



Pakistan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 3 April 2017

Information on familial disputes over land/inheritance in Pakistan (Lahore).

A report published by the European Asylum Support Office, in a section headed “Settlement of land disputes”, states:

“Land disputes were prevalent in rural and urban areas throughout Pakistan sometimes resulting in violence and death. At local government level and federal level, courts dealing with land disputes had a backlog of cases, were poorly trained, and subject to corruption. In Pakistan’s tribal areas local jirgas decided on land disputes but often discriminated against women and their right to land ownership (European Asylum Support Office (August 2015) *Pakistan Country Overview*, p.70)

In section 3.2.7 “Access to law enforcement and fair trial” (sub-section headed “State protection”) this report comments on Pakistan’s police force as follows:

“While there is a fully functioning criminal justice system, the effectiveness of the police varies greatly by district, ranging from reasonably good to ineffective. Pakistan’s police system suffers severe deficiencies in a number of areas, including equipment, technology, personnel, training, and intelligence capability. Much of the police force is regarded as corrupt, inefficient and unprofessional. There are reports that the police often fail to protect members of religious minorities and women. (ibid, p.69)

See also the Summary of a report from Human Rights Watch which states:

“Public surveys and reports of government accountability and redress institutions show that the police are one of the most widely feared, complained against, and least trusted government institutions in Pakistan, lacking a clear system of accountability and plagued by corruption at the highest levels. District-level police are often under the control of powerful politicians, wealthy landowners, and other influential members of society.” (Human Rights Watch (25 September 2016) *“This Crooked System”: Police Abuse and Reform in Pakistan*, p.1)

A report published by the (United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in a section headed “Securing Land Rights”, states:

“Freehold land in Pakistan tends to be retained by families and passed intergenerationally by inheritance. Ownership is rarely registered. Despite formal laws mandating registration, incentives for registering land are weak or nonexistent, procedures complicated, and loopholes numerous. Land is typically titled in the name of the head of household or eldest male family member of an extended family. While community property rights are

recognized in formal law, joint titling of land is uncommon. Islamic law is often inconsistent with statutory law; Islamic law permits oral, unrecorded declarations of gifts of land, while statutory law requires a writ, with the Benami Act legalizing documented but unrecorded transactions. Land in FATA is not recorded. The amount of land actually registered countrywide is unreported.” (United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (September 2010) *USAID Country Profile – Property Rights & Resource Governance: Pakistan*, p.6)

An article from the Pakistani newspaper Daily Times states:

“It is very common in Pakistan that disputes occur between two parties over property issues. Many people have been killed over land disputes and the incidents of murder and kidnapping for land have become common, putting a question mark on the performance of the law enforcement agencies.” (Daily Times (26 December 2016) *Property disputes*)

An article from Pakistani newspaper the Express Tribune states:

“In our society, the acts of illegal dispossession are largely committed at the behest of persons who are rich, powerful feudal lords, politicians, builders, government functionaries or persons who head large communities, and on account of their influence and power that place them in domineering positions either over their fellow community members or over less powerful communities living in an area of their influence.” (Express Tribune (20 July 2016) *Illegal Dispossession Act: Illegal occupants will serve a decade in jail, says SC*)

See also Express Tribune article which states:

“Police has arrested a man from Vehari who killed his wife over ownership of land a week ago. Vehari DPO Umar Saeed told The Express Tribune on Wednesday that Mushtaq, a resident of Chak 96, had gunned down his wife Ayesha, 40, after she refused to give her property documents which she inherited from her father.” (Express Tribune (10 November 2016) *Land dispute: Man nabbed for murdering wife*)

An article from the Pakistani newspaper Dawn states:

“Two brothers on Saturday killed their two siblings and set ablaze another brother and his wife at Chak 422-GB over a land dispute in Garh police precincts.” (Dawn (6 March 2016) *Two brothers killed by siblings over land dispute*)

This article also states:

“Tandlianwala DSP Fazal Abbas said the family possessed five acre land in Badin, Sindh, and Ameer had sold the property without consulting his brothers and received advance amount worth Rs0.8 million. On Friday night, he said, Ameer had been trying to convince his brothers to record their statement required to sell the land and Niaz, Hassan and Mustafa refused. The condition of Hassan is critical.” (ibid)

An article from the Lahore-based newspaper The Nation states:

“A man slaughtered his younger brother over some domestic issue in Kahna police station limits yesterday. Police believe that it was family dispute however some locals of the area are of the view that the brothers had clashed over property. Aslam, 15, son of Inayat, was working in fields when his brother Ameen, 23, came over there. They had a fight first and then Ameen slaughtered Aslam with a sharp knife. The accused then went home and told his mother what he had done. Police are yet to register a case and arrest the killer.” (The Nation (19 June 2016) *Teen brother killed ‘for property’*)

An article from Dawn states:

“Shadbagh police registered a murder case against Waris and his other family members on the complaint of victim’s father Liaquat Ali. Station House Officer Mudassirullah Khan said they were alerted by neighbours about a fire but it was revealed that a woman had been torched to death by her brother-in-law over a property dispute. He said raids were being conducted to arrest the suspect. City Division Superintendent of Police (SP) Operations Muhammad Naveed told Dawn Sidra was burnt to death by her brother-in-law over a property dispute.” (Dawn (7 August 2016) *Woman ‘burnt to death’ by brother-in-law over ‘property’*)

See also Dawn article which states:

“Two armed motorcyclists allegedly shot dead a man and his nephew over a land dispute in Manga Mandi here on Friday. Police reports said Iqbal, 50, and his nephew, Liaquat Ali, had a land dispute with their rivals known in the area as Mian Group. Initial investigation showed that Iqbal and Liaquat had killed two members of the Mian Group sometime back. The police said the two were going to attend court proceedings when the bikers sprayed a volley of bullets, killing them instantly.” (Dawn (17 September 2016) *Man, nephew shot dead over land dispute*)

An article from Dawn on killings related to a land dispute states:

“A couple and their son, along with a close relative, were killed in an attack by armed men of their rival clan over a dispute over land near Abdul Majeed Shah village within the jurisdiction of the Maula Dad police station near Jacobabad on Friday. One of the attackers was later shot dead in a tit-for-tat action by the aggrieved party. Police said the armed men, believed to be members of Sargani and Qambrani clans, attacked a group of men and women of Thaheem clan when they were busy working in a paddy field near Abdul Majeed village. Some women managed to catch hold of an attacker, Nek Mohammad Qambrani, when he was trying to flee on a motorcycle. He was later shot dead by the armed men of Thaheem clan, said the police.” (Dawn (15 October 2016) *Three of a family among five gunned down over land dispute*)

A Dawn article on the killing of family members as a result of a property dispute states:

“A man allegedly shot dead his two sisters over property dispute in Baghbanpura on Thursday. Police said Noreen, 17, and Ayesha, 20, residents of Riaz Ahmed Road, were found dead in their house by neighbours

who alerted police. A police team reached the spot and recovered the bodies, collected forensic evidence and recorded the statements of eyewitnesses. Later, police shifted the bodies to morgue for autopsy. Police, quoting the neighbours, said the family consisted of three brothers and two sisters. Two brothers are mentally challenged as was one of the slain sisters, they said. They said Aqeel wanted to sell the inherited property after the death of their parents but one of his sisters was not agreeing with him.” (Dawn (13 January 2017) *Man kills two sisters over ‘property row’*)

A report from the Urdu language news channel 92 News refers to a recent incident in Lahore as follows:

“At least three persons were killed while another was injured due to firing by unidentified motorcyclists over a property dispute in Lahore’s Tibbi City area on Saturday. According to City SP Adil Memon, two brothers belonging to Shahdra area were going to the court for a hearing when they were gunned down while a passerby wounded in the firing also succumbed to his injury.” (92 News (18 March 2017) *Three killed in firing over property dispute in Lahore*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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