

Series of brief newsletters released by **Bharucha & Co.** on latest legal developments predominantly in Pakistan.

World IP day: From Sialkot to the World

Observed annually on 26th April, World Intellectual Property day which is led by The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) highlights the importance of intellectual property in fostering creativity and innovation worldwide. Each year features a unique theme, this year's theme focused on "IP and Sports" recognizing how IP rights protect and promote everything from iconic brands and events to technological advancements, ultimately supporting the growth, identity and commercial success of the global sports industry.

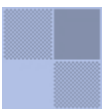
"Where Craftsmanship meets IP"

In the world of international football, some of the most iconic match balls used on the sport's biggest stages trace their origins back to one city: Sialkot, Pakistan. Known globally for its exceptional craftsmanship and decades long manufacturing excellence, Sialkot has built a strong reputation as a leading hub for football production.

For years, manufacturers in Sialkot have supplied footballs for major international tournaments, including the FIFA World Cup, producing iconic match balls such as *Brazuca*, *Telstar 18*, and *Al Rihla*. These footballs have been used on football's biggest stages, demonstrating the city's unmatched technical skill, precision, and the dedication of local industries that consistently meet the highest international standards. However, behind every globally recognized football lies another important element, intellectual property. While the physical production often takes place in Sialkot, the IP rights associated with these footballs are typically owned by international brands such as adidas, Nike etc. These rights protect the innovation, design features, branding, and commercial identity of the product, allowing these brands to maintain legal ownership and worldwide recognition.

Intellectual property serves as the bridge between manufacturing and market value. It ensures that product designs, technological advancements, and brand identities are protected from imitation and misuse. In the sports industry, this protection is essential, as it transforms a well-made product into a globally recognized commercial asset.

At the same time, local manufacturers and innovators are increasingly recognizing the importance of securing their own intellectual property rights. Through trademark registrations, design protections, and patents filed in Pakistan, businesses are building stronger legal foundations for their products and strengthening their presence in the sports goods sector. These registrations reflect a growing



awareness that craftsmanship and innovation must be supported by legal protection to create lasting commercial value.

On World Intellectual Property Day 2026, the story of Sialkot highlights an important reality: excellence in manufacturing is only part of the journey. Intellectual property is what gives innovation identity, protection, and long-term recognition. Where craftsmanship meets IP, true commercial strength is created.

