



GENDER & MEDIA WATCH

March 2025



A monthly round-up of news
stories about women and
women's representation in
Pakistan's news industry

EDITOR'S NOTE

Islamabad's Alarming Numbers: A Wake-Up Call for Pakistan

A recent report by the Sustainable Social Development Organisation (SSDO) and the Centre for Research, Development and Communication (CRDC) has revealed a shocking statistic: in 2024, Islamabad recorded more gang rape cases than any other part of the country. The federal capital reported 22 cases—more than Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir combined.

This is a damning indictment of our collective failure to protect women.

Given Islamabad's relatively small population, the number is startling. But what does it really tell us? Is this spike an actual rise in violence, or does it reflect better reporting due to greater access to police and media in urban areas? Could it also be the result of increased mobility of women—more women in universities, workplaces, and public spaces—making them more visible and therefore more vulnerable?

We must ask these questions. Because behind every statistic is a life, a body, a future disrupted by violence.

Islamabad is often viewed as modern, safe, and progressive. But this data challenges that perception. If the capital, with all its infrastructure and oversight, cannot protect its women, what hope do the provinces have—especially when many areas continue to underreport violence due to stigma, fear, or lack of access?

The SSDO-CRDC report also reveals that Punjab recorded the highest number of gang rape cases—2,046 of the 2,142 registered nationwide. Meanwhile, conviction rates remain shamefully low: just 0.5% for rape. That means nearly all perpetrators walk free. Legal reforms, where they exist, are poorly implemented. Police often blame the victim. Survivors must relive their trauma in courtrooms for years. Is it any wonder so many women stay silent?

EDITOR'S NOTE

If anything, the numbers from Islamabad may reflect a reluctant step in the right direction: women coming forward. But that bravery must be met with justice—not more bureaucracy, humiliation, or inaction.

To truly address this crisis, Pakistan must stop treating sexual violence as an occasional outrage and begin treating it as a national emergency. This means training law enforcement to handle GBV cases sensitively. It means strengthening rape investigation units, speeding up trials, and protecting survivor identities. It means offering trauma counselling, legal aid, and shelter to victims. And it means dismantling the shame culture that still silences so many.

The media, too, must do better. Coverage must go beyond headlines and offer space for survivor voices, institutional scrutiny, and follow-up.

Lastly, we must confront a harsh truth: violence against women is not just a crime—it is a reflection of power, entitlement, and impunity. Unless those are addressed, the numbers will keep rising, in Islamabad and beyond.

This is not just a moment for outrage. It is a call to action.

And justice—real, swift, survivor-centred justice—is the only answer.

MAJOR STORIES

*Click on the heading to read the full story

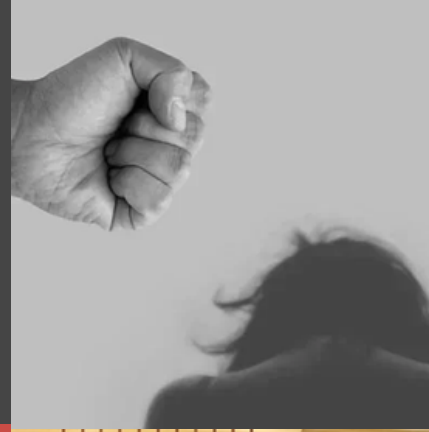
01

March

The News

'GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE SURGES WITH DISMAL CONVICTION RATES'

A total of 32,617 cases of GBV were reported nationwide in 2024 with 5,339 incidents of rape, 24,439 incidents of abduction, 2238 incidents of domestic violence, and 547 cases of honour killing. Despite the surge reported in the cases of violence against women, the national level conviction rate of rape stands at a mere 0.5%, honour killings at 0.5%, kidnapping/abduction at 0.1%, and domestic violence at only 1.3%. The report highlights the concerning scale of GBV cases and the extremely low conviction rates, emphasizing the need for urgent reforms in law enforcement and judicial systems.



03

March

Daily Times

WOMEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ESTABLISHED IN MIRPURKHAS

Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been established in Mirpur Khas Division to promote the entrepreneurial skills of women and empower them economically. The President Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sadaf Raza Waraich addressing to a Press Conference here on Sunday said that his chamber is the first of its kind in the region whose founder is President Ms. Sadaf Raza Warraich while Dr Farzana is Senior Vice President, Iram Afshan will be its Vice President Secretary General Aqila Abuzar.



06

March

The Nation

WOMEN DEVELOPMENT CENTRE INAUGURATED AT GCWUF

A Women Development and Mentoring Centre has been established at Government College University Faisalabad (GCWUF) with an aim to provide equal development opportunities to women. President Women Chamber of Commerce Shahida Aftab and Vice Chancellor Dr Kanwal Amin jointly inaugurated the centre. Pro Vice Chancellor Dr Zil Huma Nazli and others were present on the occasion. Addressing the ceremony, VC Prof Dr Kanwal Amin said that the development of women is not limited to their rights only.



10
March

Express Tribune

KASHMIRI WOMEN STRUGGLE HIGHLIGHTED IN UK

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Tehreek-e-Kashmir (TeK) UK hosted a thought-provoking webinar titled "The Silent Victims: Kashmiri Women's Struggle Under Indian Occupation Since 1947." The event shed light on the ongoing human rights abuses faced by Kashmiri women under Indian occupation, particularly the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war, enforced disappearances, and draconian laws that have left thousands in a state of perpetual suffering.



MAJOR STORIES

*Click on the heading to read the full story

11
March

The News

PAKISTAN COMMITTED TO WOMEN'S RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY

Dr Shafqat Munir Ahmed, Deputy Executive Director, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, has said that Pakistan is an active participant in the Beijing+30 Forum striving to uphold women's rights and drive global commitments to gender equality. Dr Munir was addressing a Seminar on International Women's Day organised by SDPI here Monday. Dr Munir highlighted that Pakistan has made progress in meeting gender equity and women empowerment goals amid persisting major structural, legal and cultural barriers.



12
March

Dawn

DIVORCED WOMEN ARE ENTITLED TO A SHARE IN LATE FATHERS MONTHLY PENSION, RULE SHC

The Sindh High Court has ruled that divorced daughters are also entitled to receive a share from the monthly pension of her deceased father until she marries again. The SHC also noted that realising the miseries and hardships faced by divorced and widowed daughters of deceased pensioners, the finance ministry had liberalised the pension rules in 1983 and thereafter, the status of divorced daughters had also been made equal to unmarried daughters. While allowing a petition of a divorced woman, a two-judge constitutional bench comprising Justice Mohammad Karim Khan

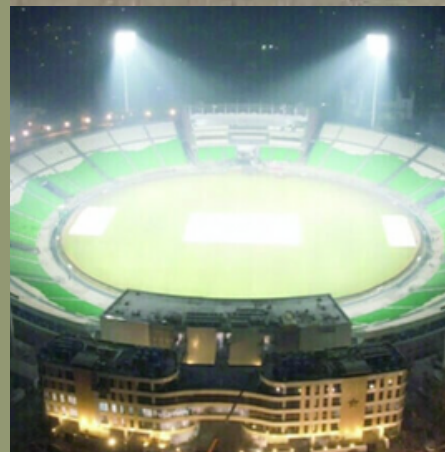


15
March

Express
Tribune

WOMENS WC QUALIFIERS BE HELD IN LAHORE

Hosts Pakistan take on Ireland at the Gaddafi Stadium while the West Indies play Scotland at the Lahore City Cricket Association on the opening day of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier 2025 which runs across the two venues in Lahore from 9 to 19 April. The sixth edition of the Qualifier sees teams from four Full Members – Bangladesh, Ireland, Pakistan and the West Indies – compete with Associate Members Scotland and Thailand in the 15-match.



17
March

The Nation

ISLAMABAD'S WAKE UP CALL

On 23 February 2025, Islamabad's F-9 Park, a recreational space frequented by families and joggers, became the scene of a brazen act of violence. A disturbing viral video, which was disclosed to the public only yesterday, captured a man dragging two women mercilessly by their hair across the road outside the park's McDonald's outlet, their screams for help echoing as bystanders watched.



MAJOR STORIES

*Click on the heading to read the full story

20
March

Dawn

DEPRIVING WOMEN OF THEIR INHERITANCE IS 'UN-ISLAMIC', SHARIAT COURT RULES

In a landmark ruling, the Federal Shariat Court (FSC) on Wednesday declared all or any custom, by virtue of which any female member of a family is being or has been denied or deprived of her right of inheritance, have no legal force whatsoever. The 21-page judgement, authored by Justice Dr Syed Muhammad Anwar of the four-member bench that also comprised Chief Justice Iqbal Hameedur Rehman, Justice Khadim Hussain M. Sheikh and Justice



22
March

Daily
times

A ROADMAP TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

In Pakistan, every woman has a story-stories of perseverance, dreams, and the struggle to carve out a space for herself in a world that often tells her to stay within limits. From young girls fighting for their right to education to mothers balancing work and family, and entrepreneurs defying the odds to build businesses, Pakistani women are constantly pushing boundaries. Change is happening, not just in policies and programs but in everyday lives, where more women are stepping into education.



25
March

Express
Tribune

TRUCK RUNS OVER PREGNANT WOMAN, HUSBAND

A young couple, Abdul Qayum and his wife Zainab, were expecting their first child after Eidul Fitr but a driver speeding his water bowser ran over their motorcycle, killing the would-be parents and their unborn child near Malir Halt Flyover in Model Colony. The truck driver dragged the bike under his vehicle killing Qayum on the spot. Zainab, lying in a pool of blood, in her death throes, gave birth to a child, who also died later.



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March

The News

THREE DECOITS RAPE WOMAN IN FAISALABAD VILLAGE

Three dacoits robbed a couple and raped the woman near Chak 62/JB, Channanke Motorway Bridge. According to the police report, Adnan, a resident of Chak 62/JB, was bringing his wife Shumaila Noor home from the Agricultural University Hostel, Jhang Road, when the dacoits intercepted them and snatched cash and a mobile phone from Adnan before tying him up. Later, they dragged his wife into nearby fields and raped her. The police have registered a case.



EDITORIAL ON GENDER

What have editors said about gender issues in Pakistan? Click on the boxes and find out!

DAWN

[Failing women](#)

[Miles to go](#)

[Too little, too late](#)

[Closing the gap](#)

[Children in jails](#)

[Education interrupted](#)

[Inheritance rights](#)

[Women's rights](#)

[Not helping.](#)

THE NATION

[Protecting free speech](#)

[Accelerate Action](#)

[Uneven Strides](#)

[Mischief on Earth](#)

[March Blocked](#)

EXPRESS TRIBUNE

[Abandoned daughters](#)

[Gender pay gap](#)

[Education emergency](#)

[GBV and police apathy](#)

[Inheritance rights of women](#)

[Another deadly accident](#)

[Thalassaemia: mandatory test](#)

[Electoral gender disparity](#)

EDITORIAL ON GENDER

What have editors said about gender issues in Pakistan? Click on the boxes and find out!

DAILY TIMES

[Bodies in Garbage](#)

[Miles to Go...](#)

[Say No to Vani](#)

[Good Touch, Bad Touch](#)

[Another woman](#)

[Shattering the Silence](#)

[Killing Fields](#)

THE NEWS

[Are women safe?](#)

[Equality now](#)

[Persistent gap](#)

[A nation's shame](#)

[An inheritance of her own](#)

[Making women strong](#)

[Death at every turn](#)

STORIES IN THE DIGITAL SPHERE

A roundup of this month's trends and viral stories on gender-related issue on Pakistan's internet

#AuratMarch2025

On March 8, 2025, International Women's Day, the Aurat March took place across major Pakistani cities, including Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi. Participants demanded gender equality, protection of women's rights, and recognition of gender-based violence as a national emergency.



#Gender Pay Gap

In March 2025, the International Labour Organization (ILO) released a policy brief revealing that women in Pakistan earn 25% less per hour than men for work of equal value. The brief highlighted structural barriers and discrimination contributing to this disparity and called for urgent policy action.

MEDIA STATISTICS

Data derived from media-monitoring throughout
March 2025

| | Total | Daily Times | The News | Dawn | Express Tribune | The Nation |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------|----------|------|-----------------|------------|
| Women Specific Stories (WSS) | 936 | 228 | 190 | 174 | 180 | 164 |
| Front Page WSS | 92 | 29 | 26 | 12 | 16 | 9 |
| Back Page WSS | 75 | 45 | 24 | 0 | 45 | 0 |
| Women Specific Columns | 140 | 37 | 20 | 27 | 28 | 28 |
| Columns by Women Writers | 146 | 35 | 28 | 28 | 33 | 22 |
| Women Specific Editorials | 19 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Female Reporters (FR) | 24 | 1 | 14 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| Front Page FR | 11 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| Back Page FR | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| Comparative Mean | | | | | |
|------------------|------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| | WSS | Editorial (WSS) | Female Reporter | Columns (WSS) | Columns by Women |
| Daily Times | 7.35 | 1.67 | 0.03 | 1.19 | 1.13 |
| The News | 6.13 | 1.25 | 0.45 | 0.65 | 0.90 |
| Daily Dawn | 5.61 | 1.00 | 1.10 | 0.87 | 0.90 |
| Express Tribune | 5.81 | 1.00 | 0.58 | 0.90 | 1.06 |
| The Nation | 5.29 | 1.00 | 0.23 | 0.90 | 0.71 |

1. Women-specific includes all the news stories, columns and editorials that are dedicated to women's achievements, problems, status etc.

2. All female sources that are named and not named (such as lady reporter) are considered female reporters.

PICTURES OF THE MONTH



Multan: Gypsy girls on their way pushing handcraft water pots after filling them from filtration in plant

Courtesy: The Nation

Rawalpindi: Women selecting footwear from a shop in Rawalpindi on the eve of eid

Courtesy: Dawn



Islamabad: Coordinator to the prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam Addresses the seminar held at a local hotel

Courtesy: Dawn

PICTURES OF THE MONTH



punjab: woman and
children waiting to fill
water

Courtesy: The News

Islamabad: A
beautician applying
heena to girls hands
for eid

Courtesy: Dawn



Quetta: Women busy in
selecting and
purchasing bangles for
eid

Courtesy: The Nation

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GenderWatch

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