

Legislators urged to raise voice against lacunas in final draft

Myra linearis
[1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8] [9] [10] [11] [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] [17] [18] [19] [20] [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] [26] [27] [28] [29] [30] [31] [32] [33] [34] [35] [36] [37] [38] [39] [40] [41] [42] [43] [44] [45] [46] [47] [48] [49] [50] [51] [52] [53] [54] [55] [56] [57] [58] [59] [60] [61] [62] [63] [64] [65] [66] [67] [68] [69] [70] [71] [72] [73] [74] [75] [76] [77] [78] [79] [80] [81] [82] [83] [84] [85] [86] [87] [88] [89] [90] [91] [92] [93] [94] [95] [96] [97] [98] [99] [100] [101] [102] [103] [104] [105] [106] [107] [108] [109] [110] [111] [112] [113] [114] [115] [116] [117] [118] [119] [120] [121] [122] [123] [124] [125] [126] [127] [128] [129] [130] [131] [132] [133] [134] [135] [136] [137] [138] [139] [140] [141] [142] [143] [144] [145] [146] [147] [148] [149] [150] [151] [152] [153] [154] [155] [156] [157] [158] [159] [160] [161] [162] [163] [164] [165] [166] [167] [168] [169] [170] [171] [172] [173] [174] [175] [176] [177] [178] [179] [180] [181] [182] [183] [184] [185] [186] [187] [188] [189] [190] [191] [192] [193] [194] [195] [196] [197] [198] [199] [200] [201] [202] [203] [204] [205] [206] [207] [208] [209] [210] [211] [212] [213] [214] [215] [216] [217] [218] [219] [220] [221] [222] [223] [224] [225] [226] [227] [228] [229] [230] [231] [232] [233] [234] [235] [236] [237] [238] [239] [240] [241] [242] [243] [244] [245] [246] [247] [248] [249] [250] [251] [252] [253] [254] [255] [256] [257] [258] [259] [260] [261] [262] [263] [264] [265] [266] [267] [268] [269] [270] [271] [272] [273] [274] [275] [276] [277] [278] [279] [280] [281] [282] [283] [284] [285] [286] [287] [288] [289] [290] [291] [292] [293] [294] [295] [296] [297] [298] [299] [300] [301] [302] [303] [304] [305] [306] [307] [308] [309] [310] [311] [312] [313] [314] [315] [316] [317] [318] [319] [320] [321] [322] [323] [324] [325] [326] [327] [328] [329] [330] [331] [332] [333] [334] [335] [336] [337] [338] [339] [340] [341] [342] [343] [344] [345] [346] [347] [348] [349] [350] [351] [352] [353] [354] [355] [356] [357] [358] [359] [360] [361] [362] [363] [364] [365] [366] [367] [368] [369] [370] [371] [372] [373] [374] [375] [376] [377] [378] [379] [380] [381] [382] [383] [384] [385] [386] [387] [388] [389] [390] [391] [392] [393] [394] [395] [396] [397] [398] [399] [400] [401] [402] [403] [404] [405] [406] [407] [408] [409] [410] [411] [412] [413] [414] [415] [416] [417] [418] [419] [420] [421] [422] [423] [424] [425] [426] [427] [428] [429] [430] [431] [432] [433] [434] [435] [436] [437] [438] [439] [440] [441] [442] [443] [444] [445] [446] [447] [448] [449] [450] [451] [452] [453] [454] [455] [456] [457] [458] [459] [460] [461] [462] [463] [464] [465] [466] [467] [468] [469] [470] [471] [472] [473] [474] [475] [476] [477] [478] [479] [480] [481] [482] [483] [484] [485] [486] [487] [488] [489] [490] [491] [492] [493] [494] [495] [496] [497] [498] [499] [500] [501] [502] [503] [504] [505] [506] [507] [508] [509] [510] [511] [512] [513] [514] [515] [516] [517] [518] [519] [520] [521] [522] [523] [524] [525] [526] [527] [528] [529] [530] [531] [532] [533] [534] [535] [536] [537] [538] [539] [540] [541] [542] [543] [544] [545] [546] [547] [548] [549] [550] [551] [552] [553] [554] [555] [556] [557] [558] [559] [560] [561] [562] [563] [564] [565] [566] [567] [568] [569] [570] [571] [572] [573] [574] [575] [576] [577] [578] [579] [580] [581] [582] [583] [584] [585] [586] [587] [588] [589] [590] [591] [592] [593] [594] [595] [596] [597] [598] [599] [600] [601] [602] [603] [604] [605] [606] [607] [608] [609] [610] [611] [612] [613] [614] [615] [616] [617] [618] [619] [620] [621] [622] [623] [624] [625] [626] [627] [628] [629] [630] [631] [632] [633] [634] [635] [636] [637] [638] [639] [640] [641] [642] [643] [644] [645] [646] [647] [648] [649] [650] [651] [652] [653] [654] [655] [656] [657] [658] [659] [660] [661] [662] [663] [664] [665] [666] [667] [668] [669] [670] [671] [672] [673] [674] [675] [676] [677] [678] [679] [680] [681] [682] [683] [684] [685] [686] [687] [688] [689] [690] [691] [692] [693] [694] [695] [696] [697] [698] [699] [700] [701] [702] [703] [704] [705] [706] [707] [708] [709] [710] [711] [712] [713] [714] [715] [716] [717] [718] [719] [720] [721] [722] [723] [724] [725] [726] [727] [728] [729] [730] [731] [732] [733] [734] [735] [736] [737] [738] [739] [740] [741] [742] [743] [744] [745] [746] [747] [748] [749] [750] [751] [752] [753] [754] [755] [756] [757] [758] [759] [760] [761] [762] [763] [764] [765] [766] [767] [768] [769] [770] [771] [772] [773] [774] [775] [776] [777] [778] [779] [780] [781] [782] [783] [784] [785] [786] [787] [788] [789] [790] [791] [792] [793] [794] [795] [796] [797] [798] [799] [800] [801] [802] [803] [804] [805] [806] [807] [808] [809] [810] [811] [812] [813] [814] [815] [816] [817] [818] [819] [820] [821] [822] [823] [824] [825] [826] [827] [828] [829] [830] [831] [832] [833] [834] [835] [836] [837] [838] [

A clause of the recently approved Domestic Violence Bill 2009 that allows punishment of six months or a fine of Rs50,000 to those who file false complaints came under severe criticism at a national consultation here on Thursday.

Under Section 25 of Domestic Violence Bill 2009 that has been passed by the National Assembly and will now go to Senate for final approval, "whoever gives an application to the court containing information about the commission of domestic violence, which he knows or has reason to believe is false, shall be punishable

clude abetting i.e. persons who aid and assist others in commission of an act of domestic violence. "It is crucial to include all parties in this definition, as the victim may be a spouse, partner, but there are also persons who actively or passively support the aggressive forms," also points out. The definition of domestic violence in the bill says the victim is a spouse, partner, but there are also persons who actively or passively support the aggressive forms, also points out. The definition of domestic violence in the bill says the victim is a spouse, partner, but there are also persons who actively or passively support the aggressive forms, also points out.

Women stage rally
release of torture



نہیں ہو سکتا شوہر نے بیوی کی ناک

[illegible]

CBA member challenges decision in Supreme

1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 26

MANAGADI: A lawyer has rejected the decision of the Andhra Pradesh High Court (APHC) in the Western Petroleum Act 6 in the Supreme Court.

Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) executive member Anand Ghoshan on Monday moved an appeal against the decision India made (14/1) of the committee, making the federal and provincial governments responsible.

He sought suspension of the order of December 14/1.

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She had a dozen stitches on her forehead, her body was bruised and battered - once again she had been assaulted by her husband, beaten till she was black and blue all over; a vulnerable, convenient punch-bag for a frustrated, cowardly man.

The slight, weary, bandaged woman who stood in the doorway was my maid, Naseema (not her real name). Married for over twenty years, with four children, Naseema has tolerated constant abuse; physical, verbal, emotional, by a husband who has never supported her financially or given her even a minimum of comfort and affection. Yet, surprisingly, even shockingly, she wants to keep her marriage going. Her husband, or perhaps her status in society as a married woman, means everything to her. Thus, despite concerned friends, mentors, family trying to convince her to put an end to this violent and abusive relationship, Naseema continues to live with her husband, cater to his needs, and support him as well as their children.

Naseema is the epitome of hundreds of thousands of women, from all social strata, throughout Pakistan.

Every day, an increasing number of women from the lower to middle, and also the upper classes become victims of domestic violence in Pakistan. There are no official surveys or accounts but work done by some NGOs indicates that the numbers are continually growing. This, of course, could be the result of more cases being reported than in previous years. However, there are still an extremely large number of unreported cases of women who silently continue to bear the humiliation, physical injury, and psychological trauma alone. They either accept the violence meted out to them as their 'fate' or endure because they know of no recourse. They fear that opting out of an abusive marital relationship would result in their facing discrimination and ostracism from unsympathetic family members as well as society, and that their children would be ridiculed and isolated by their peer groups.

There are several factors that prevent women from leaving abusive, violent husbands. Among them are the myths propagated by tradition or vested interests where men who commit acts of violence against their wives are simply 'being men', or that they have been goaded to such action by disobedient wives. Strangely, it is widely believed that 'men get violent because it is not in their nature to be able to control their feelings'. These myths seek to justify an unnatural and unhealthy practice, putting the blame for physical and sexual abuse on the victims rather than on the perpetrators.

The lack of proper shelters for women who seek to leave an abusive relationship is also a deterrent. More often than not, if a woman chooses to leave a violent husband, whether with or without her children, she will not find succor anywhere neither friends nor family will want to help, considering it simply as a 'minor' dispute between husband and wife and best left to them to sort out.

watch these plays, resort to similar violence in their effort to imitate such heroes. Further, as these plays are often watched by the entire family, young children imbibe these values from a very young age. By the time they are adults, inflicting violence on female family members, mostly wives, is thought to be 'normal' behaviour.

The media can and should also play a role in sensitizing members of the police force to the issue of domestic violence so that when a citizen seeks protection from a violent and abusive husband, for example, they file the report as a criminal case instead of dismissing the matter as a petty family dispute. No doubt, domestic violence is a crime and must be reported as one, and the onus is on the police to bring the perpetrator to book.

Pakistan is already a seriously conflict-ridden society. It is imperative that the media, both news and entertainment, takes cognizance of the grave situation that has developed, and is getting worse with each passing day, and pledges to address the issue of domestic violence in all its manifestations. It is our centuries-old customs and traditions that keep us back, that do not allow us to flourish as a healthy society where our women, as well as men are respected as individuals with rights and feelings. A woman has every right to protection from any and every kind of violence, and where necessary, to seek to break away from an abusive relationship and begin again.

Wishing you a happy, peaceful, and violence-free new year!

Tasneem Ahmar

Editorials

Crimes Against Women

Ain-ur-Razvi Foundation has presented its first 30th Annual Report covering crimes against women in the country from January to June 2014. According to the report, crimes against women constituted three percent of total crime, and on average 27 crimes against women took place each day in the reporting period. 50 percent of the crimes reported were domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual abuse, rape, honour killings, dowry deaths, acid attacks, kidnapping, forced marriages, rape, honour killings, acid attacks, burning deaths, sexual trafficking, harassment, torture and injury.

In a day gone with the wind, we have witnessed activities against women which seem to be steadily increasing. Perhaps the increase in volume is due to the fact that the media is now more aware of the issue and is reporting it more extensively. However, the volume of crimes against women has been steadily increasing in the past few years. The report also mentions that the volume of crimes against women has increased in the past few years. The report also mentions that the volume of crimes against women has increased in the past few years.

Although the report has pointed out a number of crimes against women at the workplace, there is a need to go further and address the issue of domestic violence. Domestic violence is a serious problem in Pakistan and it is a crime that is often overlooked. The report also mentions that the volume of crimes against women has increased in the past few years. The report also mentions that the volume of crimes against women has increased in the past few years.

Crimes against Women

Thirty-two year old Jamila Bibi, who died at the Mayo Hospital, Lahore, on Wednesday, has become yet another victim of domestic violence, which is so pervasive throughout the country that most of us tend to ignore it. After a month of excruciating pain, Jamila finally succumbed to her wounds. She was admitted to the hospital on September 3, by her neighbours after her husband, two of his brothers and a friend thrashed Jamila, drenched her in kerosene oil and set her on fire. In her statement to the police, the dying women said that her crime was that she had refused to grant permission to Lal Khan, her husband, to contract a second marriage.

Add to this the 'honour' killings, stove-explosions and the customary '*karo kari*' murders and one gets a staggering picture of a society whose abuse and violence against women is widespread. The propensity among men to control the life of all women in the sphere of their influence and impose their decisions on them is one of the many archaic traits still embedded deep in society. Even in what are called educated urban segments, discrimination against women and treating them as lesser beings is commonplace. This attitude, however, takes a violent turn more often in the rural areas and among low-income urban dwellers.

The killers of Jamila, who, like the victim, belong to the NWFP, have not as yet been traced as they have reportedly fled to their safe havens in the province. The most effective way to root out this savage practice of killing women who insist on their rights is to punish the culprits according to the law. Education, social change, public awareness and steps toward female empowerment play a key role. But unless the law takes its course, none of these can bring any real change in this male-chauvinist society.

The News, October 09, 1999

Domestic Violence

The news that Moin Khan, the former captain of the Pakistan cricket team, was arrested for domestic violence on the report of his wife reflects on the deep seated patriarchal mindsets in our society. The incident is an indication that the malaise is not confined to the poorer sections of society, as is generally believed, but is endemic in our society as a whole. Various media reports and survey have highlighted that the incitation of the victim or their husbands. According to a report by Human Rights Watch titled

'Crime or Custom?' Violence Against Women in Pakistan', among other forms of gender-based violence, domestic violence figures as high as 90 percent. However, we as a society are reluctant to admit its presence. Our mediaeval socio-cultural and religious views are partly blamed for this, which lend legitimacy battering their wives. The other part of the blame lies with social structures that are moulded to reconcile with these views. Victims of violence usually suffer in silence and those who speak out are often discouraged from resorting to the justice system. There is little option for women who choose to put up resistance against such behaviour and little space for those who wish to opt out of such a relationship. This boils down to the power configuration in society where women are inevitably the weaker link hence susceptible to abuse, which range from yelling and shouting to most severe forms such as murder by stove-burning. Domestic violence also figures as an important public health issue as it is the direct or indirect cause of a large percentage of women's health issues.

The attitude of the state towards this issue is marked by apathy and non-cooperation. The patriarchal mindset has so far acknowledged the scale and severity of the problem. Neither the law enforcement apparatus offers any meaningful help to victims of violence. Domestic violence is routinely dismissed by law enforcement authorities as a private dispute. Female victims who attempt to register a police complaint of spousal or familial physical abuse are usually turned away. In most cases, they are advised and sometimes pressured by the police to reconcile with their abusive spouses or relatives. Those who persist often face harassment at the hands of police. This has created a general climate of encouragement in which such practices continue unabated. Addressing this issue is an uphill task in a society that still supports primitive customs and where access to the justice system is extremely limited. The state is constitutionally committed to protect the rights of women. The least it could do is not become a party to these crimes by not taking action against them. There is a need to bring in comprehensive laws that specifically deal with the issue of domestic violence. In addition to building shelter homes and providing economic support to victims of violence, law enforcement agencies need to be Sensitised. The case of Moin Khan's wife has caught attention because of his being a celebrity. Cases of countless such women are virtually never investigated or persecuted. Bringing in laws would remain the first step towards recognising the problem. The wider issue of patriarchy that encourages violence against women as a means to keep them under control can be gradually fought only by empowering women through education and economic independence.

The Post - January 18, 2007

Domestic Violence Bill

Much that is amiss in Pakistan could be solved if the administration displayed the ability to follow through. One finds many instances in which, after having taken the first step in the right direction, the government seems to lose its bearings and change direction, thus leaving the task unfulfilled. Consider the fate of the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill. It was passed unanimously by the National Assembly in August 2009, but lapsed after the Senate failed to pass it within the three months stipulated by the constitution. Since then, little effort has been made to retable and pass it. The proposed law had widespread support, even though it was opposed by some conservative elements. It was hailed by human rights and women's rights bodies as an impressive step towards protecting women, children and others including the aged and infirm, who are vulnerable to a form of abuse that while pervasive remains largely invisible to society.

Now, it appears that there may be movement on the issue. The governor of Punjab, Mohammad Latif Khan Khosa, said in Dera Ghazi Khan on Friday that his government will soon adopt the law. It is to be hoped that this is not mere rhetoric. Were they to pass into law, the bill's provisions may prove to be of great value in upholding women and children's rights and protecting citizens who are vulnerable to abuse. As matters stand, victims of domestic violence face double injustice: abuse and then a lack of protection extended by the government. As a party that claims to champion women's rights and was led by a woman, the PPP needs to be reminded of its commitments. While the state dillydallies over the bill, the rights of countless domestic abuse victims continue to be violated, and the law continues to offer them no recourse.

Dawn - March 28, 2011

Law against Domestic Violence but...

The National Assembly should be congratulated for passing a bill against domestic violence. After years of wife-burning and other social curses attached to our homes, the bill called Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill will now be passed by the Senate to become law. It punishes offending husbands with one year in jail for the first offence and two years the second time around.

Our parliaments have turned tail in the past on laws related to issues such as 'honour' killing and have passed them after talking their teeth out. This time luckily both the mainstream parties were on board: the PPP mover was helped by the ladies from the PML-N, after which it took a year to pass. No doubt the law will be an option of desperation for most wives. Defending the rights of the socially disempowered is not an easy task.

But the passing of the law itself is praiseworthy. Some wives will use it as the last resort. Some wife-bashers will be put to shame when a police station welcomes an FIR from a battered wife instead of telling her to go back home and live with violence. A domestic quarrel among the educated will now unfold in the full consciousness that blows will not follow harsh words from the husband. Among the poor, where husbands habitually thrash wives, the police can intervene to apply reconciliation together with the threat of incarceration.

We don't know if the law will raise the status of women in society but we know that unless their status is raised laws will not be effective. The institution of marriages in Pakistani culture enslaves and disempowers the women. Before a comprehensive reform is put in place, the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Law will afford them some protection in the interim.

Daily Times - August 06, 2009



خواتین پر تشدد کے واقعات میں تشویشناک اضافہ

چیف جسٹس آف پاکستان مسٹر جسٹس افتخار چودھری نے سوینا ناز کے ساتھ ہونے والی مبینہ زیادتی کے خلاف از خود نوٹس لیتے ہوئے چیف سیکرٹری پنجاب اور آئی جی پولیس پنجاب کو حکم دیا ہے کہ وہ دس یوم کے اندر سارے واقعہ کی تفصیلی رپورٹ سپریم کورٹ میں پیش کریں۔ دریں اثناء وفاقی کابینہ نے بھی سوینا ناز کیس کے ملزموں کے خلاف سخت کارروائی کی یقین دہانی کرائی ہے۔ اس واقعہ پہ اظہار افسوس کرتے ہوئے اس کی سخت مذمت کی ہے۔ سوینا ناز کے شوہر کے غائب ہونے کے معاملے کا بھی جائزہ لیا جا رہا ہے۔ تفتیشی ٹیم چار روز میں انکوائری رپورٹ آئی جی پنجاب کو پیش کرے گی جسے بعد میں وزیراعظم کو پیش کیا جائے گا۔ دریں اثناء وزیراعظم شوکت عزیز کی ہدایت پر وزیراعلیٰ پنجاب چودھری پرویز الہی نے فیصل آباد کے ایس پی انویسٹی گیشن کو وائس ڈی بنادیا ہے۔ کیس کی تحقیقات عدالتی کمیشن سے کرانے کا فیصلہ کیا گیا ہے۔ تفتیشی ٹیم کے مطابق متعلقہ انسپکٹر کو بھی حفاظتی تحویل میں لے لیا گیا ہے۔ موجودہ حکومت کی طرف سے خواتین پر ہونے والے مظالم اور زیادتی کے واقعات کا جس سنجیدگی سے لیا جا رہا ہے اس کی مثال پہلے نہیں ملتی۔ قبل ازیں مختار ماٹی کے ساتھ زیادتی کے واقعہ کا بھی سختی سے نوٹس لیا گیا اور اب سوینا ناز کے ساتھ مبینہ زیادتی کے واقعہ کا وزیراعظم شوکت عزیز نے خود نوٹس لیتے ہوئے فوری کارروائی کا حکم دیا اور اس کے متعلق رپورٹ بھی طلب کر لی ہے۔ بدقسمتی سے گزشتہ کچھ عرصہ سے معاشرے میں خواتین کے ساتھ زیادتی، تشدد اور عصمت دری کے واقعات میں مسلسل اضافہ ہو رہا ہے۔ اس کی ایک بنیادی وجہ اخلاقی اقدار کی پامالی اور معاشرے میں بڑھتی ہوئی بے حیائی بھی ہے۔ اگلے روز لاہور میں والٹن روڈ پر ایک ڈاکٹر نے 12 سالہ یتیم بچی کو جو اس کے پاس علاج کے لئے آئی تھی زیادتی کا نشانہ بنا ڈالا جس پر علاقے کے لوگوں نے مشتعل ہو کر ڈاکٹر کے گھر اور کلینک پر حملہ کر دیا۔ پولیس نے ڈاکٹر کو گرفتار کر کے بچی کو ہسپتال میں داخل کر دیا۔ اس قسم کے واقعات جہاں خواتین میں عدم تحفظ کا احساس پیدا کرتے ہیں وہاں ملک کی بدنامی کا باعث بنتے ہیں۔ ضرورت اس امر کی ہے کہ حکومت ایسے واقعات کا سختی سے نوٹس لیتے ہوئے ملزموں کو سرعام سنگین سزا دینے کا اہتمام کرے۔ ملزم خواہ کتنے ہی بااثر کیوں نہ ہوں انہیں اور ان کے سرپرستوں کو معاف نہ کیا جائے۔

روزنامہ جنگ - 2 ستمبر، 2005

خواتین کے قتل کے واقعات

راولپنڈی میں ایک شفیق القلب خاوند نے اپنی بیوی کو ثربی بی کو جو تین بچوں کی ماں تھی کو ٹی کا تیل چھڑک کر زندہ جلا دیا اور خود فرار ہو گیا۔ مقتولہ کی شادی گیارہ سال قبل عاصم نامی شخص سے ہوئی تھی۔ قتل کی وجہ بہنوئی کی شادی میں شرکت بتائی گئی ہے، جبکہ لاہور میں ایک ایسے ہی واقعہ میں چوکی تحصیل اڈہ منواواں کے محمد صدیق اپنی بیوی ثریا بانو پر مٹی کا تیل چھڑک کر آگ لگا کے اس کی زندگی کا چراغ گل کر دیا ہے۔ جس کے پیچھے لالچ کا فرما تھی۔ اور انک میں ایک تیرہ سالہ نابالغ بچی کو ذبح کر کے ٹکڑے ٹکڑے کر دیا گیا ہے۔ بدقسمت زرینہ پیری صبح چچا کے ہاں جانے کے لئے گھر سے باہر نکلی تو نامعلوم قاتلوں کے ہتھے چڑھ گئی جنہوں نے اسکی لاش کے چار ٹکڑے کر کے پلاٹ میں پھینک دیا۔ پوسٹ مارٹم کی رپورٹ ابھی تک موصول نہیں ہوئی۔ لیکن قوی امکان موجود ہے کہ نامعلوم قاتلوں نے اجتماعی زیادتی کے بعد زرینہ کو قتل کر دیا۔

ہمارے مذہب اسلام میں خواتین کے احترام کی تاکید کی گئی ہے اور عورت کے قدموں میں جنت کی بشارت دی گئی ہے۔ عورت جو کہ ماں، بہن اور بیوی ہوتی ہے۔ سب سے بڑھ کر یہ کہ عورت کو انسان سمجھا جائے لیکن ہمارے اسلامی معاشرہ میں انسانیت کا احترام ختم ہو رہا ہے۔ جس کی جگہ سفاکیت، درندگی اور جنونیت آئی ہے۔ حکومت پاکستان کا اولین فرض ہے کہ ملک کے نصف سے زائد آبادی (خواتین) کو زندہ رہنے کا حق دیتے ہوئے انھیں تحفظ فراہم کرے۔ پاکستان میں خواتین احساس عدم تحفظ کا شکار ہوتی جا رہی ہیں۔ جس کے معاشرے پر انتہائی منفی اثرات مرتب ہو رہے ہیں۔ حکومت پاکستان خصوصاً صدر مملکت اور وزیراعظم شوکت عزیز ذاتی دلچسپی لیتے ہوئے مذکورہ واقعات کی انکوائری کر کے کوثر بی بی، ثریا بانو اور مقتولہ زرینہ کے قاتلوں کو کیفر کردار تک پہنچانے میں اپنا کردار ادا کرے۔ گزشتہ کچھ عرصے سے پارلیمنٹ کے ذریعے خواتین کے ساتھ امتیازی سلوک، ظلم و تشدد، کاروباری اور غیرت کے نام پر قتل کے خاتمے کے لئے قانون سازی کی باتیں ہو رہی ہیں اور اسی سلسلے میں بل لانے کی تیاریاں بھی کی جا رہی تھیں جبکہ ایسا کوئی بل قومی اسمبلی میں یا سینیٹ میں نہیں پیش کیا جا سکا ہے جو خواتین کو تحفظ فراہم کر سکے۔ اس کی ایک وجہ تو پارلیمنٹ میں جاگیر داروں اور وڈیروں کی کثرت ہے جو خواتین کے ساتھ ظلم و زیادتی کو قبائلی و علاقائی روایات کا نام دیکر تحفظ فراہم کرتے ہیں۔ لیکن حکومت جب تک خواتین کو تحفظ فراہم کرنے میں کامیاب نہیں ہوتی صحتمند معاشرتی روایات قائم نہیں ہو سکتیں۔

روزنامہ پاکستان - 12 ستمبر، 2004

Whatever Happened to Zainab Noor?

Zainab Noor, a victim of the most brutal torture, has been all but forgotten by the press and public since her return from treatment in London...

When the prime minister recently visited Sajida, a victim of a gruesome burning incident, many were reminded of the horrifying case of Zainab Noor. Only a day earlier I had encountered Zainab Noor in Shanaz Bokhari's office. The headline making victim of male brutality, Zainab had vanished from newspapers as suddenly as she had made the front pages. Did anyone care whether she had fully recovered from her macabre ordeal? How was she coping with the aftermath of the trauma? The sad truth was that Zainab Noor had been forgotten by the press and by the public

following her return from London almost a year ago.

When Zainab's story was first revealed to the public, no one could have remained unmoved. A wave of shock and sympathy traveled across the country. Zainab had endured the unendurable. Subjected to the most extreme forms of torture, in the end she was however, more fortunate than other victims.

When she was first bought to the

Rawalpindi General Hospital, few could even bear to look at the disfigured woman. Over a petty domestic dispute, her husband, Qari Mohammad who was the imam of a masjid, tied her to a bed and inserted hot iron rods into her genitals. Later he passed high voltage electricity through the same rod. Zainab's reproductive organs were completely destroyed as were her urinary and bowel tracts.

She was brought to the hospital only after her agony became unbearable. The story given by her husband was that "she was burnt in an accident." Zainab's silence seemed to confirm his story. But the doctor on duty became suspicious of the circumstances surrounding the episode and revealed the story to a newspaper reporter. Once the story hit the papers local women activists arrived to visit Zainab at the hospital. Subsequently, appeals were made to the prime minister to initiate a proper investigation into the incident. The prime minister herself called Zainab and things



Zainab Noor with her son, the ordeal continues... Tasneem Ahmar

started to change for the woman who everybody believed would soon die. She was shifted to PIMS and after much persistence on the part of women activists, Zainab's husband was arrested.

She was then sent off for further treatment to England where she underwent various kinds of surgeries and therapies. It was a mammoth task to piece together a woman who had been shattered both physically and mentally. But Zainab's feet were finally placed on the slow, arduous road to recovery. Zainab must have felt herself to be in wonderland. After all, why had she been singled out in this manner while millions who share her fate continue to suffer silently behind closed doors? Finally a beaming Zainab returned home and it was only then that reality set in.

She has had to face a multitude of problems since her return to Pakistan. Although her husband has been convicted and awarded a 30-year prison sentence, Zainab wants to obtain a *khula* from him. She also wants the custody of her son. She must also continue to undergo regular medical check-ups as her urinary and bowel tracts have not yet healed properly. Meanwhile the hospital has stopped supplying her the urinary bags which she cannot afford to buy on her own. Her most immediate concern, however, is a place to live for herself and her son.

Almost a year has passed since Zainab returned to Pakistan. While she has been given temporary refuge at the PIMS, she is regularly threatened with eviction. Her problem is compounded by the fact that she cannot survive without an air conditioner since her wounds are still tender and are likely to become infected in the stifling summer heat. Zainab says that she would be grateful for the job of an *ayah* at PIMS and a room on the premises. Her son, Mohammad Kaleem, also attends the hospital school and for these reasons she would like to remain attached with PIMS. Zainab is unaware that according to newspaper reports, she has allegedly been given a job which pays 6,000 rupees a month as well as a place to live. She continues to hope that the government will step forward and provide proper rehabilitation services to her and other women like her across the country.

The need for NGOs, the media, human rights bodies and the government to follow up cases like Zainab's is all too obvious. The prime minister's recent display of concern and promises of justice to Sajida, another victim of domestic violence, were ironic reminders of the Zainab Noor episode. Sajida's husband has been arrested and a fair and speedy trial has been promised. But as witnessed earlier, this is only the beginning.

Tasneem Ahmar, Herald - August 1995

Women Stage Rally against Release of Torture Case Convict

ISLAMABAD: A gathering of women's rights activists, in a protest rally on Friday at Aabpara Chowk against the grant of pardon to Maulvi Qari Muhammad Shareef, demanded that the president should respect the judicial decisions, rule of law, and basic principles, of justice while granting pardons to the convicts.

Carrying placards inscribed with slogans, the activists of Progressive Women's Association urged the Supreme Court to look into the matter of grave injustice to the victim.

"The grant of pardon, which resulted in the release of Qari Shareef on December 21, last year, is a severe blow to the rule of law, justice and the cause of women's movement. Along with this, it reveals how our system can be manipulated to let the guilty go scot free whereas the victim is left suffering for the rest of her life", PWA President, Shahnaz Bokhari said in a statement released on the occasion.

According to the details of the case, Maulvi Qari M. Shareef after tying his wife Zainab Noor with ropes to a bed, inserted iron rods in her private parts, and passed electric current through her body which left her scarred for the rest of her life in Chakwal District, 140 kilometres away from the capital. Now Zainab Noor is leading an abnormanl life with colostomy bags for urine and stool only, with the desire that justice should be done and her tormentor brought to justice.

Zainab Noor was sent abroad by the government for treatment while at the same time the Special Court for Speedy Trial convicted Maulvi M. Shareef and sentenced him to thirty-year rigorous imprisonment. In his judgement, Justice Khwaja Mehmood Ahmed, while convicting Qari Shareef, declared that the accused committed Italafi-e-Uzma" (amputation) of three organs and that the three sentences should run consecutively. This conviction was internationally appreciated. At the same time, the judgement of the Rawalpindi Bench of Lahore High Court ordered ten-year concurrent punishment.

Protesting against the "light" punishment, according to which the convict was supposed to be out of jail only after ten years, PWA filed the case in Supreme Court in 1999. Justice Raja Afrasiab and Justice Bashir Jehangiri of the Supreme Court admitted the appeal for hearing. The hearing of the case was due anytime when Maulvi Shareef was granted pardon by the president. After staging the rally for one hour, the protestors dispersed.

M. Arshad Sharif, The News - January 13, 2001

Zainab Noor torture case

Husband Still Free Despite SC Order

ISLAMABAD, Jan 26: The The Supreme Court decided that Qari Sharif, who had brutalized his wife, Zainab Noor, should be lodged in jail for ten years, has not been implemented and the prayer leader remains a free man.

Shahnaz Bukhari, head of an NGO, Progressive Women's Association, who had pursued the case up to the Supreme Court, told *Dawn* that Qari Sharif was not arrested by the police despite the orders of the apex court.

"It is frightening to imagine that such a dangerous man is allowed to roam freely in the society," she said.

Qazi Mohammad Sharif, an Imam (prayer leader) at a Masjid in Kahuta, had subjected his wife to severe torture, using electric shocks and rods, and damaged three of her vital organs.

After the case was reported in the press, he was arrested and his case referred to the Suppression of Terrorist Activities Court, which sentenced him thirty years imprisonment.

The victim was sent to England for treatment on government expense by the then Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto. She has to carry a urine bag permanently after her treatment in London.

According to the trial court's decision, the sentence was to run consecutively, meaning that the convict would have to remain in jail for thirty years.

The LHC, on the appeal of Qari Sharif, reduced the punishment to ten years, holding that all the three injuries were caused in one transaction.

Qari Sharif, however, came out of jail after six years, as he was given remissions in sentence by the jail authorities in violation of court order that he should not be given any benefit under section 382 of CrPC.

Under this section the prisoners are given remissions as provided in the jail manuals and general amnesty given by the executive functionaries from time to time.

When the matter was brought to the notice of the Supreme Court, it changed the decision of the LHC, observing that these organs had been damaged as a result of one injury in a single transaction.

The Supreme Court, in its judgment, observed that injuries, and the manner in which they were caused, could not have been comprehended/visualized by the legislature that was why appropriate sentence had not been provided in law for such a barbaric act.

Staff Reporter, Dawn - November 27, 2003



Notes.....

Burning Concerns

15-year-old Sets Herself on Fire in Front of Parents

“Nazia's cousin told the police that she was being forced into marriage”

A 15-year-old girl set herself on fire after her parents tried to force her into marrying against her will.

According to a police official, Katchi Abadi, 11 WB residents, Fida Hussain and his wife had been quarrelling for weeks about the marriage of their daughter Nazia. “They were arguing about several proposals for the girl. The mother wanted to wait till she got married but her father was adamant that she be married off soon,” said Nazia's cousin Asiya.

Asiya told police officials that her cousin feared she would be married off against her will and was extremely depressed. ‘She often spoke of running away but she didn't want to bring shame upon the family. Nazia wanted to complete her education but her father locked her in a room for several days to force her into accepting the proposal,” she said.

“We are keeping her in the burn ward but she also needs surgery. It is unlikely she will survive because her burns are severe”

- Dr. Ilyas Khan, Resident Doctor, Nishtar Hospital, Multan

A servant at the house said that on Wednesday morning, Nazia came into her parent's room and set herself on fire in front of them. “She had sprinkled oil on herself and came into the room and lit a match. We all struggled to put the fire out but she had used petrol and it took us nearly ten minutes (to put it out),” he said.

Nazia was taken to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ), Vehari but the doctors said that they were not equipped to deal with her wounds and she was referred to the Nishtar Hospital in Multan on Wednesday afternoon. Nishtar Hospital Resident Doctor, Dr. Ilyas Khan said that Nazia had suffered third degree burns to over 80 percent of her body. “We are keeping her in the burn ward but she also needs surgery because she injured herself before she set herself afire,” he said.

Doctors said that they were doing all they could to help Nazia and she was currently in the Nishtar Hospital Burns Unit. Nazia's uncle Muhammad Riaz said that his niece was in a critical condition. “Her parents continued arguing even at the hospital and I asked the doctors to ask them to leave. If

They cannot focus on the needs of their daughter at this time then they never will," he told reporters.

Nazia's mother, Iffat Hussain said that she never suspected her daughter would try to kill herself. "There was no real dispute. We were just debating over several (marriage) proposals for her. We would never have married her off without her consent," she said.

"Her parents were arguing at the hospital and I asked them to leave. If they can't focus on her at this time, then they never will!"

- Uncle Muhammad Riaz

Nazia's father Fida Hussain said that he had arranged his daughter's marriage with her consent. "She had already completed her matriculation and there were several (marriage) proposals. I had discussed the matter with her and she had agreed to a match," he said.

Multan Civil Lines Police, Station House Officer (SHO), Kareem Shahid said that he was investigating the incident. "Right now we have conflicting accounts about why she tried to kill herself but we are questioning other members of the family" he said.

The Express Tribune - June 16, 2011

The Protection and Emancipation of Women

Finally after years of hearing that legislation would be enacted for the protection and emancipation of women, it has come. Not perhaps in its entirety, as the Minister of Information pointed out in his announcement of the new measures being taken by the government, adding that more legislation would be undertaken for the protection and emancipation of women, and laws redeeming the weak will gradually be changed with the support of the nation and the government. A future strategy for the protection and emancipation of women will shortly be announced in the President's address to the nation. Needless to add, the women of Pakistan are relieved and pleased to have finally been accorded this most welcome release from the bygone and repressive laws of the past years. Soon to follow will be a future bill to provide more protection to women and to eliminate discriminatory legislation and such unhealthy customs against the rights of women.

Some of the strategic factors of the new bill include rape laws under the penal code and does away with harsh conditions that previously required victims to produce four male witnesses and exposed them to prosecution for adultery if they were unable to prove the crime.

Future laws are shortly expected to include the government's effort to eliminate all laws and customs that are unjust and affect women.

She Annual Edition - December, 2006

Woman Stabbed by Father for 'Honour'

LAHORE: A woman was stabbed to the death allegedly by her father for 'honour' in Jhuggian Nagra locality of Nawankot on Monday.

Nawankot police said Khalid attacked his daughter, Nabeela, 20, with repeated strikes of a knife. The woman was pronounced dead at hospital. The accused fled the scene. Nabeela, who was married off to Shan of Jaalo Mor six months ago, had a stillbirth.

Police investigation showed that Shan sent his wife to her parents' house after suspecting that she had become pregnant out of wedlock. Nabeela's father took the matter to his heart.

Police have registered a case against Khalid on the complaint of Nabeela's mother Sakina.

Staff Reporter, Dawn-June 06, 2011

Woman about Town

Salma Naz believes that the four-and-a-half years that she spent as a town councilor were indeed the golden years of her life.

"I originally became a town councilor as I am obsessed with cleanliness, and wanted my area, Saddar Town, to be clean and spotless as well. That's how I became the part of local government system, which were the best days of my life"

Naz's typical day when she was a town councilor started off by solving many other problems. "I was always surrounded by the women of my area, and was busy in solving their disputes. Since people did not trust the police, and avoided going to them, hence I was approached to solve their family disputes"

The kind of issues she solved were mostly related to divorce, marital

disputes or any other issue creating rifts in the family. "I always aimed to Save the marital bond between a man and his wife, and I did all I could to prevent divorce, and sent the women back home". Apart from criminal cases, such as murder, robbery and kidnapping, the rest were solved by her, in addition to looking after the hygiene and the development of the area.

"In all the 11 UCs of the town, we greatly stressed cleanliness." And to this day Naz believes that the original local bodies (LB) system should be restored as it provided relief to the public, and helped them to get access to facilities. Plus it gave them the opportunity to get involved with the development of their areas.

"In the early days issues related to water and sewerage lines would be resolved within a short period of time. Now people have to spend hours, standing in queues or searching for the relevant people for such petty issues. I remember when I was the councilor, and when a problem arose, such as the fixing of electricity wires, I would make a single phone call, and the people would come within an hour to fix it. But now it takes four to five days to get that fixed."

The former town councilor remarks that being a woman and then a councilor gave a sense of empowerment (to Ms. Naz) as well as to other women in the area, as their views changed and they started to support me.

Seeing Naz's stature, a number of women in the area wished to hold that post and would dream of becoming town councilors some day. But not anymore. The violence which keeps on erupting in the city every now and then has changed their minds.

"Even if the former system is restored, I won't become a councilor because the situation of the city is not safe as it was four years ago. With so many killings going in the city, how can the town councilor, especially women, operate? It is better to remain indoors, and be safe in your family." she concludes.

Rabia Ali, The News (Kolachi) - August 21, 2011

MARCH 2012



Thursday 1

www.uksresearch.com

Friday 2

Notes.....

غیرت کے نام پر سالانہ 600 سے زائد خواتین قتل: گلوبل فاؤنڈیشن

6 ماہ کے دوران 334 خواتین غیرت کی بھینٹ چڑھ گئیں، پنجاب میں فیصل آباد، سندھ میں کشمور، بلو

چستان میں جعفر آباد اور خیبر پختون خوا میں مردان سرفہرست، 1592 واقعات میں سے 1237 ایف آئی

آر درج ہوئیں: گلوبل فاؤنڈیشن

راولپنڈی: ملک بھر میں غیرت کے نام پر سالانہ چھ سو سے زائد خواتین قتل کر دیا جاتا ہے 2010 کی نسبت 2011 کے ابتدائی چھ ماہ میں ایسے واقعات میں 8.6 فیصد اضافہ ہوا۔ 2010 میں 627 جبکہ رواں سال کے چھ ماہ کے دوران 334 خواتین غیرت کی بھینٹ چڑھ گئیں، عورتوں پر تشدد کے واقعات میں پنجاب میں فیصل آباد، سندھ میں کشمور، بلوچستان میں جعفر آباد اور خیبر پختون خوا میں مردان سرفہرست، 1592 واقعات میں سے 1237 ایف آئی آر درج ہوئیں جبکہ مختلف الزامات کے تحت 1348 خواتین ملک کی 89 جیلوں میں قید اپنی قسمت کے فیصلوں کی منتظر ہیں۔ پاکستان کی ہر پانچویں عورت شوہر کے ہاتھوں تشدد کا نشانہ بن رہی ہے جسکو گھریلو جھگڑا قرار دے کر خاموش کر دیا جاتا ہے۔ انسانی حقوق کی بین الاقوامی تنظیم گلوبل فاؤنڈیشن کے ایگزیکٹو ڈائریکٹر الٹا گٹلی کی ریسرچ رپورٹ کے مطابق ملک بھر میں رواں ششماہی کے دوران 187 خواتین کے ساتھ زیادتی کے واقعات سامنے آئے 321 خواتین نے مختلف وجوہات کی بنا پر خودکشی کر لی۔ 722 عورتوں اور لڑکیوں کے زیادتی کا نشانہ بنایا گیا ان جرائم میں 39 فیصد جنسی تسکین اور 7 فیصد شادی کے تنازعات اور بدلہ لینے جیسے عوامل کا فرما رہے۔ انہوں نے کہا کہ جیلوں میں قید خواتین کی اکثریت کو لو میرج کرنے پر باپ بھائی، جائیداد میں حصہ نہ دینے پر، شوہر کو دوسری شادی کی اجازت نہ دینے پر، شوہر کی اجازت کے بغیر میسے جانے پر یا پھر منشیات کے عادی شوہر کی مار پیٹ یا بیروں کا رشوہر کی خواہش پر جسم فروشی سے تنگ آکر خلع لینے پر چھوٹے الزامات عائد کر کے خواتین کو جیل کی سلاخوں کے پیچھے دھکیل دیا گیا اور کچھ کو ذاتی دشمنیوں اور زمین کے تنازعہ پر مختلف مقدمات میں ملوث کیا گیا۔ مزید انکشاف کرتے ہوئے الفت کاظمی نے بتایا صرف قتل کے مقدمات میں ملوث 417 خواتین، طویل قید کی سزا یافتہ 143 اور سزائے موت پانے والی 44، اقدام قتل کے مقدمات میں 10، زخمی کرنے کے الزام میں 3، خواتین کی بے حرمتی پر 2، فارنریکٹ میں سزا یافتہ 21، فراڈ، نوشی اور اسقاط حمل کے الزام میں ایک ایک اور متفرق مقدمات میں 37 خواتین مختلف جیلوں میں قید ہیں جنکا کوئی پرسان حال نہیں۔ انہوں نے بتایا کہ غیرت اور رواج کے نام پر قتل کے واقعات میں 67 فیصد ترقیبی رشتہ دار شامل رہے 24 فیصد نے پولیس تشدد کا سامنا کیا اور 8 فیصد جیل اہکاروں کے خلاف ناروا سلوک کا نشانہ بنیں، جیلوں میں قید خواتین میں 67 فیصد ماہیں ہیں، 27 فیصد کے ساتھ تین سال سے کم عمر کے بچے بھی موجود ہیں، 87 فیصد کو اپنے مقدمات

کی موجودہ پوزیشن کا علم نہیں، 34 فیصد کو قانونی کارروائی کے لئے وکلاء کی خدمات حاصل نہیں، 17 فیصد ان پڑھ ہیں، 48 فیصد کے خلاف قتل کے الزامات عائد ہیں اور 32 فیصد منشیات کے مقدمات میں ملوث ہیں۔ الفت کاظمی نے کہا کہ انسانی حقوق کی تنظیم گلوبل فاؤنڈیشن حکومت سے پوزر سفارش کرتی ہے کہ خواتین قیدیوں کی جیلوں میں حالت انتہائی دگرگوں ہے انہیں اپنے خلاف درج ایف آئی آر تک رسائی دی جائے، ان پڑھ خواتین کے ساتھ جیل قواعد و ضوابط پر عملدرآمد یقینی بنایا جائے خواتین قیدیوں کو دیت، عرش، اور من، کی عدم ادائیگی پر بیت المال مالی امداد فراہم کرے یا حکومتی سطح پر مالیاتی فنڈ قائم کیا جائے اور خواتین اور بچوں کے لئے ضمانت کی رقم کی حد مقرر کی جائے جو زیر سماعت خاتون قیدی اور کس ملزم ادا کرے سکے جیلوں سے دائر ایپیلوں پر فوری پیریوی کی جائے۔ (ایجنسیاں)

روزنامہ آج کل 18-گست، 2011

شوہر کے ظلم کا شکار خاتون کا کامیاب آپریشن

واہ کینٹ (نامہ نگار) خاوند کے ظلم کا شکار ہونے والی 50 سالہ خاتون کا کامیاب آپریشن سرجری کے ذریعے ناک جوڑ دی گئی جبکہ ٹانگوں اور بازوؤں پر لگنے والی شدید چوٹیں بھی پلستر کر دی گئی، حسن آباد کی خاتون کے خاوند مشر خان نے اپنی بیوی کو ہیمانہ تشدد کا نشانہ بناتے ہوئے ناک بھی کاٹ دی، تحصیل ہیڈ کوارٹر ہسپتال کے ڈاکٹر احسان رشید نے کا خاتون کا کامیاب آپریشن کیا۔

روزنامہ پاکستان 11-جنوری، 2007

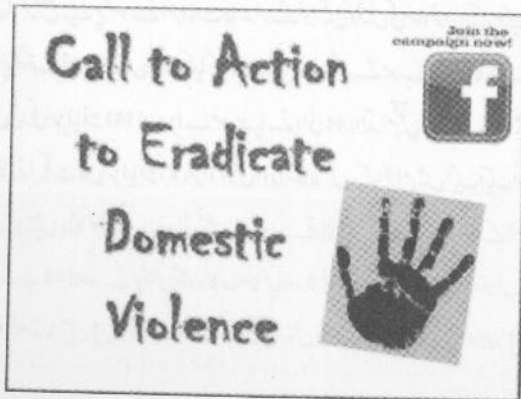


Image Source <http://www.zazzlecomdomestic+violence+awareness+posters.com>

Where do we Stand?

Women have been constantly victimized in Pakistan. If we had a provocation law, things would've been a lot better. You! takes a look.....

Nobody is a born criminal or a murderer. Most of the time it's the circumstances that force one to commit a certain crime. Not all circumstantial crimes, by any means, should be ignored or forgiven but there are a number of instances where one is provoked to commit an unforgivable crime. The victims spend years in anguish before taking drastic measures in order to stop the abuse. This is where the provocation law steps in. An Indian movie 'Provoked' has been based on a real life incident involving this same law where a wife, after being tortured and beaten ruthlessly by her husband for years finally snaps and kills him. In this case the criminal was awarded a sentence based on the provocation law since the torture she had been bearing with all her life, was a crime by her husband on its own. The question is whether someone who is continuously tormented can be blamed for action taken in order to find some relief? Read on to find out more about the Provocation law....

Being Provoked

In English law Provocation is defined under Section 3 of the Homicide Act of 1957 as; 'Where on a charge of murder there is evidence on which the jury can find that the person charged was provoked (whether by things said or thing done or by both together) to lose his self-control', the question whether the provocation was enough to make a reasonable man do as he did shall be left to the jury; and in determining that question the jury shall take into account everything both done and said according to the effect which, in their opinion, it would have on a reasonable person.

This means that a person charged with murder can have the charge lessened to manslaughter, thus reducing the life sentence to life imprisonment (fourteen years of life).

The law in Pakistan was almost similar and was laid down in the exception to section 300 of the Pakistan Penal Code as; when culpable homicide is not murder;

Exception 1: culpable homicide is not murder if the offender, whilst deprived of the power of self-control by grave and sudden provocation, causes the death of the person who gave the provocation or causes the death of any other person by mistake or accident.

However, the Criminal Law Act of 2004 did away with this section and introduced the idea of 'honour' killing as compoundable by allowing a compromise (razinama) to be reached by both the parties. Which leads me to question the point of amending the Bill in the first place? What is the

point of annulling a section only to originate another section which makes it justifiable for men to kill off women allegedly compromising their 'honour'? *The Qisas & Diyat* Act's omission of this clause leaves no room for concession in the law, but the law and the judiciary are two separate entities. While a few judges have tried to write off murder as an 'honour' killing, the majority not only condemns this practice but justifies it with a religious point of view. Islam does not permit killing another human being in the name of 'honour' neither does the land of the pure. Intentionally killing another human being amounts to murder (Qatl-i-amd) and deserves the same punishment as the one vetted out to the deceased as opposed to paying compensation for the life taken. Imagine someone killing your loved one and then paying you to make up for his/her death. As sad as this is, it is the law in Pakistan.

The irony is, even though the provocation law seems absurd to many, it was the only way an abused wife could get out of the 'hell hole' that was her marriage. An estimated three thousand women are set ablaze by their husbands or in-laws every year, and there is nothing these women can do. On the 28th of November, 2010, two women were set ablaze by their husbands, one who lost her eyesight permanently. In another case, 30-years-old Jameela Bibi was burnt alive after she refused to give her husband permission to re-marry. The Provocation Law, in my opinion was a law that protected women. Killing men or anyone for that matter can never be justified, but there are a few circumstances that force one to sympathies, even with a murderer.

A real life example of this is the Kiranjit case. A 23-year old Kiranjit left her home in Punjab to live in United Kingdom with her husband Deepak. During the course of her marriage, which lasted 10 years, Kiranjit was subjected to extreme physical, psychological, and sexual abuse from her husband. Food deprivation and marital rape were a common routine for her. When she asked her family to help her out, they reprimanded her, saying that it was a matter of family 'honour' that she stays with her husband. Kiranjit even tried running away from her house, but was found and brought back by her husband. One night, Deepak threatened to break her ankles and burn her face with a hot iron and she finally snapped. She set him on fire, while he was asleep and was convicted of murder. This young girl had been promised heaven on earth by Deepak only to be thrown into a torture cell of sorts for her to endure. In an interview, she confessed that she wanted Deepak to hurt, just like he used to hurt her and then went on to tell that whenever she tried to defend herself or ran away from his beatings, he would catch her and beat her even harder than before. This statement was backed up by medical reports. On appeal, her charge was substituted to manslaughter under provocation.

While she was punished for killing her husband, at least the law recognized the emotional trauma she went through. The law in Pakistan, however, does not. There are hundreds of women going through the same distress in our country, yet there is no protection for them. In a society dominated by men, it is not surprising that they get away with a majority of crimes. But what about the women who are being tortured to death by their husbands? Provocation was one law, which somehow protected the Kiranjits in our country. Isn't it unfair for a woman to get a life sentence for killing a person who was killing her slowly every single day? Girls keeping mum about the abuse they face is not the right solution, and neither will it reduce their torture. All we can do is hope that may be someday the law can be implemented for what it is meant to be the protection of the people!

Sara Zia Khan, You! Magazine The News - May 31, 2011

Another Victim of Karo Kari

Ruqia Kehar is another victim of the curse of Karo Kari

One day after *Eid ul Fitr*, fifteen year old Ruqia Kehar was brutally murdered by her uncle and brother as she was declared *Kari*. The incident occurred in Agani Village, some fourteen km away from Larkana city. Her uncles, including Manzoor Kehar, fled the scene moments after the incident and remains on the loose. So far, the Larkana Police has failed to arrest the real culprits of the case.

As narrated by Ruqia's family, one of her uncles had observed Ruqia in an "objectionable act" with Masud Kehar, a young boy. When forced to describe what the objectionable act was, they revealed that Masud had touched Ruqia's hand in the street. Ruqia was returning home from a family ceremony of the Kehar family. Villagers and eyewitnesses reported that Masud had touched Ruqia's hand to ask why she hadn't danced at the party but Ruqia had rebuked the boy for approaching her informally. Her uncle, however, watched from the corner of the street, and made an issue out of it, considering it an affront to their feudal ego. Manzoor Kehar reached home and misreported the incident at their joint family home and declared that the girl should be killed. He then went to look for his gun. Shahmir and Mushtaque, her other uncles and the brother joined him and the three angry men fired shots, attempting to take her life. The women in the house intervened and tried to save Ruqia's life. As the women and the mother surrounded the innocent girl, Ruqia was made to run for safety to her

Khala's house, while they look the blows and *laathis* of the men. Ruqia ran as fast as she could to her *Khala's* home but death loomed as the killer reached there before she could. Though the women in the house tried to resist, Manzoor and Shahmir overpowered them and snatched away the girl, dragging her inside a room.

Ruqia kept crying for help while the women outside also screamed and cried helplessly. "We offered them the Holy Book and our *Cheddars* to prevent them from murdering Ruqia, but they forced us to stay out of the room", Mrs. Irshad Khatoon revealed at the women police station, Larkana. The three female members of the Kehar family arrested by the police revealed that the killers used bricks to bludgeon Ruqia as they had run out of bullets. They used big bricks to kill her. It was still not confirmed whether Ruqia was dead or just unconscious after the torture.

Mystery shrouds why the dead body of Ruqia has not been recovered till now by the Larkana Police. It has also not been ascertained whether it was thrown in the nearby Dadu Canal or buried inside the thick forests. No Funeral prayers were held for Ruqia and no *fateha* was accepted. However, female members mourned the death amongst them selves and accepted the sympathies of other visiting women.

It is alleged that the concerned police helped the killers hide the gruesome murder for a week. The public safety commission of the district Government concluded that the suspended SHO of Mahott Police Station, Abdul Nabi Rind, was an essential accomplice in the murder case. It is said that the SHO, Rind, had been informed earlier and was consulted by the killers. The SHO had let the killers go ahead with the murder of the innocent girl after allegedly receiving a bribe of sixty thousand rupees.

Higher Police officials have suspended SHO Rind without arresting him. The suspension of the SHO has posed questions as to how spontaneous and prompt this act of murder action was. If the murder had been cleared with the police earlier, why was the innocent girl declared *Kari* in the evening? It is further alleged that Ruqia's uncle had some ulterior motives and a secret vendetta with the boy's family.

The family and Masud, a *Tonga* driver who was declared *Karo*, have fled from the village. His other relative, including the principal of the SZABIST, Altaf Kehar, an uncle of Masud, has also fled in fear. He was posted at SZABIST, Larkana and has now applied for a transfer to Karachi. The criminal silence on the part of the human rights groups has allowed the police to play with the case according to its whims. No significant arrests have been made and the Larkana Police seems in no hurry to solve the case. Though it was the police itself that registered the FIR on behalf of the state against the father, mother, uncles and brother of Ruqia, they have showed no progress in apprehending the killers in the case so far. Sources say that

an influential ex-MPA of the area was approached by the parents of Ruqia, who assured them that he would protect them from the police and also appreciated that they had "cut off the ugly finger". The feudal mentality of the ex-MPA, the police, as well as the alleged killers have worked in unison to rid what they considered an ugly finger, an expression proverbially used in Sindh.

As no human or women's rights group has intervened in Ruqia's case, there is rising concern that the police and the alleged killers will reach a mutually beneficial agreement to settle the case. If that happens, more innocent women will be murdered and the police will shelve such cases as blind murders.

Nasir Khokhar, She - January, 2003

کاروکاری پر دیور کے ہاتھوں بھا بھی قتل

قاضی احمد (نامہ نگار) گاؤں شیر ڈو میں ملزم حسن وٹو نے کاروکاری کے الزام میں اپنی بھانجی مسات شہر بانو زوجہ گل حسن کو بندوق سے فائر کر کے قتل کر دیا۔ چیچو پولیس نے نعش پوسٹ مارٹم کے بعد ورثاء کے حوالے کر دی اور چھاپہ مار کر ملزم حسن وٹو کو بندوق سمیت گرفتار کر لیا۔

روزنامہ نوائے وقت - 2 جون، 2011



Notes.....

Cutting your Daughter into Pieces for Speaking Up

Anum becomes the target while defending her mother

Dr. Fazal Hussain Shah Shirazi once told his wife Abida Batool that the long knife he kept in his bag was to protect him against robbers, as he did not know how to use a gun.

On June 4, he had used that same knife to stab their 17-year-old daughter Anum Fatima while their four children watched.

Disbelieving relative went to the house to discover Anum's body lying in a pool of blood surrounded by hysterical siblings and the man who had calmly washed the knife and soaked his blood stained clothes in a bucket. Shirazi confessed his crime to his sister and fled Sahiwal after he realized that the police wanted to question him.

Abida has not stopped crying ever since. Her children, who cradled their dying sister as blood gushed out, have been sent away to recover.

Saba Imtitaz (Sahiwaal), Express Tribune - June 28, 2011

Cutting your Daughter into Pieces for Speaking Up

Abida speaks with almost manic energy and repeats the same question: "Why my daughter? Why would he do this?"

Things started to sour soon after Dr Shirazi and Abida Batool married in 1992 in the 'watta satta' tradition (Shirazi's sister was married to Abida's Brother). The Shirazi Family insisted that the differences in the faith- the Shirazi's are Sunni and Abida's are Shia-would not be an issue.

According to Abida, "He constantly criticized my faith. I told him I would not practice rituals. He was suspicious of who I met, so I cut myself off from my family. He wouldn't spend money on his house. I would ask my brother."

But Abida Batool set aside all thoughts of divorce after Anum's birth. "Who would marry my daughter if I were divorced or separated?"

Four more children followed. So did problems. Shirazi barely contributed to family expenses, Abida alleges. "He enjoying depriving his children and torturing them. Influenced by elder brother Dr. Kareem Shirazi, he had no self esteem. He would do whatever his brother said including practicing at the same clinic even though he made little money there. He barely went to the hospital he was posted at

or attended to patients. The children lived in fear of him, since he could take offence at the slightest thing”

Questions about his income Abida says, were answered by hurling abuse and often blows to her head.

That same anger also applied to the matter of faith. While the Shirazis say they are Barelvi, Fazal Shirazi became avowedly anti-Shia.

“I have operated on senior dangerous mujhahideen” he boasted to his wife “I wish I could go and join them as well.”

Members of extremists' organizations were regular visitors to his clinic. At one point he stopped his wife from crying while watching news coverage of Lt. Yasir Abass, who were killed at PNS Mehran Base Attack.

“These soldiers have killed so many mujhahideen.” He said, “It's only fair that he be killed too.”

While Abida says she raised her children as Sunnis, they were drawn to Shia rituals. Anum would hide from her father and pray, but he had found her out twice and threatened her with “dire consequences”

Anum had witnessed her parent's turbulent marriage for seventeen years. Abida recalls that Anum would comfort her, saying that once she started earning they could “escape from this hell”. After several years of silence, she had started arguing with her father, especially in support of her mother's demand that Shirazi build them a house, since they were living in one loaned to them by Shirazi's older brother. “I didn't want anything else.” Abida recalls. “Only a roof for my children” but that man wouldn't agree.

On June 3, the couple fought bitterly over the issue of a house. Shirazi rose to strike her with a water jug, but Anum locked her mother in the room to protect her from her father's rage. She defended her mother, and in response, Shirazi reportedly yelled, “I won't give you a house, I'll give you graves!”

Her father made true on his promise a few hours later.

At around 4:00 am Shirazi stabbed his daughter, dragging her from one room to another. Her siblings awoken from their sleep, screamed at their father to stop. A servant who lives upstairs, watched silently as the man “cut his daughter to shreds” according to Anum's grandmother. By then Abida had moved to her mother's house for the night, so that Shirazi's rage wouldn't affect Anum, who was studying for her first year examination.

Piecing together the events of that night has occupied Abida's family who speculate when the two fought when Anum woke up to offer her prayers. Other relatives said they could have fought over the house.

Shirazi confessed his murder to his sister, but according to one account, he has been telling relatives that Anum was talking to a man late at night, which is why he killed her. The account appears inconsistent with the investigation carried out by the police and family members.

According to Dr. Kareem Shirazi, who sought to separate himself from his brother's action, “This was basically a domestic fight. My brother and I are independent.”

The older Dr. Shirazi also denied that his brother has anything to do with extremists. “We believe in 'pirs' and 'mureeds' and those people destroy shrines!”

According to Abida's Lawyer Mujahid Hussain, the police has been extremely cooperative in investigating the case.

A legal process may have been set into motion but tears continue to roll down Abida's cheeks, who refuses to look at the picture of Anum or sift through her belongings.

In the last few minutes before Anum's died, she was studying for an Islamiat exam. Her books were scattered around her room when her relatives found her body. Whether her father was riled by her faith, or her defence of her mother, is a secret that Anum has taken to her grave, and her father carries around with him as he eludes the police. The house-a source of such contention in the family-has been stripped bare of its belongings, but a blood stained mirror - a reminder of a 17-year-old's dying moment.

Express Tribune - June 28, 2011

NCSW bill may be tabled in Parliament in December

All Set to Make Domestic Violence a Crime: Anis

ISLAMABAD - A bill proposing autonomy of National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) is likely to be presented before the Parliament, in the next session in December, to get it passed.

The NCSW chairperson Anis Haroon informed this at a consultative meeting Wednesday. She said after the struggle of seven years finally the bill for the autonomy of NSCW is going to be discussed in the next session of the parliament on December 15. She said the bill that has already been tabled in the house is going to be discussed in the standing committee of Ministry of Human Rights then it will be presented in the house to be approved.

According to the Commission on the passage of the bill NCSW would have autonomy and would directly report to the President and Prime Minister; the NCSW had organized a consultation session with civil society representatives to finalize the amendments to be proposed by the commission in Pakistan Penal Code that criminalize the offence of domestic violence against women.

Regarding the proposed bill of domestic violence Anis Haroon said that the provinces have already been taken on board for introducing the legislation on the subject and there is some progress already made on this front in three provinces. "However; we still feel that there is a need to have some sort of legislation at the Federal level. For this reason she said that the NCSW has prepared some amendments to criminalize domestic violence under the existing penal code"

She said the proposed bill has full support of the legislatures and the parliamentarians have asked the civil society to support the bill for its early approval.

The Law committees of NCSW had proposed some amendments in the Pakistan Penal Code with reference to Domestic Violence. Some definitions of some of the offences which constitute domestic violence were made to determine and prescribe the level of punishments.

In the consultations, the proposed amendments were thoroughly examined and reviewed by the participants. The participants debated on all aspects, including definitions, and corresponding punishments of the bill and came up with some recommendations. The participants unanimously agreed to rename the bill to "Prevention of Domestic Violence Act" while prescribing the punishment, she suggested that the culprit should face imprisonment and fine or both.

Tahira Abdullah said the proposed fine and sentence of three months to one year in the proposed bill is a mockery of the victim and it will hurt the victim instead of the perpetrators; the participants sought to increase the sentence from minimum six months to three years with fine and also proposed to provide some psychological counseling to the perpetrators. Naeem Mirza, Chief Operating Officer (COO), Aurat Foundation said that due to Qisas and Diyat there was duplicity of laws and proposed to remove definitions of violence because they were falling under the ambit of Qisas and Diyat. This was accepted by all the participants.

After the consultation with the civil society and non-governmental organizations, their suggestions would be added to the proposed amendments for the domestic violence that would be sent to the Ministry of Human Rights and then to the Cabinet and at the end would be tabled in the Parliament for approval.

The civil society representatives and the members of NCSW were mostly suggesting amendments in the proposed bill according to their personal experience and based on assumptions. And the need was felt to put suggestions of genuine stakeholders into the bill and there should have been some kind of consultations with the victims of violence or general public.

Asma Ghani, The Nation - November 24, 2011

MAY 2012

Tuesday 1

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Wednesday 2

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Women Safer In 2010 than in 2009

As foreign reports claim that Pakistan is among the least secure countries for women, local NGO Aurat Foundation reports that violence against women decreased by 6.41 percent in 2010 compared to figures from 2009. The NGO report, titled 'Violence against women in Pakistan 2010', revealed the 'surprising' fact that 8,000 cases were reported across the country in 2010 against 8,548 cases in 2009.

According to the report, Lahore is the most violent city against women with 1,089 reported cases, 521 comprised kidnappings, two acid attacks, 28 domestic violence, 110 rape, 19 'honour' killings, 109 murder, several sexual assaults 76 suicides, three burnings and 214 incident of custodial violence torture, trafficking, child marriage and attempted murder.

The other top nine districts where cases of violence were reported include Faisalabad, Sargodha, Sheikhpura, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Kasur, Okara, Multan and Sialkot respectively.

Murder cases in the country, however, showed an increase from 1,384 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 308 in Sindh, 27 in Islamabad in Baluchistan. In 2010, 557 women are reported to have been killed for 'honour' compared to 604 cases in 2009. The highest number of 'honour' killings (2006) was reported in Sindh.

During the year, 2,296 incidents of abduction were reported across the country of which 1,890 from Punjab. This figure constitutes 82.32 percent of the total number of abduction and kidnapping cases of women in the country.

An NGO's official, said that since Punjab has the largest population, the percentage of incidents of violence in Punjab was more or less the same as in other provinces. The maximum number of abductions in Pakistan was in Lahore, where 521 people were kidnapped.

The report also said that violence against women was the main drive behind suicide and 663 women reportedly committed suicide in Pakistan during 2010 while 683 cases were reported in 2009.

Nine hundred and thirty seven incidents of rape/ gang rape were reported in the country in 2010, out of which 741 took place in Punjab. The report also showed 32 cases of acid attacks on women, a decline from 52 cases recorded in 2009.

According to the report, police cases were registered in 76.31 percent of all reported cases, no case were registered in 15.11 Percent of the cases while no record could be found of remaining 8.58 Percent.

Source of data collection include news reports, First Information Reports, monitoring cells and citizen committees.

Ali Usman, Express Tribune (Lahore) - July 06, 2011

Beyond the Bill

Between the unconfirmed killing of Baitullah Mehsud, the Gojra attacks and attempts to prosecute Pervez Musharraf, there has been little time to celebrate the one items of good news that has come out of Pakistan this month.

The National Assembly's passage of Domestic Violence [Prevention and Protection] Bill is a serious - though long overdue - acknowledgement of the dismal state of women's rights in this country.

If the Senate passes the bill, it will make Pakistan one of the few countries in the world with specific legal language about domestic violence. At last count, in 2006, the United Nations Development Fund for Women tallied only 60 countries with special laws on domestic violence, with another 29 nations having some legal provisions dealing with the problem. By signing the bill into law, the PPP will concretise its commitment to Pakistan's women, and begin to counter the widely held perception that, despite much-touted intentions, the party has not done enough for women.

The urgent need for the Senate to pass the bill cannot be overstated. The statistics say it all: according to an Aurat Foundation report, 7,733 cases of violence against women-including hurt, torture, burning, rape, domestic violence, threat to violence and more were reported in the media in 2008.

Since much of this violence has not been named by the law - and by extension, recognized by the state - it goes unpunished. Prosecution in domestic violence cases has to rely on the Pakistan Penal Code's (PPC) definition of 'hurt' and 'injury'. Men who are routinely violent toward women can be specifically prosecuted for causing bleeding, a fracture, dislocations or skull injuries. But without accounting for the context of the injuries, these crimes do not carry the same weight, in punitive terms, as domestic violence will if the bill is passed.

Moreover, the PPC has few provisions against injuries that don't leave marks.

In the absence of a domestic violence bill, men who slap, shove or emotionally abuse women in their households have been doing so without fear of prosecution.

This will change if the bill is passed. If recognised as a crime by state, citizens and law - enforcers can no longer dismiss domestic violence as a 'private' or 'familial' matter in which the government has no business intervening.

That said, the bill is more sound and fury, signifying nothing if not enforced. As it stands, the bill will only benefit those lucky few women who have the personal courage or family support to report abuse and demand

speedy justice. For the thousands of women who cannot stroll over to a first class magistrate's court to file a complaint after being whacked about, the state will have to take a few extra steps.

Firstly, the state needs to ensure that it is being alerted about as many instances of domestic violence as possible. This requires extensive training for police officials. At present, when summoned during a domestic flare-up both male and female police officers urge families to resolve on the spot, rather than register an FIR.

With training, police officers of both sexes can be made to realise that domestic violence is a crime. They can also be taught to recognize abusive situations and implement station-by- station system to help keep track of homes where repeated incidents of domestic violence are reported and suspected. If needed, the bill should include provisions to punish law-enforcers who fail to follow up on domestic violence cases.

The medico-legal infrastructure is also in serious need of revamping. Innumerable news report describe how medico legal officers - on the basis of whose reports of domestic violence cases are registered - are unqualified to do medical exams to detect abuse, oblivious to proper legal procedures and are easily bribed.

No doubt, systemic change is required. But let's start at the very beginning. In 2004, there were only eight female MLQs in all of Karachi. There is now only six - and that's in the largest metropolis of this country. Without more female doctors in the employment of police surgeons throughout the country, the domestic violence bill will be meaningless. The government must create incentives - financial or otherwise - to attract more women into the medico-legal track.

The government must also urgently invest in a nationwide network of women's shelter. It's fine to offer speedy justice in domestic violence cases, but what are women to do after they drag the men in their lives to court? They need places to hide while they recover from the trauma of violence and plan their future. They need to be attended to by psychologists and medical doctors. They need legal advice. In short, they need state-sponsored women's shelters.

Interestingly, if you Google domestic violence in Pakistan the first link is a website offering eight tips on how to address the problem. Tip one: 'Know this is not Islamic.' The fact is, many Muslims believe that Islam permits men to beat their wives, and mullah's cannot be counted on to debunk this interpretation.

Before it is passed by the Senate, the bill must include legislation against people - especially clerics - who condone or promote domestic violence using religion as a justification. Finally the government should rethink the

clause about filing a false complaint that the bill makes punishable by imprisonment and hefty fines. As a blogger Sana Salim points out, in an environment shaped by the Hudood Ordinance - in which women who report rape have often found themselves incarcerated for committing Zina - the false complaint clause could deter women from reporting domestic abuse in light of this nation's legal precedent towards women.

Of course, the best way to deal with that problem is to repeal the Hudood Ordinance once and for all. That would be the greatest gift this government could give Pakistani women.

Huma Yusuf, Dawn - August 16, 2009



Image Source Page <http://blogs.tribune.com.pk/story9064violence-against-women-no-more>

JUNE 2012

Friday 1

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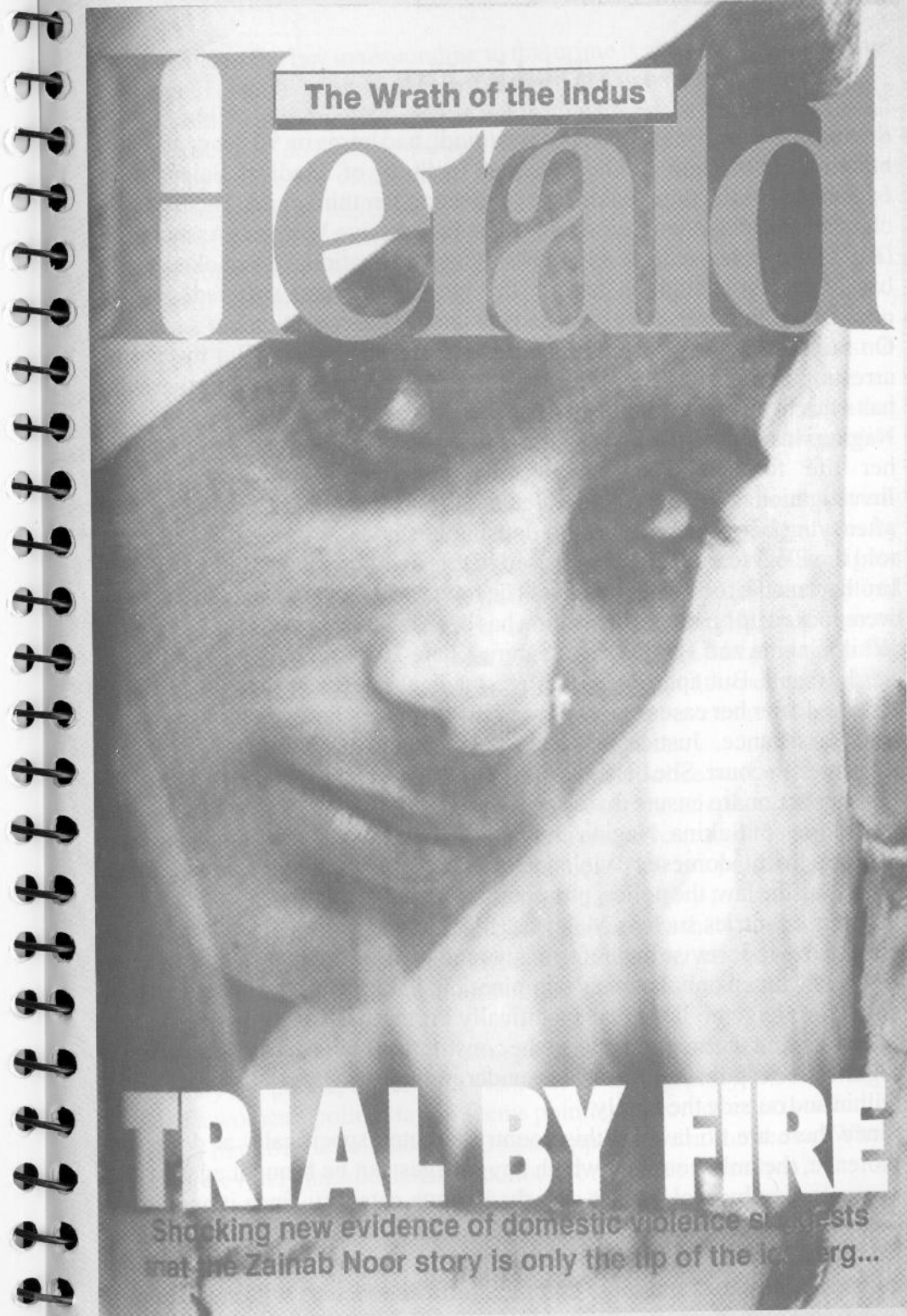
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Trial by Fire

Sakina, of Meera Baigwal near Rawalpindi, had burns on 90 per cent of her body when brought to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in Islamabad. At the time, Sakina was expecting her third child. The first FIR claimed she had attempted suicide. The Progressive Women's Association (PWA), however, recorded Sakina's dying declaration. In a choked voice barely strong enough to narrate the horrors she had suffered, Sakina confirmed that her in-laws were responsible for her condition.

On the basis of this declaration, another FIR was lodged. But instead of arresting the culprits, the police have been harassing Sakina's brother who has since been falsely implicated in a murder case.

Nagina was apparently burnt while making tea. This 18-year old fought for her life for ten days but eventually succumbed to her injuries. Investigations by the PWA revealed that her own brothers had burned her after tying her up with rope and dousing her with kerosene oil. Villagers told the PWA team that the rope used in this heinous act was hidden by her brothers on the roof of their house. The rope was recovered and the brothers were locked up but no further action has been taken.

While Sakina and Nagina died, Sabira Khan, 20, survived the brutality of her husband. But apart from the free medical treatment that she initially received after her case was publicized by the media, Sabira has received no other assistance. Justice has been delayed and her case has not been presented in court. She believes that her influential brother-in-law has used his connections to ensure that a case is not brought before the courts.

The stories of Sakina, Nagina and Sabira point to an area of great concern dealing with domestic violence—the state machinery charged with enforcing the law, the police, prosecutors and judges.

In many countries such as Malaysia, Mexico and India, efforts have been made to review, revise and reform laws and legislation that water down the rights of women or bolster male domination. Pakistan is way behind on this count. We have no laws that specifically protect victims of gender based violence. And the amendments to the constitution made during Ziaul-Haq's regime are responsible for further undermining the status of women both within and outside the family.

Since there are no laws in this country targeted specifically at domestic violence, the only count on which any charges can be brought against the aggressor is physical assault, clearly a vague category since it applies to both male and female victims, as well as an infinite variety of possible situations. In cases of domestic violence, the question of criminalization takes on a different and more complex form as it occurs within the home,

and the role of the law in responding to this crime is shrouded in ambiguity. But even if charges of assault were to be brought against abusive husbands, the age-old dichotomy between the public and private sphere renders such cases extremely difficult to pursue or investigate. The absence of legal provisions protecting victims, and the inadequacy of laws that frequently end up sanctioning legitimacy to offenders, are also crucial points to contend with. Add to them the fact that the absence of specific legislation against domestic violence appears to condone such acts, and the legal position of women is weak indeed.

But even the best law is nullified if it is not enforced. Here, the police, instead of being the first ones to help victims of violence, are the last to enter the scene and offer assistance. On the few occasions that an investigation has actually been conducted, it has been bungled so badly that one is led to wonder about the integrity and intelligence of the police officials in question.

Frequently, the power or the superiority complex of the police officials leads them to behave as if they are doing innocent citizens a huge favor by lodging a simple FIR. And the gender biases of police officials figure prominently in their dealings with women, with rape in police custody and the undue harassment of women in *thanas* an alarmingly common occurrence. Police stations are regarded as no-go areas where women fear to tread even if they are desperate for police protection. It is perhaps for this reason that women's police stations were set up, but even there the staff is not fully aware of how to handle gender violence cases.

Hamida Sardar, SHO of the Rawalpindi women's police station, reportedly admitted that if a woman called her for help over the telephone, she would refuse to step out of the police station. "We ourselves might be implicated in the case if we intervened in such a situation. This is a political era who knows, it may well be a conspiracy to make us a party to the case." In an interview which appeared in a local daily, Sardar said that "unless a woman herself comes to the police station with her complaint, we cannot help her." So much for the hope that women's police stations would be the savior of women in need.

If the officer in charge of the *thana* refuses to help when a complaint is lodged by the phone, either by a victim or by a third party, then the whole idea of a women's police station seems pointless. Moreover, it is ridiculous to insist that the victim make a personal appearance at the *thana*. What if she is so severely injured that she cannot be brought to the station?

Clearly, there is a dearth of research conducted on the issue of gender violence, especially the sort that takes place within the home. Such studies would help identify the characteristics common to violent domestic

situations, as well as the geographic location and socio-economic profile of women most frequently victimized. Armed with such information, campaigns could be specifically targeted towards the most vulnerable segments of the population.

However, what some studies already conducted reveal is a grim reality that might shatter our complacency about domestic violence and the commonly held belief that it occurs in only within certain kinds of families or within particular social or economic strata. In one such study, "Battered Housewives in Pakistan", conducted by the Ministry of Women's Development, it was revealed that domestic violence in some form or the other takes place in nearly 80 percent of all Pakistani households.

It is only in the recent past that the sanctity of the family unit has begun to be questioned. Now, when a burned woman is brought to the hospital for treatment, it is not automatically assumed that her injuries were accidental. Hospital staffs, women's groups, NGOs and the media have recently publicized cases of abuse and domestic violence, helping to increase awareness about the issue. But domestic violence cannot be tackled, let alone eradicated, if women refuse to speak out against those who perpetrate such crimes.

There has been a growing realization on the part of the media that stove burning is an important area of concern. Awareness campaigns on how to avoid accidents are being aired. A concerted effort must be made to continue with such campaigns to include interviews with the survivors of "stove explosion" cases as well as the families of the less fortunate who die. It must be made clear that the "choola phat gaya" excuse cannot be used casually to cover up heinous crimes, nor can it be used indefinitely.

Tasneem Ahmar, Herald - August 1995

The Shocking Tale of Iffat Iqbal

Were it not for the intervention of a conscientious magistrate who exposed the appalling negligence of the police, Iffat Iqbal's horrifying case would have been written off as yet another accidental death...

Iffat Iqbal of Mandi Bahauddin was 100 per cent burnt, and died soon after she was taken to the hospital. While her in-laws claimed she was making tea when her kerosene stove exploded, her own family disputed the 'official' story. They alleged that her husband gave Iffat poison injections and then burned her after throwing acid on her body. Iffat's family appealed to the Progressive Women's Association to investigate the case. It took

PWA Chief Shahnaz Bokhari fourteen days to register an FIR, and that too while sitting in the office of the interior minister.

A PWA team visited Iffat Iqbal's home in Mohalla Akhora to examine the kitchen where she had been burnt. Bokhari noted that the kitchen was in full public view, with a window that opened onto a street where people were constantly walking by. It was hard to believe that in the busy morning hours, and a kitchen that was far from secluded, a woman was severely burned but nobody heard her shrieks of pain or her calls for help.

Iffat's death was clearly no accident. There are certain facts which corroborate this claim. She was the third wife of the accused, who had divorced two others, suggesting a history of unstable marriages. On the day she was burned, he went to his shop without his breakfast. Iffat insisted that he come home when she was told he had had his tea at a *chaikhana*. Could it be that on that day the two had been arguing?

Moreover, Iffat's in-laws claimed she was burned while using a kerosene stove, but the PWA found a gas stove in her kitchen. Why was she using two different stoves? And would anyone actually use kerosene if they had access to natural gas, which is cheaper and cleaner fuel?

In his report on Iffat's case, the magistrate wrote, "I think this cock and bull story has been concocted because they knew that the explosion of a gas cylinder does not burn only the daughter-in-law, but also does much more damage. Moreover, the maneuverability of the kerosene stove for such purposes is unparalleled."

The magistrates report went on to question the behavior of Iffat's husband on that day of the "accident". How could he stay away from his house when his wife had just been severely burnt? Instead of taking her to the hospital or calling in a doctor, the accused proceeded to carry out routine tasks like taking meals to the servants of his shop. He even made a point to telephone his in-laws in Jhelum at 10.42 a.m. But Iffat was not taken to a hospital even after her condition deteriorated. She was deliberately allowed to languish and die.

The magistrate held that the police was slow to act in this case, and that "the little they did was so slipshod that it is hard to believe." The victim's clothes, the stove and other items which might have yielded clues about the crime ought to have been taken into police custody and examined, but this was not done.

Since the police failed to carry out a proper investigation, the magistrate offered Iffat's body exhumed and called for a new investigation. His order clearly held the police responsible for gross negligence, adding, "Even a bicycle theft case is dealt with better than was this one."

Iffat Iqbal's case is rare indeed. The magistrate's order here is

unprecedented. More common are cases where the gender biases of persons in positions of authority are clearly manifested in their orders and decisions. Further, the clash between religious and civil laws also leads to confusion.

The unnecessary delay in collecting evidence about Iffat's death, meanwhile, has badly affected the prosecution's case. Although residents of the mohalla too believe that Iffat was burned to death by her husband, it took the police a month to lodge an FIR. In the meantime, Iffat's husband used his influence to procure bail before arrest. He even lodged a complaint against Iffat's father on charges of murdering his own daughter.

Tasneem Ahmar, Herald - August 1995



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A Willfully Neglected Issue

According to Leo Tolstoy in Anna Karenina, "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." But Tolstoy probably did not have time to study unhappy families and their problems. For one thing that makes them all alike is the constant pattern of domestic violence they all inevitably exhibit. True, the nature of the violence may be different in each case, but it exists and is characterized by the male desire to control the women.

Although this traditionally takes the form of physical abuse, it doesn't always have to be so. Patterns of behaviour in which the man uses emotional/psychological blackmail, economic/financial intimidation, sexual harassment or even threaten to use any of these are regarded as domestic violence. Domestic violence has become so ingrained in our society that no one really speaks about it. One gets to hear about it only when a woman is killed or "grievously hurt" that implies that she may lose a limb, be seriously burnt; suffer a fracture, or any other injury. Even that, we know, is glossed over by the family and shown as accidental.

Reading about various cases in the newspaper, I felt that the time has come to address this issue in real earnest. After all many lives are at stake. And now we have the news from across the borders that India has adopted a new law to protect women from domestic violence. It goes beyond encompassing physical abuse. It also bans harassment for dowry. A magistrate is empowered to issue protection orders where he feels they are needed.

Not that we have been indifferent to this problem our women have faced for centuries. Sherry Rehman, the Information Secretary of the PPP-P, a staunch supporter of women's rights who has been working hard on drafting bills on issue pertaining to women, informs me that her party had introduced the Prevention of Domestic Violence Bill, 2005, in the National Assembly early last year. It was designed to correct the loopholes in the law by recognizing domestic violence as crime. What happened next?

It is not difficult to guess. Our parliamentarians, many of whom must be wife-beaters themselves, would obviously not have felt too pleased with the piece of legislation. It would have landed before them on their desks, had the speakers not sent the bill summarily to "the relevant committee" - a gentle way of saying that it has been shelved indefinitely.

If proof was needed of the mind-set of our male parliamentarians, it came when the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Sher Afghan Niazi, opposed the bill. His position was that "The Quran permits wives to be beaten" and therefore the bill on domestic violence is not Islamic. If he was referring to

the oft-quoted *ayat* of Surah Nisa, it simply proved that religion is being used by politicians to serve their own narrow ends and of course very selectively.

The problem is, needless to say, very widespread. The Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, Islamabad, states that "Over ninety percent of married women report being kicked, slapped, beaten or sexually abused when husbands were dissatisfied by their cooking or cleaning, or when the women had 'failed' to bear a child or had given birth to a girl".

There are two dimensions to the failure of the government to treat it as human rights problem. One is of course the failure of the government to treat it as a human rights problem, a law and order issue and a morally indefensible pattern of behaviour. In fact the World Health Organization which conducted a multi country study on women's health and domestic violence also treats it as a women's health issue. Its study recognizes that domestic violence "has serious impacts on women's health and well-being...and its cost to individuals, to health systems, and to society in general is enormous. Yet no other major problem of public health has-until relatively recently-been so widely ignored and so little understood.

In this context WHO makes the following recommendations to governments:

- Strengthen national commitment and action
- Promote primary prevention
- Involve the education sector
- Strengthen the health sector response
- Support women living with violence
- Sensitize criminal justice systems
- Support research and collaboration

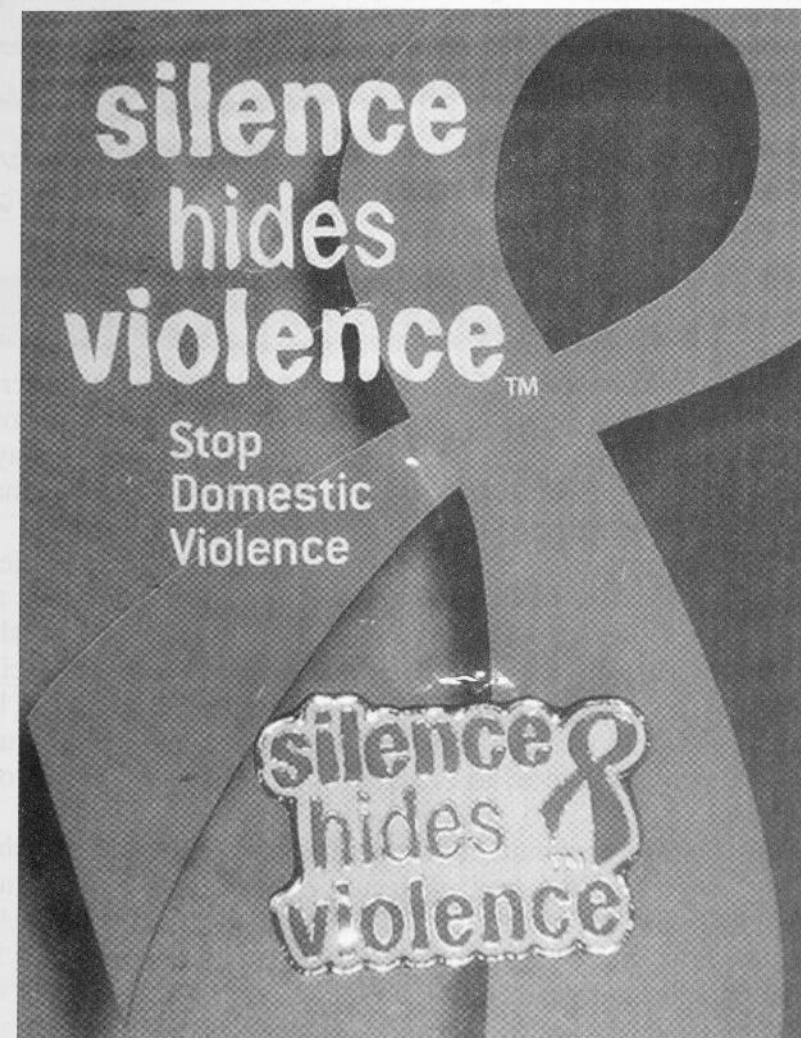
The second dimension is the secrecy that ascends this problem.

Many women deny it because they have been conditioned to believe that it is a man's right to exercise physical control over them and even use coercion in the process.

Besides they have been taught to feel guilty, because they believe they are responsible for it because they provoke their husbands by not being good and dutiful wives. But WHO observes that in its study's findings that there is nothing "natural" or inevitable about domestic violence. So it is time women unlearn the lessons that have been drilled into them. They will have to be taught not to feel guilty by teaching them more about the phenomenon of domestic violence. There is also the need to bring about a paradigm shift in the concept of marriage in our society. The idea is not to destroy the institutions of marriage and family - they are the only social support system we have in Pakistan - but to strengthen them by teaching the partners the

importance of mutually respectful relationship. Trained marriage counselors could make a beginning in that direction.

Zubeida Mustafa, She - November , 2006



کاروکاری کے الزام میں بھائی نے بہن اور نو جوان کو قتل کر دیا

واقعہ سرہاڑی کے قریبی گاؤں باروگسی میں پیش آیا، ملزم نے لاشیں کھیت میں پھینک دیں، تھانے جا کر گرفتاری دے دی

شاہ پور چاکر (نامہ نگار) کاروکاری کے الزام میں بھائی نے چھوٹی بہن اور اس کے مبینہ آشنا کو فائرنگ کر کے قتل کر دیا اور تھانے جا کر گرفتاری دیدی، تفصیلات کے مطابق سرہاڑی کے قریبی گاؤں باروگسی میں 40 سالہ محمد حسین گسی نے اپنی 18 سالہ بہن وزیراں اور 20 سالہ نو جوان احسان عمرانی کو مبینہ طور پر کاروکاری کے الزام میں فائرنگ کر کے قتل کر دیا اور لاشیں کھیتوں میں پھینک دیں بعد ازاں ملزم نے آلہ قتل سمیت سرہاڑی تھانے میں پیش ہو کر گرفتاری دے دی۔ لاشیں پوسٹ مارٹم کے بعد ورثاء کے حوالے کر دی گئیں، مقتولین کو مقامی قبرستان میں سپرد خاک کر دیا گیا۔

روزنامہ ایکسپریس، 7 اگست 2011

Inteha is a Pakistani Urdu film which was released in 1999 across theaters in Pakistan. The movie was Samina Peerzada's debut directorial attempt, and established the careers of its two leading men Humayun Saeed and Zeeshan Sikander. Both the actors incidentally also made their debut with Inteha.

Inteha basically is the story of Sara, played by the leading actress Meera - a young girl from a well off background, studying at a liberal arts college. Being quite the introverted sort and romantically inclined, she's a dreamer. With a dad who still dotes on his daughter, and a pacifist boyfriend (Zeeshan Sikanadar), life just couldn't get any better of her. This all is shattered when circumstances force her to marry her feudal cousin (Humayun Saeed as Zafar). She finds her new home troublesome.

The film's plotline dealt with the issue of marital rape and a few shots detailing the ordeal the lead character goes through stirred much controversy when Inteha was released during the first half of 1999. As a result the movie was banned for a few days, but was subsequently re-released after Peerzada managed to get a stay order from the court. It was a sensational success at the major urban centers in Pakistan and had a record run at Karachi's Nishat theatre. The cast of the show was quite huge and contained experienced actors and the crew.

SEPTEMBER 2012

Saturday 1

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Sunday 2

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It is too much for an ordinary person to see a burn victim screaming in pain"

- Shahnaz Bukhari

Running from hospital to another, looking at charred bodies, the smell of burnt flesh pervading the senses, watching insects crawling over open wounds, hearing shrieks and sobs of pain witnessing the agony of the dying and the wailing for the dead, helping to lodge complaints, and FIR, fight cases... A routine day in the life of Shahnaz Bukhari, who works all day, seven days a week, four weeks a month. She determinedly follows each case that comes to her notice, and so far the Progressive Women's Association (PWA) has handled almost 40 cases.



The day I visited Shahnaz's cluttered "office", which is actually her dining room, Zanaib Noor had also arrived there along with her son to spend the day at "Shahnaz Baji's" invitation. The father of another burnt victim, Iffat Iqbal, had also travelled here from Mandi Bahauddin to seek help in the ongoing case of his daughter's death. Answering phone calls, taking notes, calling news papers, the police or hospitals to inquire whether any fresh cases of domestic violence had been reported, especially burnt cases, Shahnaz seemed tireless. She determinedly follows up burn cases to ascertain whether they were accidents or actually pre-meditated murders.

Excerpts from the interview

Q. Isn't this task of following up on all the burn cases that come to your notice too demanding?

A. Demanding? It consumes all my time, energy and courage. Being with burn patients is no joke. You cannot imagine what a sight they present until you see it for yourself. It is too much for an ordinary person to see a burn victim screaming in pain. It is too much.

But I live with them. And I don't do this as a favor. This is my work. I have dedicated myself to fighting the cases of burn victims, dead or alive. And

There are threats from the "other party" as well. I do not have a big staff, I am a one-woman organization. I have asked, invited, requested other people, men and women, to join me or do this kind of following up on their own, but no one has come forward so far.

Q. How do you follow up on a case?

A. I keep close contact with the police stations, hospitals and as soon as I hear of a burn case, I rush to that place, mostly hospitals which are the focal point for domestic violence. The first case I followed up was of Nagina, who was burnt by her brothers. I was scared to go and investigate the case on my own. But I knew her death was not an accident. The DSP Islamabad accompanied me. This was the beginning. I followed her case, but could not achieve much because her brothers were quite influential. You see, there is a lot involved in following up a case. I must have a good, competent team of lawyers, legal experts and advisors. I don't have this. What I have are volunteers who give me some of their precious time and help me with these cases. This helps, but not as much as the cases demand.

Q. Do you think you can continue with this work indefinitely?

A. This is my passion. After all that I have gone through while following up cases, now I feel I have achieved a little recognition as a person who can be approached by anyone who is a victim of violence. My reward has been an increased awareness among doctors, some police officials and volunteers who inform me of any case which they feel is worth following up. The doctors no longer buy the "stove explosion" stories. They want to get the truth. Similarly, the boys who are asked to keep an 'eye' on hospitals do so without any monetary reward. I would like to mention Iqbal, a young boy who makes regular rounds of city hospitals just to inform me of any burn victim who can be helped.

Q. With so many loopholes in our judicial system, and the way our police operate, what changes would you suggest?

A. There is a great need to change existing legislation. The requirement of producing eyewitnesses has to be relaxed. In our society, where domestic violence is not even recognized properly, where do you think eyewitnesses will come from? When a crime is committed, when a wife, daughter, daughter-in-law is bashed or burned by the men of the family, who do you

think will come forward as an eyewitness? This is a major loophole. We must accept circumstantial evidence-the kitchen, the way a woman was burned- as sufficient in such cases.

Look at Irene's case. She was 95 per cent burnt. But she had injuries on her back, not front. The excuse given was, again, that her stove blew up. Can you explain a woman dying of stove explosion and the front of her body remaining untouched by fire?

Then, in many cases, courts are bribed to handle a case in a particular manner. Circumstantial evidences can help sift through real and concocted stories.

Q. How can we fight against domestic violence?

A. Women must be empowered. This has to be done right from the beginning. Along with mental preparedness, she must have a say in all domestic matters. She must be respected and her work recognized. She must also be able to support herself and not be totally dependent on others, especially men.

Q. How can women be helped to gain economic independence?

A. I think that women must have economic independence. I am aware that women who go out to work are often subjected to harassment. To counter this, I plan to set up an employment exchange bureau where women could get jobs through a reference. I thought that there would be less chances of harassment when the employers knew there was someone behind the women they have hired. The Women's Division thought it was not a good idea, but then the minister blocked our funds saying that the idea was too far ahead of its time. In the short period that this exchange did function, 40 girls were employed in different capacities.

Q. How do you see your work developing in the future?

A. I am optimistic about the future. But I would like to ask for other people's help in my efforts. I need support to fight these cases that keep piling up. I cannot do it alone. These cases demand financial, moral and legal help. The women who survive rehabilitation, they need shelter. I am requesting people to come forward and help me.

Tasneem Ahmar, Herald - August 1995

Vicious Cycles

Why do battered women continue to endure violence at the hand of their husbands without walking out of the relationship? The case of "Seema", a composite of various actual patients, highlights the patterns and factors, both psychological and material that characterize a typical victim of domestic violence...

Seema, 30, is a college graduate and has been married for nine years. She has two young children. She was brought to my clinic by a concerned friend, who had been trying to persuade her to contact me herself for many months. When I first saw Seema, I was struck by her good looks and poise. She was tastefully dressed and spoke in a soft voice. Her initial reserve, however, was soon overtaken by a desperate need to relate the story of the last nine years of her life.

Seema was brought up in a supportive and financially comfortable family. At the age of 21, she was married to a professional. She tried hard to be a good wife, taking care of the needs of her husband and in-laws. Despite her efforts, however, the early years of her marriage there were occasions when, following a quarrel, her husband would slap her. Not infrequently, this would be followed by an apology, reconciliation and a period of domestic peace. Over the years, however, the slaps came more frequently, and on occasions they were supplemented by kicks, punches, and being smashed against a wall. On one occasion in the past, when he didn't find his socks in a drawer, her husband threw the drawer at her, breaking her nose. Sometimes Seema's husband would take her to a doctor to have her treated. At other times, he would leave her to her own devices. Then, Seema would mostly stay in the house until her bruises had healed. There were temporary plateaus in this pattern - times when the violence abated, leaving Seema to hope it had seized altogether. Right after a beating, there were also many times when her husband seemed contrite and would try to make up for his behaviour by apologizing and buying her gifts. Seema believed in this good, kind side of her husband. If only she tried harder, she would often tell herself, she could win him over and change him for the better.

For several years, Seema hid the violent side of her marriage from her parents. Finally, after a particularly vicious beating, she feared for her life and decided to escape to her parent's house with the children. Her husband soon followed her there and begged her to return. Although Seema's parents were supportive of her, she felt guilty involving them in her marriage. Moreover, she did not want to stay with them indefinitely, especially since

have found that in these situations the victim initially struggles to regain control, but soon “learns” that her efforts are useless and settles down into a “helpless” mode of functioning, which she retains even if the situation changes into one where she does not have control.

This pattern of behavior, called “learned helplessness”, is associated with three important sets of changes in psychological functioning. First, at the cognitive level, the woman loses faith in her ability to predict or control a situation, leading to a loss of confidence, self-worth and self-esteem. Second, at the effect level, this feeling of helplessness is accompanied by depression. Finally at the behavioral level she ceases to struggle to escape from her situation. It would, however, be too simple to call all this behavior passive, since battered women develop many complex coping skills which increase the probability of their surviving in a violent relationship.

In addition to these internal psychological changes in the battered woman, there are also external factors which impede her escape from an abusive situation. Most important is the threat of violence itself, and the fear of losing her children. Another obvious reason to stay is the woman's need for financial support. But even where women have independent means, the other factors mentioned usually prevail to keep them in their marriage. Often, another important factor is either the lack of alternative sources of love and support, or the desire on the victim's part to protect these sources of support from the effects of her marital situation. Here, traditional views of gender roles - which place the bulk of the burden of making the marriage work on the woman; which glorify suffering; and so on - also make their contribution. As a result, most battered women continue to live in an abusive relationship. Most even come to accept their situation.

What can be done about these complex forces which give rise to and sustain violence against women in society? The solution does not lie simply in increasing the number of mental health professionals or creating shelters for battered women, but in bringing about a change in our attitudes. In many ways, violence begins at home, when a child is disciplined by beating while boys grow up to be seen as adult men, girls continue to be seen as children who have to be beaten to be disciplined. Unless society learns to see women as adults and human beings in their own right, this phenomenon will continue to hear about the Seemas of this world.

Dr. Riffat Moazam Zaman is a clinical psychologist at the Agha Khan University, Karachi. This article is adapted from a paper she presented at a seminar on violence against women.

Dr. Riffat Moazam Zaman, Herald - August 1995

OCTOBER 2012

Monday 1

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Tuesday 2

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Wednesday 31

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One from...the Heart

I hear a howling, I had cried once. She is no more. She died six months ago. Everybody around me seems to understand. I don't. You see, her husband shot her.

This is not easy for me to write. It is much easier to forget about it. Bury it along with all those things that hurt me, bother me, and threaten the security of my precious castle of cards. But I hear a howling. It was low at first, so low that it was almost inaudible, like a women, crying softly, sobbing. I only heard it when I was alone. When everything was quite around me. At times it would grow, become intrusive. I heard it in the smile of a person that reminded me of her smile; it grew when I saw a little child that looked like hers. Louder became the howling, a raw gut wrenching, and painful sound from the depths of a hollowed soul scraped of its contents, devoid of its right to feel. I could presume it is her, but I fear it is me. Does it matter? I met her for the first time on the day of her wedding. She was twenty then. She was happy and slightly nervous as all brides are supposed to be when they don't really know their husbands to be. Dragged there against my will by my mother. I had expected another one of those girls, that I so scorned. Timid and docile, well turned out, ripe for marriage, perfectly educated housewives of tomorrow. I prided myself being different; I was going to be free and independent. There was no howling then, just the resounding silence of my own smugness. Strangely disconcerting. She didn't fit my category of stereotype brides. She was witty and interesting. Once I got over the initial shock. I hate to admit I am wrong, she and I became friends, not very close friends but not acquaintances either, just friends. Time passed as it always does.....sometimes we take it for granted that things will remain the same....but they don't as long as you follow the rules. You see the howling waits in the shadows, waiting for you to take that one false step, and then the world comes crumbling down in ways you can't imagine. I met her every now and then. From time to time and saw her change from a shy girl to a self assured housewife, and then a mother. She seemed happy. They seemed happy. Her husband was a nice man. Courteous and well behaved. He seemed almost human, unlike so many other men I knew. They seemed to be in love. Of course, there were the usual complaints about how he spent too much time at his computer or in his car...but they were so normal. Nothing strange, obviously no hint of the shocking violence that was about to unfold in such a normal household. The howling was quite then or maybe it was so low that she could ignore it.

I had learnt that he had shot her in the heart one week after it happened. Even then I was told that it was probably a suicide. My mother thought it was better for me not to know. She thought it was better if I never knew that my friend had been murdered. Oh, how we protect our castle of cards and how we try to drown out the infernal sound! You see, she, my friend, had done the unthinkable, the unspeakable act of adultery, she had had an affair! And that so bad he had HAD to shoot her.

Everybody understands, but I do not. They say she was still alive when she was brought to the hospital, still breathing....I wonder if she could hear the howling then? Was it loud, jeering and victorious, or was it more subdued, silent but rebuking, or scarier still, was it a deadly hush, a terrible rushing unrelenting sound that takes you towards inevitable?

Or maybe she was oblivious to it and her thoughts were focused on her child left motherless at four, with a legacy that would haunt him forever. Or was she thinking about her own short life and how she had wanted to live more than her 26 years. What was he thinking at that moment? Did he bring her in to save his neck or did he realize the enormity of his act and feel remorse? Does it matter? She is dead now. A crime of passion, committed by a man enraged beyond reason, driven to protect his 'honour'. They say, he did not think, he was too blinded by anger. Some even try to rationalize it by telling me that it was love, he loved her so much that he struck out at her out of hurt and rejection. So many justifications, so many loopholes, so much acceptance of this unforgiveable deadly act. The act of murdering someone, the act of taking away someone's essence, their right to live, breath, contribute and participate in this world. Nobody justifies her, no body tries to conjure up her motivation for doing it or what drove her to it. Nobody. She was shameless and that seems to be an epitaph enough.

A question keeps bothering me and I put it forward to you. They both committed a crime each, one of adultery, the other of murder. You be the judge and tell me which is the worse. I ask because the world calls her a bad woman and him a normal man.

I wonder about him. Did he think what he was doing to his only child, depriving him of a mother and a family, of all the things that a child of four recognizes and hold as precious? Did he think beyond his own ego? I guess he did not because I see this child floundering helplessly, trying to make sense of where his familiar world went? I wondered too if he can hear the howling, as he sits alone at night awaiting a trial or is it drowned out by the silence of his own righteousness. I believe he can hear it, now more than ever. Maybe it bothers him too, gnaws at his soul, eating away at his heart, every time he sees his child trying to smile in the new unfamiliar world. But he denies his expression, locks it away, far away and takes refuge in the silly

shallow mask of the manliness. I can talk about women's rights, about justice, about the predatory mental state of men that leads them to believe that they have right to take a life if it threatens their so-called 'honour'. I can talk and talk till I am blue in the face but who is listening? When my father can say to me I know you are hurt and you cared for her but she was a "bad" girl, how can I feel safe? If I dared to, through some twist of fate, transcend the norms of my existence as a mere woman, would I be snuffed out too?

I repeat again, who is listening. Who is accountable? Is it her for being foolish enough to believe that she could get away with it just like men seem to all the time. Is it him for believing that if his wife is unfaithful it means that he is no longer a man or that he can only express his hurt and anger in this brutal way. Or is it the society that sets these rules and we are mere pawns in the game. The howling and I are friends now; it sits beside me patiently while I write this. It soothes me when I miss my friend and cry for her. But most of all it lets me be in touch with what I feel, reminds me that there is much more to freedom than mere financial independence. There is a new breed of women now that believe that it is free or striving to be free, to finally achieve the recognition, as a separate entity, not as anyone's property. A woman is a person. I ask all of you out there, is this woman for real or are we just letting her test out her wings, till she strays too far?

The News - 31 August, 1999

NA Passes Law against Domestic Violence

Government to Set up Protection Committees at Tehsil Level

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly on Tuesday passed a bill on protection against domestic violence covering all types of repressive and abusive behaviour against vulnerable people in domestic relationship.

The new law would cover not only intentional act of gender based, physical and psychological abuse, but also include economic abuse, harassment, stalking, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, and any other repressive behaviour committed against women, children and other vulnerable people, with whom those accused have been, or still are in a domestic relationship.

The proposed law-passed as members' bill moved by the Pakistan People's Party's Yaseen Rehman, would become an act following its approval by the Senate and the President.

The legislation is aimed at bringing domestic violence into the public

domain, as such issues are quite common in society but are seldom reported and there is no data available in the country for such crimes.

Under this Law, protection committees - each consisting of female councillors, a female SHO, a sub-divisional police officer and a protection Officer - would be set up at the tehsil level by the provincial governments.

Victims would be able to approach the committees directly or through some other person, which would have to send the case within three days to the area magistrate after full filing of all legal requirements on behalf of the complainant.

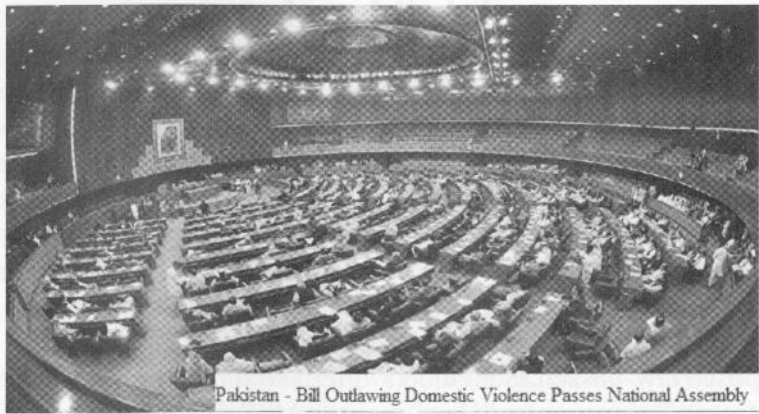
Except where the domestic relationship is based on employment and domestic help, "Victims should not be evicted from the household or any part of it by the accused person during the litigation period."

The court, on being satisfied that domestic violence has taken place, could pass a protection order in favour of the aggrieved party in addition to directing the accused person to provide monetary relief. This protection order would remain enforced until the aggrieved party applies for its discharge.

The court - at any state of the application of protection order - may grant temporary custody of an aggrieved party.

A breach of protection order of the accused person would be considered an offence punishable with imprisonment - which may extend to a year but would not be less than six months and a fine not less than Rs.100,000.

Irfan Ghuari, Daily Times - August 5, 2009



Pakistan - Bill Outlawing Domestic Violence Passes National Assembly



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Stand up against Abuse

There is a general consensus of opinion in Pakistan that it is better for a woman to battle it out with her in-laws rather than opting for a divorce. The argument for this is; although women in our society have been educated to expect justice and equality, society is still archaic. Men have a privileged position and can still supposedly get another wife, but the women will always be on the losing end regardless of any effort she may make to her marriage a success.

One reason I feel to be the cause of this is duplicity between thoughts and action in which even leading feminists expect and demand totally different conditions for themselves and their own sisters in society, which they don't practice in their own homes despite having suffered themselves. There is good and bad in every society, problems related to in-laws is universal. However, in our society the principles of Islam are not practiced and the law discriminates against women. This, combined with the attitudes towards women described above, abusers are given both opportunity and power.

The need for change is generally acknowledged, however, as long as women continue to tolerate being victimized and abusers are allowed to get away with it, the well needed change will never come about. I hope to convey the message of hope by relating my own personal experience. And I am not alone in my quest for justice. All the women I am acquainted with have stood up for their rights, even if it meant ending their marriage and they all have a better life now. In retrospect, their only regret is not having left later.

I was brought up and educated in England. I belong to a simple, down-to-earth, modest family, who neither displays nor boasts their financial status. After my Masters degree, my family immigrated to Pakistan. My experience to an arranged marriage phenomenon, however, was an eye-opener. I had many proposals including those where the agenda was a boy benefiting from the union in some way by obtaining a foreign passport or financial benefits. Unfortunately, this was precisely the type of marriage in which I became entrapped.

After some time my parents decided to return to England where my ex-husband and his family were introduced to us. At the time I was disillusioned and reluctant to return to England being patriotic, I wished to settle in my own country. Furthermore, my ex-husband pursued me ardently, giving the impression he was keen to make me his wife.

I therefore decided to take a gamble and accepted his proposal. His family on the surface at least, gave the impression of being an educated broadminded modern family whose only concern was the happiness of their only brother, and although their living conditions were run down, cramped and poor standard, my ex-husband made a commitment that he would purchase a new house before our marriage.

As our families got to know one another, I realized they were entirely false; they deliberately told lies and embellishments, acting like lords without land to give an impression of status and position they did not possess. In the buildup to the marriage, simple decisions and problems which could easily have been resolved with tact, common sense and courtesy were blown out of all proportion. These generated major conflicts, which gave me an insight into their true natures; aggressive, arrogant, self-centered and crafty human beings.

They tried to dominate all the proceeding in the buildup to, and after the wedding even down to the preparation of my clothing and jewelry from my parent's side, wanting it to be their choice. Their logic being as I was brought up in England, I did not have any fashion sense. Although sign of disaster were present before the marriage, I turned a blind eye hoping in my naivety for the best having a rosy picture of gaining the companionship of a loving family. Besides the wheels were set in motion, the ceremony was finalized and after a lot of persuasion on my part, my husband to-be eventually purchased a house for himself and his family.

After the marriage ceremony, I moved into the new empty house and went about establishing it, financed with some money given to me by my parents, with little offer of help from my in-laws who treated me with neither courtesy, respect nor warmth. The first few months were extremely hectic and stressful. Instead of the bride being treated like one, the roles were reversed and as soon as the kitchen was operational, I started to cook and it was me making preparations for the arrival of my ex-husband's family who acted like guests expecting me to welcome and entertain them. When they arrived the politics began as more truths about them unfolded.

The followings are just some of the web of lies and deceit which unfolded: they were sitting tenants with an eviction order against them. My ex-husband was poorly educated having failed all his junior Cambridge exams. His business, which was based on bribery, came to an abrupt halt causing him considerable depression, after the arrest and imprisonment of his main contact for his corrupt activities. He took to drugs and was also a long-term alcoholic who also did not hesitate to drive in that condition, putting others at risk. Despite this his family still put tremendous unfair pressure on me to control his drinking habits, even accusing me of being

responsible by not making him happy.

My ex-husband was the only son with four elder sisters. A lot of women across our culture have absorbed the notion that men are superior beings who have power. And the only chance of getting any of that power, they as women feel, is through the loyalty and closeness shared with a male child. The pressure is even greater on an only son. My ex-husband was no different. The role he played in his household was a father figure and the role cast for me was their servant/mother figure who was only there for the convenience of my in-laws.

The most hypocritical and cunning of all had the nick name of "live wire" and she proved to live up to her reputation as a troublemaker. The campaign she led in her office under the banner of anti-corruption was actually based on attempts to obtain facilities for her. Not only was her own brother corrupt, she herself was guilty of petty crimes. Her attempts to use and manipulate me were an insult to my intelligence for she mistook my politeness for foolishness. She had the audacity to preach women's rights but was nasty towards me, and even had the cheek to make personally insulting, derogatory, and humiliating remarks, making it clear that my place was in the kitchen. She even reminded me that as I was from England, I was supposedly "used to" domestic work unlike her family who were "used to" servants. Her behavior and personal habits, by example did not warrant respect as an elder.

However, even when I fulfilled the above role, I found it an impossible task. They were fussy eaters and the food I cooked was always criticized and I was made to feel as if I was poisoning them. Financing household expense was also created into major issues where I was even accused of saving their money and goods in my parents' home when actually I was financing much of their demands, including food, using my parent's money.

In-laws may not do things out rightly in the open but may behave in an underhand manipulative way, so you cannot explain why they are upsetting you. Subtle and blatant insults designed to "put you in your place", issues created to look like the "bad one". You have to ask yourself why your husband is not prepared to look as clearly at them as he would at anybody else. In my case, my ex-husband was a part and parcel of it, his family came first and they backed each other up no matter who was right or wrong. Despite all my efforts he complained that he had not gained sufficient benefits from the marriage. By nature he was a bully lacking in character and integrity blaming others rather than taking responsibility for his own actions. He was also suspicious - minded not hesitating to read my personal letters and to listen to my phone calls. Neither was he an intelligent man, his response to most things even if merely contradicted, was to have an

irrational temper tantrums going to the extreme of abuse towards my family and threatening physical violence which was followed by remorse. The excuses he subsequently made for his behavior were lame and cowardly. There was no excuse for it, and bullies simply target people weaker than themselves they dare not intimidate someone their own size.

For fifteen months I lived in that strange, un-homely, depressing atmosphere, where there was always some trauma or crisis. My ex-husband had no interests and few friends and there were few visitors apart from his sisters. The picking, criticism, recriminations and complaints on every aspect of my life, seldom having any foundation, continued. On top of this, material demands from my parents started.

Despite having followed few customs and traditions themselves, (they had maintained that their approach to giving dowry was "English") they were full of expectations, with no concepts whatsoever of their role and responsibility towards me. I was made to feel I had no value and should be grateful they had "allowed" me to become their wife/bahu and should even thank God for this so called lucky privilege. Tremendous pressure to have a child was there from the day I got married, which soon turned into blame with treats and ultimatums that if I wanted a place in their home I had to have a child. Eventually, I coped with everything by ignoring it, avoiding them as much as possible seeing the humorous side (anything to keep me sane). Although I felt alone I was an optimist, who never gave up trying to improve my circumstances in the hope that one day I would have a normal, happy life.

My mother's visit from England came as much needed. She was alarmed to see me mentally and physically exhausted and I poured my heart out. She could see for herself how I was being treated-like a doormat. Mine was a no-win situation in every way. I believed the moment I stood up for myself, the marriage would have ended. Which is exactly what happened. A minor issue triggered events which for me were the last straw that broke the camel's back and I went to my mother's home in a distressed state. My ex-husband's family responded in their usual way by jumping up and down in a hyper state, making personally insulting and provoking remarks with ridiculous false accusations. My ex-husband's response was to bully and threaten me with ruining my reputation, warning me that girls who dare to answer back are killed.

In two months no attempt was made to negotiate or resolve the conflict, apart from my ex-husband informing me when the servant had left, implying that a golden opportunity to return had opened up and I could take the servant's place to appease his family. I had been unwell and distraught at the time, but my ex-husband's concern was not for me or my

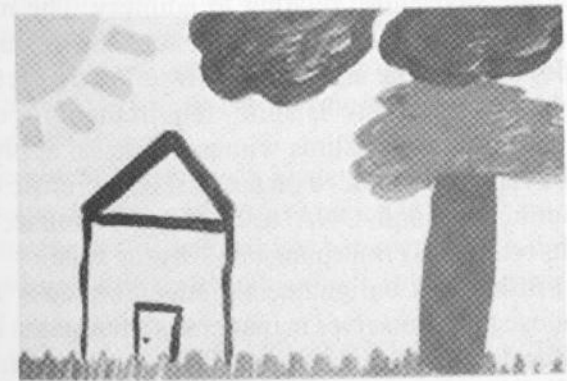
predicament, but for his family and to preserve his own reputation wanted to teach me a lesson.

After my ex-husband made more threats and material demands, I decided to return to England with my mother. Luckily I took some of my personal possessions from their home before I left which they threw outside in the heat of the moment; otherwise they would not have returned anything on their initiative. They felt no shame to include kitchen items well used by them and I observed that they tried to hide the things they wanted to keep. When I returned to England, I applied for a divorce through an Islamic council. After a year wanting to give them the full benefit of doubt and to be absolutely clear in my mind that I was making the right decision by taking a final action. Their actions since, have only confirmed that I made the right decision. I was even amazed to learn they had spread the rumor that they had supposedly sent me away with a divorce soon after my arrival in England.

To conclude, I am not advocating divorce, which in my case was not appropriate, but would like to advise women to have the courage to stand up against the abuse - being alone is better than suffering ill treatment. Fortunately, my family and friends are supportive. One of the worst experiences of my life had a positive outcome in that I learnt a lot from it and I have used the lessons as an inspiration for the future.

Shammia Ahmad, Women's Own - February,

**It Shouldn't Hurt
To Go Home.**



[Http://www.eapcrackerbarre.com/apply_to_youDomesticViolence.htm](http://www.eapcrackerbarre.com/apply_to_youDomesticViolence.htm)

The Women's Protection Bill

How important is the Women's Protection Bill for President General Pervez Musharraf? He said he was going to have it passed no matter how strong the opposition. The mullahs ranted and raved. They threatened to resign from the assemblies and take to the streets. They said they would block the bill's implementation in the provinces they govern. They declared all support for the bill heretic and sinful. Yet the President went ahead and encouraged some say browbeat the parliament into adopting it.

That done, he came on TV to congratulate the nation on what he said was a historic day when a 27-year-old injustice to women had finally been dealt with. He promised to bring more national laws, especially in areas where the existing legislation either fails to provide justice to half of the country's population or assists in perpetuating injustices against women. Not only that, he chose to turn the final step in the procedure for the bill's adoption into a gala affair.

This was not a bill that the President was going to sign in the hallowed sobriety of the presidency. He would do it at a women's convention, amid thunderous applause from a hall packed to capacity by those who have struggled against the hudood laws for 27 years.

Clearly, the significance that the amendments to the controversial hudood laws hold for President and his beleaguered government cannot be overstated. But what exactly has this bill done that is so loathsome for our religious leadership?

Oddly enough, very little. In essence, hudood laws are a set of five different laws governing punishments for adultery, false accusation, consumption of alcohol and other crimes such as theft etc. All of these laws remain pretty much what they are save those relating to adultery. The most important change in the adultery related laws is the exclusion of rape from them mischief of hudood laws. The amendment law allows a victim to take her case to the ordinary courts where 'Islamic' requirements of evidence, such as four adult right-thinking Muslims witnesses, do not apply. The victims can now have the rapists convicted on the basis of forensic evidence such as medical examination and DNA tests etc. Of course, sex between consenting adults remains a crime punishable by the state.

Even General Musharraf's enlightened moderation does not extend to letting adults choose for themselves in matters as personal as love and sex.

In his speech to the nation, he said making adultery a non-crime would lead to many complications and it was not possible to accept the secular opposition's demand that the state stay out of people's beds. No wonder

when JUIF's Maulana Fazlur Rehman warned that the amendments would turn Pakistan into a "free sex zone" many liberals sighed as if to say "only if!"

Anyway, women's NGOs who have been in the forefront of the struggle against the hudood laws seem to have gone along with the amendment despite having serious reservations regarding their limited scope. Something is better than nothing, they say, adding that the fight for women's emancipation was far from over.

They could not be more right. No matter how important the changes that the amendments have brought to hudood laws, they do little to redress the fundamental discrimination against women institutionalized under General Zia's horribly orthodox agenda. Just as important, the country still retains parallel judicial system, which means that General Musharraf's well meaning amendments remain a hostage to the nuisance value the obscurantist wield in Pakistan. Should our military leadership come to the conclusion that the clergy's support is needed to bolster its politics, one can safely assume that the women's protection bill will be among the first items on the general's liberal offerings to be thrown out the windows.

Even after seven years of enlightened moderation, Pakistan, it seems, is still some distance from the dream of a genuinely enlightened state. It still awaits a ruler who can stand up and boldly say that religion is a matter between people and whatever gods they choose for themselves. A ruler who can lead the state to being the benevolent entity that the nation's founder had envisaged-which treats all its citizens with equality and protects the rights of all, irrespective of whether they cross their hearts or kiss the ground in their communication with the divine.

Hudood laws are only small part of General Zia's agenda and his military successor needs to broaden the scope of his reform ambitions to include other so-called Islamic laws that have played havoc with the structure of Pakistan's criminal justice system

If enlightened, or for that matter any kind of, moderation is to prevail, Pakistan needs to rid itself of the conflicting sets of laws that have turned its value systems upside down.

Despite all that we hear from our leaders about the need for scientific progress and progressive thought, we remain one of the few countries in the world where murder is a private matter between individuals - thanks to u and diyat law - while kissing a lover becomes a crime against the state.

Aamer Ahmad Khan, She - December, 2006

Hit him Back Legally-Domestic Violence Bill



Women find themselves beaten and then are also threatened if they tell anyone about domestic violence. – File Photo

If your husband raises his hand on you, and you are a constant victim of physical violence, humiliation and verbal abuse, a time may come when you say “enough is enough”.

Whether it is an urban, educated woman or a woman from an underprivileged rural background, social pressures and conditioning can keep her tongue-tied and stop her from complaining to anyone about the abuse. But one fine day, if he beats her and her children black and blue, and she decides that it is time to stand up for her right, what is she going to do? Does she know what to do? Whom to complain to? And as this is regarded as “a family matter”, will the law side by her?

These were some of the questions answered at the recent **“Provincial Dialogue on ‘Domestic Violence Bill’ Policy and Data Monitoring Violence Against Women (PDM-VAW)”**, organised by the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) and Aurat Foundation (AF) on October 13, 2011 in Karachi.

“The Domestic Violence Bill had been passed by the National Assembly in 2009. However, once it reached the Senate, it lapsed. After the passage of the 18th Amendment, the bill comes under the Provincial governments’ domain,” explains Maliha Zia, a lawyer who has expertise on Gender & Law.

The aim of the event was to reinstitute the legislative process on the said Bill. MPA Humaira Alwani, who was also present at the occasion, had submitted

the Bill as a private member's bill in 2008. But the desired effect did not take place. “Events such as this provincial dialogue are an attempt to make the government take ownership and responsibility of this issue, as domestic violence has reached epidemic proportions in our society.

But the main problem is that it is considered a private matter and women are encouraged not to come into the public sphere with their complaints,” says Zia.

Also present at the occasion were Ms. Anis Haroon, Chairperson NCSW, Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, current speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh, Tauqeer Fatima Bhutto, Provincial Minister for Women's Development, Sindh, Ms. Sharmila Farooqi, lawyers, human rights activists and journalists.

The definition of Domestic Violence (DV) in the proposed Bill is that “Domestic Violence includes but is not limited to all acts of gender based and other physical or psychological abuse committed by an accused against women, children or other vulnerable persons, with whom the accused is or has been in a domestic relationship.”

Thus, the person committing DV may not necessarily be the husband. It can be a brother-in-law, a step-son or even a brother. And the victims can and do include children.

As Zia explained in her detailed and insightful presentation, DV includes much more than just physical beating. It includes assault, use of criminal force and intimidation, wrongful confinement, inflicting hurt, trespassing and harassment. Physical abuse is of course the most salient part. But an interesting new addition is the term “stalking” as part of DV which could mean watching, **loitering around or following the victim**.

Sexual abuse is an important part of this. This also includes “forcing the wife to cohabit with anybody other than the husband”. This does not include only rape, and is an umbrella term for many other violations. Sexual abuse of children by a relative, which amounts to incest, is a serious and damaging kind of abuse, the effects of which the child will carry with him/her throughout life in the form of psychological scars.

Economic abuse is also included, which can entail forcefully snatching away the woman's earning. Wilful or negligent abandonment of the aggrieved person is another form of abuse.

What really touched a raw nerve with the participants was Section 4 (m), which included, very aptly, “emotional, psychological and verbal abuse”. How commonly we see the things mentioned in this section around us. Degrading and derogatory remarks, use of foul language and hurtful remarks about the woman's family are not uncommon.

A humiliating or ridiculing attitude, for example commenting upon the

wife's weight gain or lack of education can destroy a person's self-esteem. A repeated exhibition of obsessive jealous behaviour which later leads to false allegations upon the character of the victim, which is done by not only the husband, but many a times by in-laws as well, is both abuse and the highest form of mistrust and disrespect.

Women find themselves beaten and then are also threatened if they tell anyone about DV: threats of divorce, of beating and of malicious prosecution. In addition, many a times when the man has an intention to remarry, he may cite the wife as 'infertile' or 'insane'.

All these and the above come under DV in the proposed bill, which made it very comprehensive and well thought-out.

Punishments have been defined so that people take it seriously as an offence. This can be short term imprisonments or fines.

If the Bill gets passed, the aggrieved can bypass reporting to the police, and directly present a petition to the Court which is within the jurisdiction where she resides. A person authorised by the victim can also present the complaint.

A bit of information worth knowing is that the victim, for treatment, should preferably go to a hospital that has a medico-legal centre.

Not only will they treat her, but they can also register a complaint. However, even if she goes to any clinic or hospital, she can get a report that mentions the extent and nature of her injuries, and that will help strengthen her case.

"People feel that passing of such a Bill and increased awareness will result in the divorce rate going up. But is leaving a violent and abusive marriage really a bad thing? And in Pakistani law, Khula is in any case a fairly simple procedure, with or without this Bill," says Zia, and continues to say, "A woman or child or any vulnerable person is entitled to the fact that her bodily, mental and emotional integrity remains intact and she is protected by law. The man who commits violence should be answerable for retribution." Her words say it all.

Farahnaz Zahidi Moazzam, Dawn - October 21, 2011



Going nowhere: Bill on Domestic Violence Stuck in Sindh Assembly for Three Years

KARACHI: While many women face violence within their homes, a piece of legislation that aims to protect them from it has been pending in the Sindh Assembly for the past three years.

No private laws have been passed in the house of Sindh's elected representatives since the Pakistan Peoples Party-led government came to power in 2008.

The 'Domestic Violence against Women and Children (Prevention and Protection) Bill 2008' was submitted by MPA Humera Alwani three years ago, but it has yet to be brought to the floor.

"There is not enough legal protection for victims of domestic violence. The proposed law will help shield women and children from such incidents, including 'honour' killing," said Alwani.

The bill has been criticised and some of the male parliamentarians, who feel that there is no need for such laws, have even harassed Alwani. "I am really putting up a struggle for the bill, which has been neglected and ignored. Every time I speak about it, I am given false assurance that it will be introduced," she said. Alwani added that a feudal mindset prevails in the assembly and hence the men are of the view that domestic violence should not be discussed outside the home.

Earlier this year, some men in parliament joked about a resolution on this very issue before they passed it. But Alwani believes that a simple resolution isn't enough. According to a report which was published by the Aurat Foundation in 2010, around 136 cases of domestic violence were reported in Sindh.

But as everyone knows, this figure is a gross underestimate and is not representative of the scale and spread of such acts, as activists believe that the victims prefer to stay silent.

The organisation's director, Mahnaz Rahman, said that the bill is extremely important as men are not being punished for torturing women. "Five months ago, a woman with broken ribs came to us and said that her husband was responsible for the injuries. The police had refused to register an FIR

As they felt that it was a matter which had to be sorted out by the members of the household.”

Rahman cited the apathy of the law ministry as the reason behind the failure to highlight these issues. The law minister, Ayaz Soomro, said that Alwani was making a mountain out of a molehill. He said that the law would be passed by the Sindh Assembly at its next session.

The domestic violence bill covers physical, sexual, emotional, social, economic and psychological abuse committed by a person with whom the victim has an intimate relationship.

A woman who feels that she has been wronged can submit an application to a magistrate. If the court finds a man guilty of domestic violence, he can be sent behind bars for a minimum of three years. He will also have to pay monetary relief to the victim every month, which includes the full cost of medical treatment. Moreover, the bill suggests that the government form a protection committee to assist the victims.

“The National Assembly has passed a number of bills related to the plight of women. It is sad and ironic that these issues are not addressed in the provincial assembly, where women are so active,” said Alwani.

The Express Tribune - December 06, 2011



Notes

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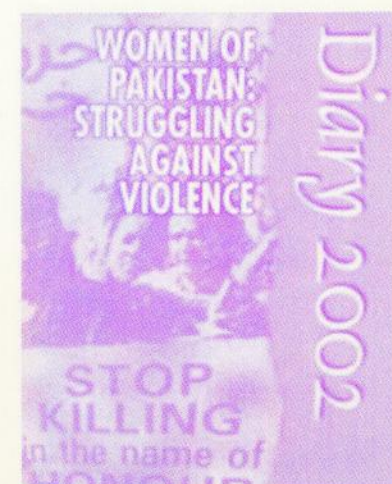
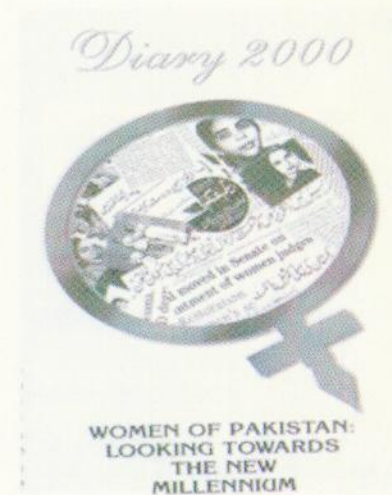
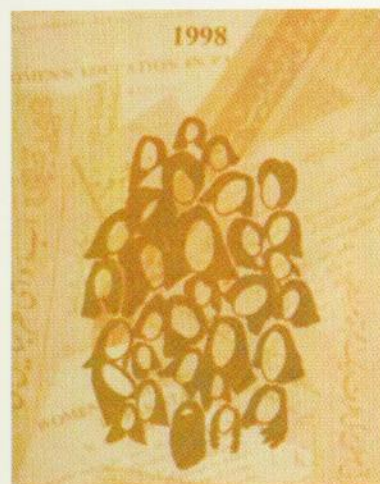
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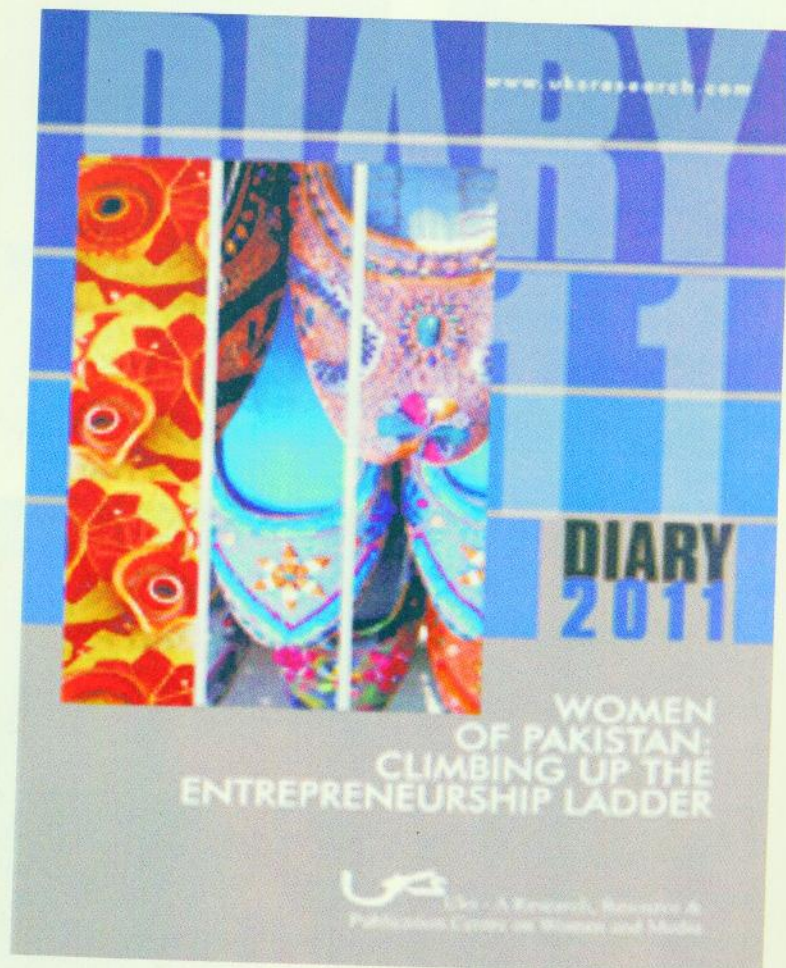
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UKS DIARIES OVER THE YEARS





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