the team is known for** Karachi-based Fazle Ghani Advocates has a renowned team with an illustrious reputation for advising on high-profile commercial cases, including tax disputes and international arbitration. Also maintains an eminent constitutional litigation practice.

**Strengths** Clients say about Fazle Ghani Advocates: "They have a fantastic team of lawyers with immense knowledge."

Market sources say that Fazle Ghani is "without doubt a top law firm," while a client finds the team to be "very good in commercial and tax litigation."

#### Notable practitioners

**Makhdoom Ali Khan** leverages valuable experi-

Dispute Resolution: Constitutional Law
<b>Senior Statespeople</b>
<b>Senior Statespeople:</b> distinguished older partners
Anwer Khalid <i>Khalid Anwer &amp; Co (ORL) ◇</i>
<b>Leading Individuals</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Ahsan Aitzaz <i>Aitzaz Ahsan &amp; Associates (ORL) ◇</i>
Ali Khan Makhdoom <i>Fazle Ghani Advocates</i>
Malik Muneer A <i>MCA Law Associates</i>
Raja Salman <i>Raja Mohammed Akram &amp; Co *</i>
Razvi Rasheed <i>Rasheed Razvi &amp; Associates (ORL) ◇</i>
<b>Band 2</b>
Hamid Shahid <i>Asma Hamid Associates (ORL) ◇</i>

ence as the former Attorney General of Pakistan and former chairman of the Pakistan Bar Council, in addition to an extensive career representing clients in significant commercial and constitutional cases before the High Courts and the Supreme Court of Pakistan. He is highly rated by market sources, with one calling him "probably the best lawyer in the country," and another observing that he is "no doubt a star individual – he is sought after and his practice remains thriving." Ali Almani is well regarded as a tax specialist. One market source describes him as a "good upcoming lawyer," while another compliments him as a "bright and hard-working" litigator.

### Band 2

### ABS & Co

**What the team is known for** ABS & Co offers an impressive disputes practice with offices in Lahore and Islamabad regularly representing the local subsidiaries of blue-chip multinationals and also a number of government entities. Experienced in handling a range of High Court litigation and arbitration relating to tax, land and breach of contract disputes. Additionally demonstrates expertise in handling constitutional law cases and in state-to-state arbitrations.

#### Notable practitioners

**Ahmer Bilal Soofi** (see p.633) frequently represents clients in commercial arbitration proceedings, in addition to white-collar criminal cases. A market source describes him as "a prominent litigator."

### Axis Law Chambers

**What the team is known for** Axis Law Chambers has a well-reputed Lahore-based practice representing clients including energy companies, manufacturers, government entities and NGOs in a range of cases, including tax disputes and employment litigation. Active in international arbitrations relating to government and energy parties and PPP projects, and offers expertise in constitutional law. National Transmission and Despatch Company, Agritech and Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority are key clients.

**Strengths** A client comments: "Axis Law Chambers has been involved in international arbitrations so they have the exposure and practical experience. I feel that their qualifications and knowledge of international laws and international work experience makes them capable of handling complicated legal work of other jurisdictions."

Interviewees say: "Lawyers at Axis are meticulous and hard-working which gives us the confidence to trust their judgement on any given issue."

**Work highlights** Axis Law Chambers represented

Coca-Cola Beverages in an investigation and proceedings before the National Tariff Commission related to the imposition of anti-dumping duty on allegedly dumped imports of aluminium cans.

#### Notable practitioners

**Sameer Khosa** (see p.634) focuses his practice on commercial disputes, having recently acted on domestic arbitration proceedings. A client comments: "Sameer's attention to details with his down-to-earth attitude makes him stand out. He is always open to discussing any aspect where we require his assistance." **Syed Shahab Qutub** (see p.635) routinely represents clients in litigation and arbitration proceedings, with a focus on disputes arising in the power sector. He also represents companies in arbitral award challenges, contract disputes and regulatory matters. One client comments: "He handles cases very well and is always very straightforward with us and very meticulous. The good thing about him is once he's got the case the quality is always top-notch." **Waqqas Mir** (see p.635) represents clients in breach of contract matters and regulatory disputes. A market commentator describes him as a "hard-working lawyer," while a client appreciates that he is "very reliable and responsive" and adds: "With Waqqas, I get answers that are quick, to the point and which anticipate my next questions."

### FGE Ebrahim Hosain

**What the team is known for** FGE Ebrahim Hosain is a well-reputed disputes practice offering expertise across commercial litigation, arbitration and mediation. Regularly appears before the Supreme Court representing clients from the banking, aviation and construction sectors. Based out of Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore, the team is also active in constitutional cases.

**Strengths** Clients of FGE Ebrahim Hosain say: "Overall we are very happy with the service, knowledge, feedback and response times."

#### Notable practitioners

**Zahid Ebrahim** (see p.634) offers clients over two decades of experience handling commercial litigation cases before the highest courts in Pakistan, in addition to acting on international arbitration proceedings. A client highly appreciates his "detailed review and interpretation of the law and the detailed reading of the contracts," and adds: "He is a commercially-oriented lawyer so we get very good practical advice from him."

### Mohsin Tayebaly & Co

**What the team is known for** Mohsin Tayebaly & Co is a long-established firm that handles a range of commercial disputes including construction, shareholder, competition and tax cases from its Karachi office. Offers expertise across both litigation and international arbitration, acting for a range of domestic and international clients. Also active in constitutional and white-collar crime disputes. SPEC Energy DMCC, Burshane LPG and Isra University are clients on the team.

**Strengths** A source comments that Mohsin Tayebaly & Co provides "excellent and efficient legal support."

In relation the team's ability to handle cross-border elements in a dispute, a client says: "They understand all the issues and coordinated excellently."

**Work highlights** Mohsin Tayebaly & Co represented ZhongTong Bus in its challenge to the tender process for the Karachi Bus Rapid Transit

Project. The case is valued at USD30 million.

#### Notable practitioners

**Arshad Tayebaly** (see p.635) handles commercial disputes on behalf of clients from a range of industry sectors. A source lauds him as “*extremely commercially minded and a problem solver*,” while another claims: “*Whenever you go to him he will have a very simple solution for you within the first half of the meeting and he is very effective.*”

#### Orr, Dignam & Co

**What the team is known for** Orr, Dignam & Co is an established team that ably handles High Court litigation and international arbitration mandates from its Karachi office. Regularly represents corporate clients from the shipping, power and telecoms sectors. Maintains a strong client base, encompassing multinational corporations, as well as domestic public sector companies.

#### Notable practitioners

**Taha Alizai** often acts as a lead adviser on the firm's contentious mandates. He handles commercial and contractual disputes on behalf of clients from a range of industries. **Sajid Zahid** offers significant experience in representing clients in litigation before the High Courts and also provides extensive skill in handling arbitration proceedings. He assists clients from a range of industries, including manufacturing, construction and engineering.

#### Raja Mohammed Akram & Co

**What the team is known for** Raja Mohammed Akram & Co has a broad dispute resolution practice based out of Karachi, Islamabad and Lahore. Well versed in domestic and international arbitration and litigation, the team handles constitutional matters, regulatory disputes and a range of commercial cases including banking, land, construction, labour and employment and tax matters. Active for clients in the power, natural resources, financial services and technology sectors.

**Strengths** Market sources say Raja Mohammed Akram & Co is a “*very good firm*” which is handling “*good work.*”

#### Notable practitioners

**Salman Raja** (see p.635) is known for his handling of both commercial and constitutional disputes. He attracts praise from market sources with one describing him as “*a fantastic lawyer*,” while another states: “*He is extremely articulate, persuasive and carries a lot of depth.*” **Umer Akram Chaudhry** (see p.633) is regarded as a “*very bright*” lawyer by market commentators and is experienced in both litigation and arbitration in matters relating to shareholder, joint venture and other commercial disputes as well as competition and constitutional issues. A client says he is “*one of the best newly coming litigators because he's obviously younger compared to senior partners but very thorough and makes sure the client is up to speed with what the strategy is.*” He is based in the firm's Lahore office.

#### RIAA Barker Gillette

**What the team is known for** RIAA Barker Gillette is a substantial full-service firm with a well-regarded litigation practice, particularly active on energy, finance, pharma and tax disputes. Based in Karachi, the team also advises clients on international arbitration and the enforcement of arbitral awards in the courts. Also involved in trade, maritime and competition cases. Attock Cement

Pakistan, Chevron and The Hub Power are notable clients.

**Strengths** Sources value the RIAA Barker Gillette team's responsiveness and ability to form an effective strategy. One interviewee says: “*The service is good, they are proactive and I'm really impressed with them.*”

A further source appreciates that “*the response times are great.*”

**Work highlights** RIAA Barker Gillette acted for Gunvor International in a dispute arising out of a long-term LNG sale contract with Pakistan State Oil Company in relation to whether port charges levied from the latter were in excess of what was contractually permitted.

#### Notable practitioners

**Mayhar Mustafa Kazi** (see p.634) handles a range of disputes, often arising out of commercial contracts and agreements, in addition to tax matters. One client simply states: “*Mayhar is exceptional. He is competent, committed and responsive.*” Another client explains: “*Of course, he always gives us advice from a legal standpoint, but also provides us a practical way to reach a resolution.*”

**Omer Soomro** (see p.635) is well placed to act on a wide variety of disputes, from representing international companies in litigation proceedings, to handling white-collar criminal cases on behalf of individuals. He has appeared before the High Courts, in addition to advising on commercial arbitration cases. One market source describes him as being “*extremely good at what he does.*”

### Band 3

#### Cornelius, Lane & Mufti

**What the team is known for** Cornelius, Lan & Mufti is a highly regarded firm with offices in Lahore and Islamabad housing an impressive team of litigators. Handles a wide spectrum of commercial litigation work, with activity in banking disputes.

**Strengths** A client says of Cornelius, Lan & Mufti that “*they know international arbitration very well.*”

#### Notable practitioners

**Shehzad Ata Elahi's** practice spans litigation and arbitration and commercial and regulatory disputes. He is well regarded in the market and is regularly involved in disputes arising out of construction and public-private projects, with one client noting that he is “*one of the most gifted lawyers one can come across – he has the ability to pick up and address new subjects with ease and dexterity.*”

#### Haidermota & Co

**What the team is known for** Haidermota is a pre-eminent firm, well equipped to act on a full spectrum of contentious work, including real estate litigation, shareholder disputes and international arbitration out of its Karachi and Islamabad offices. Also active on white-collar crime matters, tax and takeover disputes and insolvency proceedings. Clients benefit from its national footprint and full-service offering. Increasingly active on IP and international trade disputes. Regularly represents clients from the banking, energy, construction and education sectors. Pakistan Mobile Communication, Uber Technologies and SriLankan Airlines are notable clients.

**Strengths** Clients say Haidermota & Co is “*very thorough and detail-oriented*,” adding that the advice is “*something which I can take to my board.*”

A source notes: “*I find the firm to be extremely adept at litigation. They are very thorough and diligent in representing us. The firm's ability to fully understand cross-border issues is commendable and reflected in the astute advice rendered to us.*”

**Work highlights** Haidermota & Co acted for Sindh Infrastructure Development Company in a dispute filed by Xiamen Golden Dragon Bus Company, an unsuccessful bidder for the Karachi bus rapid transit project.

#### Notable practitioners

**Kazim Hasan's** wide-ranging dispute resolution practice spans litigation and arbitration cases, often brought in relation to oil and gas, finance and manufacturing sector disputes. He is well placed to assist with shareholder, construction and banking disputes at the High Court and Supreme Court levels. **Jahanzeb Awan** is experienced in handling litigation regarding construction, employment, banking and energy sector matters. One enthusiastic client states: “*He has the ability to feel the pulse of the court while arguing cases, which means he is versatile – a great skill to have when it comes to litigation in Pakistan.*”

#### Mandviwalla & Zafar

**What the team is known for** Mandviwalla & Zafar has a respected practice in Lahore handling a variety of commercial litigation, constitutional matters and arbitrations. Offers expertise in a diverse range of cases, including banking, media and tax disputes.

#### Notable practitioners

**Syed Ali Zafar** is well placed to handle a wide variety of commercial and regulatory disputes. A market source describes him as a “*good litigator.*”

#### MCA Law Associates

**What the team is known for** MCA Law Associates is a recognised corporate and dispute resolution outfit based in Karachi. Caters to an impressive roster of clients in the energy, maritime and telecommunications and media sectors. Highly regarded for its commercial and constitutional law litigation capabilities.

#### Notable practitioners

**Muneer Malik** of MCA Law Associates is highly experienced, having been in practice for over 40 years. He is a prominent figure in constitutional law disputes and has previously acted as Attorney General for Pakistan and as the President of the Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan. He also has a substantial commercial disputes practice in court and continues to be highly active in this area. He is applauded by one market source as “*without doubt the best attorney*,” while another says: “*Muneer Malik is a leading disputes lawyer.*”

### Other Ranked Lawyers

**Ijaz Ahmed** of Ijaz Ahmed & Associates offers extensive experience in handling commercial litigation proceedings. He offers clients a skilled handling of disputes and contentious matters arising out of transactional work.

**Aitzaz Ahsan** of Aitzaz Ahsan & Associates is highly experienced, having been practising for over four decades. He is held in high esteem for his work on constitutional disputes, in addition to complex commercial litigation. One market source enthuses: “*He is brilliant in terms of advocacy skills and his innovative prowess – a fantastic*

advocate and public intellectual." Clients are also appreciative of him, saying: "He is a man of great character and is also one of the greatest lawyers that Pakistan has seen."

**Khalid Anwer** of Khalid Anwer & Co draws on vast expertise in the dispute resolution field, with over five decades of experience in legal practice under his belt. He has successfully represented clients in several high-profile High Court and Supreme Court cases. One impressed market commentator notes: "Khalid Anwar is hands down the most effective advocate. He is remarkably good at persuading judges."

**Asma Hamid** (see p.634) heads Asma Hamid Associates' litigation practice and has a busy banking, real estate, IP and family law dispute resolution practice. One interviewee states: "I find Asma to be very hands-on and thorough in her approach. She is easy to work with and quickly

understands issues. She is always accessible and very efficient in the way she handles our case. I would highly recommend her." A client describes her as "a seasoned and senior lawyer with strong technical skills" who "understands client needs very well and is able to do a thorough and dependable job."

**Shahid Hamid** of Asma Hamid Associates is a high-profile figure in the constitutional law arena in Pakistan. He is the patron of the chambers and brings to bear over 40 years of experience representing clients in litigation before various courts and tribunals.

**Mansoor Khan** of Khan & Associates maintains his reputation as a highly regarded litigator at the High Court. He provides skilled handling of both commercial litigation and arbitration, often in relation to the mining, telecoms and oil and gas sectors.

**Rasheed Razvi** of Rasheed Razvi & Associates draws on over four decades of experience in legal practice. He has acted on behalf of a range of clients before the High Courts and Supreme Court of Pakistan.

**Haider Waheed** of Haider Waheed and Partners has an impressive track record in acting on disputes before the High Courts and Supreme Court of Pakistan. He is well known for his skill in handling commercial litigation cases.

**Abid Zuberi** of Abid Zuberi & Co has over 25 years of experience advising clients in the courts of Pakistan. He is known for handling high-value matters including tax disputes and cases in the energy sector. Impressed by his caseload, one market source refers to him as "the busiest lawyer in the Sindh High Court."

## Employment

Employment
<b>Leading Firms</b>
Akhund Forbes
Axis Law Chambers
Faisal Mahmood Ghani & Co
Yousaf Amanat & Associates
<b>Leading Individuals</b>
Ghani Faisal Mahmood Faisal Mahmood Ghani & Co*
* Indicates individual with profile.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

### Band 1

#### Akhund Forbes

**What the team is known for** Akhund Forbes is a well-known full-service firm based in Karachi with a growing focus on employment law matters. Assists with employee grievances, redundancies and employee wrongdoing on the contentious side. Also advises on workers' welfare fund, worker participation fund and employment aspects of transactions. UBL Fund Managers, adidas and Deutsche Bank are important clients of the team.

**Strengths** A source comments about Akhund Forbes: "They are a great firm to work with. I like their energy and enthusiasm. They understand what you want and they manage to navigate difficult issues."

A client appreciates the team's ability to provide "timely and well-formulated advice."

**Work highlights** Akhund Forbes advised MCB Arif Habib Savings and Investments on its workers' welfare fund policies and liability insurance for its board of directors.

#### Notable practitioners

Sahar Iqbal is a key contact for the employment practice.

#### Axis Law Chambers

**What the team is known for** Axis Law Chambers has a successful employment law practice based in Lahore drawing on the firm's strength in the dispute resolution and corporate transactional fields. Effective in handling disputes with employees, redundancies, harassment and white-collar criminal matters. Also drafts employment contracts and advises on provident funds. Centre for Economic Research Pakistan, Norinco International Cooperation and Prime Genetics are clients of the team.

**Strengths** A client says that Axis Law's advice is "well explained, to the point and well in time."

Another interviewee who used the team on complex matters observes: "I find them to be reliable, responsive and practical in their services."

**Work highlights** Axis Law assisted Oxford Policy Management UK with the restructuring of its employment policies in relation to enforced leave, reduction in working hours, termination, pension and benefits as a result of the pandemic.

#### Notable practitioners

Syed Shahab Qutub is a point of contact for clients.

#### Faisal Mahmood Ghani & Co

**What the team is known for** Faisal Mahmood Ghani & Co offers a well-established employment law and industrial relations practice in Karachi. Represents clients in collective bargaining, employee misconduct matters and other disputes as well as advising on benefits and the employment aspects of M&A. Experienced in appearing before the National Industrial Relations Commission and the Labour Courts. Its roster of high-profile clients include Novartis, Shell and Pfizer.

**Strengths** Market commentators say: "Faisal Mahmood Ghani is one of the leading practitioners in Karachi" in the labour law space.

Clients say: "The service is among the best legal service that we have experienced. Their attention to their client and details is impeccable."

**Work highlights** Faisal Mahmood Ghani & Co acted for National Bank of Pakistan in cases before the High Court on the validity of appointment of the chairman, president, directors and several key executives to the bank.

#### Notable practitioners

**Faisal Ghani** (see p.634) is a highly experienced employment law specialist assisting clients with the full range of contentious and non-contentious work in this space. One client enthuses: "I think he is a thorough professional. He speaks very little but he is very much to the point. In court he is one of those lawyers who is very firm and likes to argue his point in detail and takes his point along."

#### Yousaf Amanat & Associates

**What the team is known for** Yousaf Amanat & Associates is a full-service firm based in Karachi and Islamabad with a growing employment and labour law practice. Regularly represents international and local companies before the labour court and assists with redundancies, terminations and HR restructuring. Also advises on HR policies and COVID-related regulations. Clients include HMD Global Oy, Generali and Marriott International.

**Strengths** One client notes that Yousaf Amanat & Associates is "responsive and on point" in their advice.

**Work highlights** Yousaf Amanat & Associates advised Oxfam International on the workforce restructuring and termination of employees and hiring of new employees in connection to a proposed merger.

#### Notable practitioners

Yousaf Amanat and Noman Zahid Ali are both contacts for this practice.

## Intellectual Property

Intellectual Property
<b>Leading Firms</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Bharucha & Co
United Trademark & Patent Services
Vellani & Vellani
<b>Band 2</b>
Ali & Associates
Daudpota International
Sheikh Brothers
<b>Leading Individuals</b>
<b>Band 1</b>
Khan Hasan Irfan <i>United Trademark &amp; Patent Services</i>
Vellani Badaruddin F <i>Vellani &amp; Vellani</i>
<b>Band 2</b>
Bharucha Mohammad Fazil <i>Bharucha &amp; Co</i>
Daudpota Faisal <i>Daudpota International</i>
Shah Ali Kabir <i>Ali &amp; Associates</i>
Sheikh Sultan Ahmed <i>Sheikh Brothers</i>
Sheikh Zain <i>Zain Sheikh &amp; Associates (ORL)</i> ◊
<b>Associates to watch</b>
Bharucha Dilshad <i>Vellani &amp; Vellani</i>
◊ (ORL) = Other Ranked Lawyer.
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.

### Band 1

#### Bharucha & Co

**What the team is known for** Bharucha & Co has a prominent team well regarded for advising multinational corporates on contentious and non-contentious intellectual property mandates. Regularly handles trade mark, patent and copyright matters for telecoms, technology and pharmaceutical clients. Commended for its work on prosecution matters.

#### Notable practitioners

**Mohammad Fazil Bharucha** maintains a strong reputation in the intellectual property market. He provides a capable handling of the full spectrum of intellectual property mandates and is widely recognised for his work on trade mark prosecution and portfolio management.

#### United Trademark & Patent Services

**What the team is known for** United Trademark & Patent Services is a specialist IP practice in Lahore handling a suite of litigation and advisory

work. Remains a popular choice for international companies seeking advice on IP issues in Pakistan, including registration and enforcement. Offering is further enhanced by its network of offices throughout the Middle East.

#### Notable practitioners

**Hasan Irfan Khan** is considered a market leader and a top-tier lawyer in the IP field by market commentators, who say he is a “very good lawyer” and note his presence at the Supreme Court. He receives instructions on local and international cases, with particular expertise in contentious IP cases.

#### Vellani & Vellani

**What the team is known for** Vellani & Vellani boasts a longstanding reputation in this sphere, routinely assisting multinational corporates with a diverse array of IP matters from its Karachi and Islamabad offices. Handles IP litigation and advisory work, including issues concerning internet domains and transfers of technology. Often engaged in trade mark opposition and patent infringement work and is known for its strength in IP transactions.

#### Notable practitioners

**Badaruddin Vellani** maintains his market-leading reputation as a “legend of IP,” according to market sources. He draws on extensive experience advising multinational companies on the IP aspects of transactions, as well as oppositions and litigation proceedings. **Dilshad Bharucha** is recognised for her significant experience in the intellectual property field. She is experienced in patent matters and based in Karachi.

### Band 2

#### Ali & Associates

**What the team is known for** Ali & Associates is recognised for its activity on local trade mark matters. Increasingly active on customs and anti-counterfeit related work, including advising on brand protection strategy and infringement cases. Active on behalf of manufacturers in the technology and fashion sectors. Ali & Associates has offices in Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.

**Strengths** Market commentators endorse Ali &

Associates in the IP space.

#### Notable practitioners

**Ali Kabir Shah** advises on a broad range of mandates in the field, including brand protection strategy and disputes, as well as handling the IP aspects of transactions. A market commentator states: “Ali himself is a good lawyer and present in international conferences.”

#### Daudpota International

**What the team is known for** Daudpota International represents an international client base in a wide range of intellectual property matters, ranging from trade mark infringement and prosecution to patent drafting and copyright enforcement from its Karachi office. Strong in the anti-counterfeiting and customs fields. Active in coordinating overseas IP enforcement and prosecution, with a particular focus on Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

#### Notable practitioners

**Faisal Daudpota** is recognised for his transactional and contentious IP practice, which spans trade mark opposition and infringement disputes, data protection and anti-counterfeiting matters. One market source describes him as possessing “good knowledge” in this area.

#### Sheikh Brothers

**What the team is known for** Karachi-based Sheikh Brothers is noted for its activity on the full range of both domestic and international IP matters. Regularly involved in trade mark litigation.

#### Notable practitioners

**Sultan Ahmed Sheikh** is noted for his expertise in contentious matters. He draws on considerable experience representing clients in IP litigation proceedings.

#### Other Ranked Lawyers

**Zain Sheikh** of Zain Sheikh & Associates comes highly recommended for his handling of IP litigation cases. He is praised for his significant experience in the field and one market source notes that he is “very thorough in the work he does.”

## Projects, Infrastructure & Energy

Projects, Infrastructure & Energy	
<b>Leading Firms</b>	
<b>Band 1</b>	
Haidermota & Co	
RIAA Barker Gillette	
<b>Band 2</b>	
Axis Law Chambers	
Kabiraj & Talibuddin	
Mohsin Tayebaly & Co	
Orr, Dignam & Co	
Qureshi Law Associates	
Vellani & Vellani	
<b>Band 3</b>	
Aqlaal Advocates	
<b>Band 4</b>	
Ahmed & Qazi	
Akhund Forbes	
Ali Khan Law Associates	
Ijaz Ahmed & Associates	
LMA (Liaquat Merchant Associates)	
<b>Senior Statespeople</b>	
<b>Senior Statespeople:</b> distinguished older partners	
Kabiraj Kairas N Kabiraj & Talibuddin	
Riaz Zahir Orr, Dignam & Co	
Rizvi Ahsan Zahir RIAA Barker Gillette *	
<b>Leading Individuals</b>	
<b>Band 1</b>	
Khan Ali Ali Khan Law Associates	
Khan Ejaz Ishaq Aqlaal Advocates	
Naqvee Hasnain RIAA Barker Gillette *	
Shereef Umar Haidermota & Co	
<b>Band 2</b>	
Ahmed Amina Axis Law Chambers *	
Qureshi Adnan Aslam Qureshi Law Associates	
Shaukat Bilal RIAA Barker Gillette *	
Yusuf Aliya Orr, Dignam & Co	
<b>Band 3</b>	
Akhtar Javaid Vellani & Vellani	
Zufar Tariq Nasir Vellani & Vellani	
<b>Band 4</b>	
Ahmed Ijaz Ijaz Ahmed & Associates	
Akhund Rabel Akhund Forbes *	
Raza Shahid Orr, Dignam & Co	
Vellani Badaruddin F Vellani & Vellani	
<b>Up-and-coming individuals</b>	
Aziz Owais Haidermota & Co	
Faruqi Maheen Kabiraj & Talibuddin	
Ghanghro Rahmat Kamal Haidermota & Co	
Rahim Salman Mohsin Tayebaly & Co *	
* Indicates individual with profile.	
Alphabetical order within each band. Band 1 is highest.	

### Band 1

#### Haidermota & Co

**What the team is known for** Haidermota & Co has a market-leading practice offering national coverage and deep experience in the natural resources and power sectors from its Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi offices. Well equipped to handle the full projects life-cycle, including financing, development and regulatory issues. Clients include banks, government entities and independent power producers, both domestic and international. Highly active on large-scale infrastructure and renewable energy projects, such as coal, solar and wind power projects, LNG terminals, bridges and transport projects. Increasingly active on PPP matters. Shanghai Electric, Gul

Ahmed Electric and Bank Alfalah number among Haidermota's clients.

**Strengths** One client says of Haidermota that the "attention to detail is spectacular," while others compliment the team's client care and thorough knowledge of energy sector regulations.

Sources often praise the team for the quality of its advice: "Our overall impression is very good in terms of knowledge of contracts and local laws, turnaround time and quality of work."

**Work highlights** Haidermota & Co acted for CDC Group and Habib Bank as lender's counsel on the USD47 million financing to Zhenfa Pakistan New Energy for the development of a 100 MW solar power project in Punjab province.

#### Notable practitioners

**Umar Shereef** is a seasoned practitioner who has a stellar reputation for his work in the energy sector. He is particularly highly respected for his work on project finance and development mandates, advising on a range of matters from coal and LNG projects to solar power matters. One interviewee appreciates his ability to "work through tricky issues" while another hails him as "maybe the best lawyer in Pakistan on issues related to power tariff." **Owais Aziz's** practice spans solar, oil and gas and coal projects. Market sources see him as a rising star in this space and one comments that "he handles transactions very well and is commercially sound." **Rahmat Kamal Ghanghro** offers significant experience on project finance transactions, advising a range of multinational and domestic clients in the energy sector. She is active in the conventional energy space, advising on LNG and coal projects.

#### RIAA Barker Gillette

**What the team is known for** RIAA Barker Gillette is a pre-eminent firm routinely advising on high-profile power and infrastructure projects from its Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad offices. Aply handles the full range of financing, development and regulatory work. Active on conventional and alternative energy projects, as well as telecoms matters, advising on PPAs, EPC contracts and project documents as well as licences and tariffs. Team can draw upon support from RIAA's international network of offices, enhancing its ability to handle cross-border mandates. Its broad client base includes leading local and international power companies including Mira Power, Indus Wind Energy and Sindh Nooriabad Power.

**Strengths** One client notes RIAA's strong knowledge of the power sector regulatory environment and the expertise and reliability of the team from partner to associate level: "They have very good associates and they take care of us and do the groundwork independently."

**Work highlights** RIAA Barker Gillette acted for Nepal Water and Energy Development on the USD450 million financing of a 216 MW hydro-power project in Nepal.

#### Notable practitioners

**Ahsan Zahir Rizvi** (see p.635) is the global senior and managing partner of RIAA Barker Gillette and has forged a formidable reputation as one of the country's leading experts on energy sector financings. **Hasnain Naqvee** (see p.635) operates a market-leading projects practice and offers notable expertise in project finance mandates, acting pri-

marily for borrowers. One client enthuses that "for the power sector he is one of the most prominent lawyers in Pakistan - he knows all the insides and outsides of this sector." **Bilal Shaukat** (see p.635) is admired for his adept handling of energy projects, regularly assisting clients with development and financing matters. He is well acquainted with the PPP model, advising clients regularly on concession agreements, licences and project agreements. One client states he is "very well respected in the power area."

### Band 2

#### Axis Law Chambers

**What the team is known for** Axis Law Chambers is a notable Lahore-based practice handling a growing number of projects mandates for clients in coal, solar and wind power. Regularly advises on project finance and development and establishing tariff agreements and is acknowledged for its expertise in the PPP framework. Additionally attracts instructions on the financing of infrastructure projects.

**Strengths** Market sources say Axis Law is "a good firm in this sector."

One client comments: "I have found them quite up to the mark and would say they make your life easy."

#### Notable practitioners

**Amina Ahmed** (see p.633) is a strong lawyer with excellent experience in project finance mandates, advising on a range of coal, LNG and renewable energy projects. Market sources describe her as "a capable lawyer with good commercial sense." A client enthuses: "Amina is an extremely competent and diligent lawyer possessing an in-depth understanding of project finance and renewable energy projects. She really knows her financing documents inside and out and has the perfect balance of commercial, practical and legal understanding of transactions and is focused on providing client solutions."

#### Kabiraj & Talibuddin

**What the team is known for** Kabiraj & Talibuddin has a highly reputed team of project finance specialists with a long history of advising on complex transactions from its office in Karachi. Principally acts for lender clients, both international and domestic, including acting increasingly for Chinese banks on inbound work. Offers specialist expertise in various sectors, including infrastructure and hydro and wind power. Additional areas of experience include mining, coal and thermal power. Regular clients of the team include International Finance Corporation, DEG and Hub Power.

**Strengths** One client comments: "Kabiraj & Talibuddin is constantly available to meet our needs and to answer any questions we may have," adding that the team stands out for its "work ethic, time spent, advice given, and knowledge."

**Work highlights** Kabiraj & Talibuddin assisted China Development Bank as the lead arranger with the USD1.36 billion financing of a power project and the USD793 million financing of a mining project, both located at the Thar coalfield block 1 in Sindh.

#### Notable practitioners

**Kairas Kabiraj** is a distinguished authority in

Pakistan energy market. He has a fantastic track record on project financing matters, acting on a range of energy and infrastructure mandates. **Maheen Faruqi** is a rising star and is making a name for herself in the energy market. She has impressive experience in project finance and energy investment mandates. One interviewee describes her as “*extremely knowledgeable*.”

## Mohsin Tayebaly & Co

**What the team is known for** Mohsin Tayebaly & Co is active on project finance matters, offering expertise in both Islamic and conventional financing structures from its Karachi and Lahore offices. Aably handles the full suite of power and infrastructure work, focusing mainly on renewable energy projects. Also experienced in oil and gas matters such as the development of storage facilities and drilling projects. Clients include leading international and domestic banks, as well as government departments. China Development Bank, Nizam Power and K-Electric are key clients.

**Strengths** Sources say that “*Mohsin Tayebaly is very solution-oriented and a standout firm*.”

**Work highlights** Mohsin Tayebaly & Co advised The Bank of Punjab and other lenders in the PKR4 billion financing of the development of an 8 MW high-head run of the river hydropower project in Azad Jammu & Kashmir.

### Notable practitioners

**Salman Rahim** (see p.635) is experienced in project financing in relation to solar, hydro and coal-fired power projects. One market source notes that he is “*a very good lawyer and has good commercial sense*.”

## Orr, Dignam & Co

**What the team is known for** Orr, Dignam & Co maintains an excellent reputation for projects work, with continued activity in the telecoms, alternative energy, and oil and gas sectors, including regular involvement on matters involving LNG projects. Especially active in wind and infrastructure projects. Acts for an impressive roster of local and overseas entities from both the public and private sectors from its Karachi office.

### Notable practitioners

**Zahir Riaz** is a seasoned practitioner who has a stellar reputation for his work in the energy and natural resources sector and is recognised by market sources as “*a very renowned person*.” He is best known for his work on project finance. **Aliya Yusuf** is well established in the area of LNG projects, advising on a range of project development matters as well as investments. **Shahid Raza** is admired for his adept handling of energy projects. Based in Islamabad, he attracts praise from market commentators, with one saying: “*He is a good lawyer, very calm and composed. He is always a pleasure to have opposite – reliable and someone you can talk sense with*.”

## Qureshi Law Associates

**What the team is known for** Qureshi Law Associates is a recognised Lahore-based project counsel focused on the renewable, coal, and oil and gas sectors. Particularly active in advising both international and domestic clients on the development of IPPs. Also instructed on a range of corporate and commercial work in the oil and gas space and noted for its experience advising on regulatory matters. Red Sea Petroleum, Hydrochina Dawood and Sino Energy Consortium are key clients.

**Strengths** Clients say Qureshi Law has “*vast experience in the energy sector*.”

One interviewee enthuses: “*Their government contacts provide valuable insight and they are always ahead of the requirements and what proposed actions need to be taken. They are small, efficient, responsive and focused. They also provide amazing turnaround time for work*.”

**Work highlights** Qureshi Law Associates acted as project counsel for Solution de Energy on the development of a 100 MW solar power project.

### Notable practitioners

**Adnan Aslam Qureshi** is frequently sought out for representations in relation to transactions in the power sector. Market sources praise his “*outstanding commercial awareness, responsiveness and availability, with deep understanding of the power sector, where his past experience with the PPIB makes a difference*.”

## Vellani & Vellani

**What the team is known for** Vellani & Vellani is experienced in the renewable energy and oil and gas sectors, with expertise spanning financing, M&A, regulatory advice and arbitration. Clients include international and domestic energy corporates as well as local government entities. Regularly acts for power producers and lenders from its offices in Islamabad and Karachi.

**Strengths** Market sources say that Vellani & Vellani has “*seasoned lawyers*.”

Clients say: “*Vellani has excellent lawyers, particularly in the power sector*.”

### Notable practitioners

**Javaid Akhtar** is very well established, particularly in the field of oil and gas projects. One market source notes he is “*very sound, clear and commercial*,” while another observes he is “*a confident lawyer*.” **Tariq Nasir Zufar** offers experience advising a range of domestic and multinational lenders on infrastructure project financing mandates, including LNG import terminals. He is also well-versed in advising on construction and operation agreements and PPAs. One market commentator describes him as an “*excellent person*” and notes his experience in wind power projects. **Badaruddin Vellani** offers clients a wealth of experience across a range of different corporate and financing matters in the energy sector, including investments and project finance work.

## Band 3

### Aqtaal Advocates

**What the team is known for** Aqtaal Advocates is active on solar and wind power projects, acting primarily for public sector entities from its office in Islamabad. Other areas of focus include hydropower and telecoms. Regularly advises on project bids and project development.

### Notable practitioners

**Ejaz Ishaq Khan** has longstanding experience and is highly respected for his work on complex renewable energy and telecoms projects.

## Band 4

### Ahmed & Qazi

**What the team is known for** Ahmed & Qazi has an active projects team, attracting a growing amount of work on the development and financing of infra-

structure and power projects. Based in Karachi, the team’s roster of clients includes government entities and international lenders. Also has a notable track record acting for Chinese clients on project development in Pakistan. Demonstrates further experience advising on agricultural and food processing projects.

### Notable practitioners

Head of department Saim Hashmi is a key contact.

## Akhund Forbes

**What the team is known for** Akhund Forbes has a well-regarded team based in Karachi acting predominantly on behalf of energy sector clients and particularly noted for its project finance and development work. Frequently engaged by international clients on their investments into Pakistan. Offers notable experience advising on energy-related regulatory compliance issues. Offers additional experience assisting clients on matters relating to natural resources. China Power Hub Generation, China Zhongyuan Engineering and Stanley Electronic are notable clients of the team.

**Strengths** One enthusiastic client comments: “*Akhund Forbes is represented by a team of young and dynamic individuals who are committed, hard-working and thorough professionals. The Akhund Forbes team is very responsive and reverts with their replies over emails and phone calls on, generally, real-time basis*.”

Another interviewee notes the team’s “*excellent knowledge of Pakistan*” and ability to “*work professionally with international counterparts*,” adding: “*They have a good knowledge of international business norms and are also quick to respond*.”

**Work highlights** Akhund Forbes acted for the Privatisation Commission of Pakistan on the privatisation of two RLNG-based power plants through a strategic sale.

### Notable practitioners

**Rabel Akhund** (see p.633) is admired for his adept handling of energy sector transactions, assisting a range of multinational clients with investments into Pakistan-based projects. One client observes: “*Rabel is cordial, courteous and efficient in his working. He, in all his engagements, leads by example. I have found him to be innovative and able to provide alternatives to manage complex issues. His logical mind allows him to read, interpret and explain provisions of law and legal framework in simple and understandable language*.”

## Ali Khan Law Associates

**What the team is known for** Ali Khan Law Associates is a newly established firm in Karachi with a strong bench of projects specialists. Acts for international and local lenders, project companies and the government in project development, financing and regulatory matters. Experienced in energy and public infrastructure matters including LNG, solar, road and utilities projects. Key clients of the firm are the federal government of Pakistan, Local Government Department of Sindh and Faysal Bank.

**Strengths** One client says of the team at Ali Khan Law: “*They are meticulous, do their research and are able to convey their point of view effectively*.”

An interviewee recommends the firm for “*quality legal advice*.”

**Work highlights** Ali Khan Law Associates is advising Asian Development Bank, the government of Sindh and the Karachi Water Sewerage Board on an end-to-end waste water manage-

ment solution to cater to industries operating in the Sindh Industrial Trading Estates.

#### Notable practitioners

**Ali Khan** frequently assists clients on PPP projects and is highly rated for his work assisting with development, financing and regulatory issues. One client enthuses: "Ali Khan is considered a pioneer in PPP projects in Pakistan, especially in the province of Sindh. He has an amiable personality and leads by example, and has led many successful PPP projects' structuring either from the government side or investors' side." Sources also often note that he is "open-minded, very practical and has a problem-solving approach."

#### Ijaz Ahmed & Associates

**What the team is known for** Ijaz Ahmed & Associates is regularly sought out for advice on energy work, with particular experience in LNG projects. Active on matters relating to coal, oil and gas and power projects and recommended for regulatory expertise. Clients include major domestic and international sponsors and government entities such as Thal Nova Thar Power, Pak Oman Invest-

ment and National Electric Power Regulatory Authority. The firm has offices in the three major cities of Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi.

**Strengths** Market sources note Ijaz Ahmed & Associates is "very knowledgeable and responsive."

A source who was on the opposite side compliments the team highly: "I am very happy - a big smile on my face. Although on the other side, they were fair to all parties and were pushing for what was best for all parties, not just their client."

**Work highlights** Ijaz Ahmed & Associates assisted JS Energy with its acquisition of a 50 MW wind power project.

#### Notable practitioners

**Ijaz Ahmed** is active across the commercial sphere, advising clients on a range of projects. He is best known for his work on LNG and oil and gas projects. One client notes that "he is very calm even when he is under pressure and bombarded with questions, and he understands before actually responding."

#### LMA (Liaquat Merchant Associates)

**What the team is known for** LMA has a rated projects practice, offering notable experience in LNG-based power projects. The Karachi-based firm is additionally active on project finance and development work relating to hydroelectric, coal-based and wind power projects. Also represents multinational investors in their investments in energy sector projects. Clients of LMA include Karachi Infrastructure Development, Sindh Solid Waste Management Board and Pakistan LNG Terminal.

**Work highlights** LMA assisted Sui Southern Gas with the amendment to a gas transportation agreement for the movement of RLNG from Engro LNG Terminal to Sui Northern Gas Pipelines.

#### Notable practitioners

Hira Ahmad is a key contact for the practice.

## Leaders' Profiles in Pakistan

#### AHMED, Amina

Axis Law Chambers, Lahore  
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*Featured in Projects (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Projects, Infrastructure & Energy

**Career:** Partner - Axis Law Chambers, Lahore, Pakistan (April 2016 - Present) Transaction specialist, specializing in power and infrastructure projects, PPP projects, banking and finance, project financing (both conventional and Islamic modes of financing); with a particular expertise in the power and energy sector. Partner - HaidermotaBNR & Co, Lahore, Pakistan (2014 - 2016) Transaction specialist, specializing in power and infrastructure projects, PPP projects, banking and finance, project financing (both conventional and Islamic modes of financing); with a particular expertise in the power and energy sector. JD Clerk - Mergers and Acquisitions - Clayton Utz, Melbourne, Australia (September 2005 - October 2005) JD Clerk - Corporate and Commercial Advisory - Maddocks, Melbourne, Australia (August 2005 - September 2005)

#### AHSAN, Faresa Jafarey

LMA (Liaquat Merchant Associates), Karachi  
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*Featured in Banking & Finance (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Faresa Jafarey Ahsan specializes in banking and finance, Islamic Banking, technology contracts, e-commerce law, derivatives, capital markets, LNG projects, tenders and procurement. Faresa has the distinction of being involved in the first ever LNG project in Pakistan and led the legal team in providing extensive legal services to Sui Southern Gas Company Limited on the entire LNG supply chain

and subsequently to Pakistan LNG Terminal Limited. She has authored several publications, including "Diminishing Musharakah: The Dilemma in Pakistan" published in the 'Islamic Finance News' by the Red Money Group and 'Chambers Global Practice Guides' on banking laws and practice in Pakistan, published by Chambers and Partners.

#### AKHUND, Rabel

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*Featured in Projects (Pakistan), Corporate/Commercial (Pakistan), Banking & Finance (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Rabel has practised law for over 20 years in London, Pakistan and internationally. He is a graduate of University College London where he obtained his LL.B and LL.M degrees and is a Solicitor of England & Wales and an Advocate in Pakistan. Prior to founding Akhund Forbes and during his 8 year career in leading global law firms in London, Rabel successfully worked on and completed cross border private equity buy-out transactions with a combined value in excess of £5 billion. Rabel is deeply involved in all Non-Litigation client matters at Akhund Forbes. He himself leads all Corporate and Finance transactions and Projects work for his major clients supported by his able team of Partners and Associates. Chambers and Partners ranks Rabel as a leading lawyer for Corporate and Commercial in Pakistan and describes him as "knowledgeable, supportive of the client requests and responsive", "prompt, precise and courteous" and "very skilled". Legal 500 recognizes Rabel as a "leading individual" for Capital Markets. The latest edition of AsiaLaw recognises Rabel as a Distinguished

Practitioner for Banking & Finance and Corporate and M&A in Pakistan.

#### BANGASH, Mazhar

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*Featured in Corporate/Commercial (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Mazhar Bangash is the head of Pakistan's Trade Law Department and also heads our Kabul office. His international trade expertise includes WTO trade remedy instruments; tariff related matters; customs; trade policy incentives; WTO dispute settlement; and free and preferential trade agreements. Mr. Bangash has successfully defends exporters facing anti-dumping investigations at various international forums. He has represented the government of Pakistan in trade disputes at the WTO Dispute Settlement Body. He is also a panelist at the WTO for trade disputes as has been part of a major trade dispute between the US and Korea. Mr. Bangash has made significant contributions towards the Afghanistan jurisdiction where he advises multinational companies and NGO's on their corporate matters in the country, including registrations/incorporations; good governance and compliance with regulatory requirements.

#### BILAL SOOFI, Ahmer

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** -International Commercial Arbitration -Commercial Litigation -Constitutional Litigation -Construction Disputes -Public & Private International Law -International Sanctions Law & Regulatory Compliance

#### Professional Memberships:

- Member, ICC International Court of Arbitration - Foreign Qualified Lawyer, UK - Supreme Court of Pakistan - High Courts of Pakistan

**Publications:** -Soofi, Ahmer Bilal (ed.) Nuclear Law, Book Home (2017). -Soofi, Ahmer Bilal (ed.) UN Law on Terrorism, Book Home (2016). -Soofi, Ahmer Bilal (2014), 'Legal Challenges to Military Operations in Pakistan: The Case of the Federally and Provincially Administered Tribal Areas', in Yusuf, Moeed (ed.) Pakistan's Counterterrorism Challenge, Georgetown University Press. -Soofi, Ahmer Bilal (2007), 'International Humanitarian Law - A Pakistani Perspective' in V.S. Mani (ed.), Handbook of International Humanitarian Law in South Asia, Oxford University Press.

#### CHAUDHRY, Umer Akram

Raja Mohammed Akram & Co, Lahore  
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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Dispute Resolution: General Commercial (Pakistan) Corporate/Commercial Projects, Infrastructure & Energy

**Career:** Umer Akram Chaudhry has over ten years of experience in handling a wide array of work in dispute resolution, transactional, and advisory practices. His primary focus is on domestic and international dispute resolution. He has appeared as counsel before a variety of fora ranging from the Lahore High Court and the High Court of Sindh to international commercial courts and arbitral tribunals in litigations and arbitrations. Umer has been engaged in landmark constitutional cases before the Lahore High Court and the Supreme Court of Pakistan. He represented clients in regulatory matters before the Securities and Exchange Commission of

Pakistan and the Competition Commission of Pakistan. He has a vibrant international disputes practice and has been engaged in cases arising from different common and civil law jurisdictions. He was primarily involved in commercial, joint venture, shareholders, and energy infrastructure disputes. Umer maintains an active advisory and transactional practice. He regularly advises businesses with respect to regulatory risks and affairs and represent them before regulatory bodies in Pakistan. He has acted for clients in complex contractual negotiations, drafting, and execution and advised them during the performance stages and in settlement discussions.

## EBRAHIM, Zahid

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** With 30 years of experience, Zahid Ebrahim has successfully acted as lead counsel and expert witness in contentious dispute resolution matters in the Supreme Court and International Arbitrations. He has served on Arbitral Tribunals in ICC and Pakistan law arbitrations alongside former Chief Justice of Pakistan.

**Career:** Current Senior Managing Partner at FGE Ebrahim Hosain 2018-2019 Additional Attorney General of Pakistan 2005 to present Founding Partner, Ebrahim Hosain (later renamed as FGE Ebrahim Hosain) 1999 to 2006 Lecturer, Interpretation of Statutes, S.M. Law College, Karachi University 2003 to 2005 Lecturer, Business Law, Institute of Business Administration, Karachi University 1994 to 2005 Senior Associate & Partner, Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim & Company 1993-1994 Associate, Rizvi Isa & Co. (RIA Barker Gillette) 1991-1992 Teaching Associate, Tufts University, History Department 1988-1990 Worldviews Editor, The Minnesota Daily 1986-1988 Copywriter, Bond Advertising & Interflow Communications

**Professional Memberships:** He is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators U.K. He is on the panel of arbitrators at the Singapore International Arbitration Center, the Hainan International Arbitration Court and has served the Additional Attorney General of Pakistan.

**Publications:** His articles on constitutional law issues have been published in Pakistan, India, England and the United States.

## GHANI, Faisal Mahmood

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**Practice Areas:** Faisal Mahmood Ghani, Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan, advises and represents a panel of clients including financial institutions, multinationals, industrial / commercial establishments and public-sector concerns, on the full spectrum of employment, labour, and industrial relations matters.

## HAMID, Asma

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Asma is Founder of Asma Hamid Associates, an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, a former Advocate General Punjab and recipient of the 'Advocate of the Year', Women in Law Awards 2021. She advises and represents local and foreign clients in civil, commercial and constitutional, service and tax cases in all courts and tribunals in Pakistan. She advises a large number of clients in the emerging fintech sector in Pakistan. Her clients include multinationals, corporations and private individuals from a broad range of industries including education, family law, petroleum, property and real estate, media, public procurement, banking and finance, digital finance, construction and revenue. Asma has experience in arbitration as counsel and arbitrator, representing clients in the construction and banking industry. She is legal advisor to Punjab's government departments on tax and State property. Her chambers has dedicated litigation and corporate teams, known for their quick turnaround time, accessibility and responsiveness.

### Professional Memberships:

Lifetime Member - Supreme Court Bar Association Lifetime Member - High Court Bar Association Founder, Pakistan Chapter of Harvard Women Lawyers Association

**Publications:** 'The Case for Smart Courts', Pakistan Law Digest, July 2021 Pakistan chapter on 'Dispute Resolution', Law Reviews Publication Pakistan chapter on 'Fintech', Lexology GTDT, 2021

## HASSAN, Mian Tariq

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*Featured in Corporate/Commercial (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Labour and Employment; Corporate and M&A

**Career:** Partner - Axis Law Chambers, Lahore, Pakistan (March 2014 - Present) Advising clients on various corporate and commercial matters under Pakistani law Partner - Hassan, Qutub & Rahim, Lahore, Pakistan (2013 - 2014) Advising clients on various corporate and commercial matters under Pakistani law In-house Counsel - FHS LLC, FL, USA (July 2010 - March 2011) Advising on corporate compliance (HIPPA Law, OSHA law, Anti Kick-back Laws, American Disability Act compliance, Stark law and other health care laws) Corporate Counsel - Chima & Ibrahim, Lahore, Pakistan (October 2008 - July 2010) Litigation Attorney - Aitzaz Ahsan & Associates (September 2007 - September 2008; September 2004 - July 2006)

### Professional Memberships:

• Accredited Mediator from Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR) (2012) • Admitted as an advocate to the High Courts of Pakistan (2007)

## IQBAL, Sahar

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*Featured in Corporate/Commercial (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Sahar obtained her LL.B (Hons) degree from University of

London. Sahar is a Barrister-at-Law of Lincoln's Inn and an Advocate of the High Courts in Pakistan. She started her career as an Associate at Akhund Forbes and became a Partner in 2013. Sahar specializes in Corporate and M&A, Capital Markets, TMT, Private Equity, Funds & Asset Management and Joint Ventures, Employment and Projects at Akhund Forbes. Sahar draws upon her strengths acquired from assuming responsibility of and working on important and complex transactions throughout her career at Akhund Forbes and has advised the Firm's major clients on multi hundred million dollar transactions in the Telecoms sector, the Private Equity sector and the Infrastructure sector, among others. Legal 500 recognizes Sahar as "leading individual" for Corporate, M&A and Capital Markets, and is also well regarded for her work on Employment and TMT. Sahar is recognised as a Distinguished Practitioner for Capital Markets and Corporate and M&A in Pakistan in the latest edition of AsiaLaw. She is also a ranked lawyer for Corporate/Commercial in the latest edition of Chambers and Partners (Asia/Pacific).

## KAZI, Mayhar Mustafa

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Mayhar represents clients in complex commercial disputes before the High Courts, specialist tribunals and in local and foreign arbitration and expert determination proceedings. His broad ranging engagements comprise cases involving questions relating to arbitration, contracts, company, employment, energy, environment, insurance, shipping and tax law. On advisory matters, Mayhar's experience of advising on high-value cross border M&A, project finance, construction and other commercial transactions enable him to propose practical and commercially sound solutions. He advises on regulatory and policy framework across a number of industry sectors and on corporate, competition, employment, investment and tax law. His clients include major international and local players in the banking, cement, construction, FMCG, chemicals, energy, development, insurance, management consultancy, mining, petroleum, pharmaceutical, retail, shipping and telecoms industries, as well as governmental institutions. He has authored articles published in Bloomberg's Tax Planning International Review and has contributed chapters to Thomson Reuters Practical Law's Tax on Corporate Transactions and Tax on Corporate Lending and Bond Issues, LexisNexis's Foreign Investment and Mergers & Acquisitions Law Guides and Lexology's Getting the Deal Through Country Focus - Pakistan: The Legal Landscape and Pakistan: Dispute Resolution. He has also contributed to the World Bank's Doing Business and Investing Across Borders publications.

## KHALID, Vaseeq

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*Featured in Corporate/Commercial (Pakistan), Banking & Finance (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Banking and Finance, Islamic Finance, Capital Markets, Mergers and Acquisitions, Mutual Funds and Asset Management, Corporate, Commercial, Competition, FinTech  
**Career:** Vaseeq Khalid (LL.B Hons, L.P.C) has over fifteen years experience with Mohsin Tayebaly & Co. in corporate, commercial, banking, financial and regulatory matters. He directly handles and has extensive experience in transactions involving corporate financing (local and foreign currency), debt restructuring, project financing, capital markets including term finance certificate (bond) and sukuk (shariah compliant bond) Issues, Islamic financing, private equity, mergers and acquisitions, public offerings and other corporate, finance and commercial transactions. He is lauded by local and international clients for his ability to carry out transactions efficiently and expeditiously. Vaseeq focuses on understanding the clients' needs in a detailed and thorough manner prior to providing swift, tailored and decisive advice. His out-of-the-box approach was pivotal in leading the teams that provided the first electronic bank guarantee solution in Pakistan and a PKR 6 Billion Sukuk issue of a major listed company on a discounted basis, being the first of its kind in Pakistan.

**Professional Memberships:** Law Society of England and Wales Sindh Bar Council

## KHOSA, Sameer

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Corporate and M&A; Dispute Resolution; Labour and Employment

**Career:** Partner - Axis Law Chambers (March 2014 - Present) Adjunct Faculty - Lahore University of Management Sciences (January 2020 - May 2020) Course: Legal Practice Senior Associate - Raja Mohammed Akram & Co (August 2008 - February 2014) Lecturer - Institute of Legal Studies (August 2009 - June 2010) Coach, National U-19 Team - Debating Society of Pakistan (2006 & 2010)

### Professional Memberships:

Admitted as an attorney in the state of New York, USA (2013) Admitted as an advocate to the High Courts of Pakistan (2008) Called to the Bar of England & Wales at Lincoln's Inn (2008)

**Publications:** Chapter published in "Appointment of Judges to the Supreme Court of India; Transparency, Accountability, and Independence", OUP, 2018 Regulating Mobile Payment Services in Pakistan, Journal of the Institute of Bankers, 2018 Freedom of Artistic Expression in Pakistan, report for Freemuse and Shirkat Gah for Pakistan's Universal Period Review, 2017 Pakistan's Challenge: The Use of Detention in Counter-Terrorism in a Human Rights Framework, Human Rights

Journal, Network for International Law and Human Rights, 2015 Slum Evictions – A Legal and Policy Perspective, presented: Pakistan Urban Forum, 2015 State Sovereignty & Investment Arbitration, presented: International Judicial Conference, 2012

#### **MANTO, Mehreen**

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*Featured in Banking & Finance (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Mergers and Acquisitions, Privatization, Private Banking, Banking and Finance, Islamic Finance, Capital Markets, Mutual Funds and Asset Management, Corporate, Commercial, Competition

**Career:** Mehreen Manto is a partner at Mohsin Tayebaly & Co. and an Advocate of the High Court. She has over nineteen years of corporate, commercial and banking law experience. She is involved in handling public sector and infrastructure development projects, public-private partnerships, power projects, financing, corporate syndications (under conventional and Islamic modes), engineering and construction contracts, private equity, bond and GDR issues. She has substantial experience in handling competition law matters, project financing transactions for corporations, advising electronic money institutions and complex mergers and acquisitions. She lead the team which advised the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on investment in Pakistan.

**Personal:** Education: Sindh Muslim Government College, LL.B. Washington College of Law, American University, LL.M.

#### **MIR, Waqqas**

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Competition Law; Labour & Employment; Dispute Resolution

**Career:** Partner – Axis Law Chambers (November 2016 – Present) Advising companies, financial institutions, high net-worth individuals and government institutions/public bodies on a whole host of matters ranging from general civil, corporate and regulatory issues to commercial transactions and infrastructure projects. Servicing work before High Courts and various lower courts/tribunals with a focus on advice and dispute resolution/litigation pertaining to civil, constitutional, banking/finance, corporate, telecommunications, competition, commercial and regulatory law matters. Partner – Mohsin Tayebaly & Co (November 2013 – November 2016) Representing clients in commercial, civil and constitutional litigation and arbitration under Pakistani law Senior Associate – Raja Mohammed Akram & Co (September 2007 – April 2011) Representing clients in commercial, civil and constitutional litigation and arbitration under Pakistani law

**Professional Memberships:** Admitted as an advocate to the High Courts of Pakistan (2011) Called to the Bar of England and Wales at the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn (2007)

**Publications:** Contributed to 'Getting the Deal Through's Merger Control'

guide (by Law Business Research Limited, UK in collaboration with Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer) Headscarf and Religious Attire: A matter between God and the State? A Comparative Perspective (UCL Human Rights Review (Published by the American Bar Association))

#### **NAQVEE, Hasnain**

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*Featured in Projects (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Ranked as a top lawyer by leading legal directories, Hasnain Naqvee is one of Pakistan's leading corporate and projects lawyers and a Senior Partner at RIAA Barker Gillette Pakistan, based at Lahore. He has vast experience in all aspects of corporate law, power and infrastructure projects, project finance, contract negotiations, strategic and tax planning, restructuring and mergers and acquisitions. Hasnain has represented most of the power projects in Pakistan. He has also advised on infrastructure projects and has represented scores of local and international investors. Hasnain is known as an innovative lawyer who is gifted with the ability to find practical solutions for the clients.

#### **QUTUB, Syed Shahab**

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Labour and Employment; Corporate and M&A; Dispute Resolution

**Career:** Partner – Axis Law Chambers, Lahore, Pakistan (March 2014 – Present) Representing clients in commercial, civil and constitutional litigation and arbitration under Pakistani law. Advising clients on various corporate and commercial matters under Pakistani law. Partner – Hassan, Qutub & Rahim, Lahore, Pakistan (2013 – 2014) Representing clients in commercial, civil and constitutional litigation and arbitration under Pakistani law. Partner – Qutub & Qutub, Lahore, Pakistan (2011 – 2013) Representing clients in commercial, civil and constitutional litigation and arbitration under Pakistani law. Senior Associate – Raja Mohammed Akram & Co, Lahore, Pakistan (2004 – 2005; 2006 – 2011) Visiting Faculty – Government College University, Lahore, Pakistan (2008) Taught Business Law in the MBA Program.

**Professional Memberships:** Admitted as an advocate to the High Courts of Pakistan (2006) Called to the Bar of England and Wales at the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

#### **RAHIM, Salman**

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*Featured in Projects (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Projects, Banking and Finance, Islamic Finance, Capital Markets, Mergers and Acquisitions, Mutual Funds and Asset Management, Corporate, Commercial, Competition, FinTech

**Career:** Salman Rahim, LL.B (Hons.) (University of Manchester), BVC (City

Law School London) is a Barrister-at-Law, Member of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, Advocate of the High Courts of Pakistan, a Partner at Mohsin Tayebaly & Co. and heads the Corporate, Commercial and Transactional Law Division at the firm's Lahore office. He has over 13 years of experience and is directly involved in banking, financing, corporate and commercial transactions, with a particular focus on Projects in the power and energy sectors.

**Professional Memberships:** The Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn

#### **RAJA, Salman**

Raja Mohammed Akram & Co, Lahore  
+92 300 8445333  
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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Dispute Resolution: Constitutional Law Dispute Resolution: General Commercial

**Career:** Salman Akram Raja is an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and has around 30 years of vast experience in all forms of dispute resolution. He is particularly recognized for his successful advocacy before the High Courts and the Supreme Court of Pakistan in a number of far-reaching and landmark constitutional, commercial, and corporate cases. Salman started his practice in Lahore and quickly rose to prominence as a successful practitioner. At an early stage in his career, he acted as counsel in major corporate and commercial disputes as well as constitutional litigations. Later in his career, Salman Raja has acted as lead counsel in a number of regulatory, commercial and tax matters for leading corporations, banks, and public entities. He is regularly called upon to assist the superior courts as amicus curiae on critical legal issues. Salman has also represented and advised clients in international arbitrations outside Pakistan. Apart from dispute resolution, Salman advises clients on regulatory matters, privatizations, mergers and acquisitions, corporate regulations, and capital markets, etc. Salman is consistently ranked as one of the top lawyers of Pakistan.

#### **RIZVI, Ahsan Zahir**

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*Featured in Projects (Pakistan), Corporate/Commercial (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Top-ranked by leading legal directories, Ahsan Zahir Rizvi is the Global Senior and Managing Partner of RIAA Barker Gillette. He is globally recognized as a leading international corporate lawyer. He has extensive experience in all aspects of corporate and commercial legal matters including contract negotiations, strategic planning, commercial arrangements, banking and finance, corporate and financial restructuring, privatizations, mergers, acquisitions and divestitures, and project finance. He has particular expertise in complex cross-border transactions in the energy, infrastructure and telecommunications sectors. He has undertaken high-stakes dispute resolution work in London, Brussels, Singapore and Pakistan.

#### **SHAUKAT, Bilal**

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*Featured in Projects (Pakistan), Corporate/Commercial (Pakistan), Banking & Finance (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Recommended as a leading lawyer by prestigious legal directories, Bilal Shaukat is the Managing Partner of RIAA Barker Gillette (Pakistan), and heads the corporate/commercial practice of the firm in Karachi. A distinguished member of the legal fraternity in Pakistan, his chief areas of focus include project finance, mergers and acquisitions and infrastructure projects. He is particularly well known for his extensive experience in developing power projects, including coal, RLNG and renewable energy projects. He has worked on number of China Pakistan Economic Corridor projects and regularly assists clients with foreign and local financing facilities including Sukuks and Musharaka arrangements. A seasoned professional with more than twenty years of experience in contentious and non-contentious matters, Bilal regularly advises multinational companies, financial institutions and other listed companies in complex company, banking, competition, and income tax related matters. Bilal has also been active within the public sector and has rendered advice on the establishment and growth of private independent investment in state-owned enterprises. More recently, he has been busy with Public Private Partnership Projects and is currently advising the Government of Sindh on the development of a hybrid solar/gas power project for the K-IV Water Supply Project and the Dhabeji Industrial Zone Project.

#### **SOOMRO, Omer**

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Mr. Soomro is based in Karachi and is an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. He handles all kinds of corporate and civil litigation, as well as white-collar crime proceedings. He also acts on constitutional law matters at the High Courts of Pakistan. Mr. Soomro has represented clients in commercial arbitration, locally and overseas. He has been involved in a wide variety of cases before the High Court of Sindh, including matters relating to insurance, pharmaceuticals, customs, sales tax, intellectual property and the National Accountability Bureau. He also has a particular focus on energy-related litigation and New Captive Power Producers. Additionally, he has been involved in drafting legislation, such as The Trade Development Authority of Pakistan Ordinance, 2006, and was the principal advisor for the first Islamic compliant lottery scheme, which was a joint collaboration between foreign investors and the Pakistan Sports Trust.

#### **TAYEBALY, Arshad**

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*Featured in Dispute Resolution (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Commercial, Contract, Company, Public, Regulatory, Arbitration, Appellate, Tax, Property, Intellectual Property, Banking, Health Care, Energy, Family

**Career:** Arshad M. Tayebaly is exclusively responsible for all litigation matters of the Firm. He appears before the Supreme Court and the High Courts of the Country and supervises all litigation matters before the Banking Courts, District Courts and Tribunals. He has successfully handled several important litigation and arbitration matters including those relating to Company Law, Regulatory and Public Law, Commercial and Contract Disputes and Real Estate matters. He is considered to be the leading expert in Commercial and Company litigation matters. Many of the decisions in litigation matters handled by him are reported in Law Journals. Arshad M. Tayebaly is renowned for his solution oriented approach and understanding the clients' needs, playing a key role in numerous landmark disputes including the disputes surrounding the Karachi Rapid Bus Transit System and the Supreme Court's decision to quash the National Accountability Bureau Reference arising out of a notable commercial transaction. He has achieved numerous favorable outcomes via various modes of alternative dispute resolution. He completed his LL.M. from Kings College London in 1990.

**Professional Memberships:** Supreme Court Bar Association of Pakistan Sindh High Court Bar Association

**TAYEBALY, Irfan**  
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*Featured in Corporate/Commercial (Pakistan), Banking & Finance (Pakistan)*

**Practice Areas:** Corporate, Commercial, Company, Banking & Finance, Projects, Capital Markets, Regulatory, Foreign Exchange, Competition

**Career:** Irfan M. Tayebaly (BCom, LLB, BBA Hons, MBA) heads the Corporate, Commercial and Transactional law division of the Firm. Subsequent to completing five years as an international banking and finance legal adviser in England, Irfan M. Tayebaly returned to Pakistan where he has been recognized as a pioneer in banking, finance, corporate and commercial law and regulatory matters in which he has been practicing for over forty years. He has been consulted by leading private institutions as well as the state and legislative bodies for advisory on the most complex legal issues in the country. He is widely acknowledged, by local and international clients, as a leading lawyer who understands business needs which greatly facilitates valuable out-of-the-box solutions. He advises on M&A transactions, joint ventures, financial transactions, foreign exchange laws, and privatization transactions with a focus on providing tailored and bespoke advice.

**Professional Memberships:** Sindh Bar Council Sindh High Court Bar Association