



## **Pakistan – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 11 May 2015**

### **Information on honour killings in Pakistan and revenge due to a pregnancy out of marriage.**

An article from US magazine The Atlantic states:

“In Pakistan, women and men who have illicit relationships or women who lose their virginity before marriage are at risk of paying with their lives. ‘These are matters of honor and the leaders call a jirga and they declare that the woman or the couple should be killed,’ said Abdul Hai, a veteran field officer for the Human Rights Commission in Pakistan. These acts of violence are most commonly labeled as ‘honor killings.’” (The Atlantic (28 September 2011) *Refusing to Kill Daughter, Pakistani Family Defies Tradition, Draws Anger*)

A report from German broadcaster Deutsche Welle states:

“Honor killings in Pakistan are known as ‘Karo Kari’ in Sindh province, ‘Kala Kali’ in the Punjab, ‘Tor Tora’ in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and ‘Siyahkari’ in Balochistan. The terms are used for persons accused of indulging in adulterous or ‘immoral’ behavior. Traditionally, honor killings in Pakistan are not considered murder. They are accepted and recognized as a way of protecting family honor. Members of a certain clan or a family consciously decide to kill an allegedly adulterous or guilty individual and the perpetrators are backed by their families. While men often escape death by running away or persuading the woman’s relatives to accept cash, land, or a woman from their own clan in marriage, women suspects rarely have such alternatives. In most cases, the family of the accused woman does not seek any concrete evidence of adultery. A man can kill a woman on the basis of rumors of her talking to, walking, smiling at or sitting next to a man other than her husband and immediate male family members, quite apart from sleeping with another man. Even educated families with a certain degree of socio-cultural awareness do not speak out against this custom. Some sacrifice the woman concerned only to preserve their honor, while others do it because they are forced by social pressure.” (Deutsche Welle (20 March 2012) *Women in Pakistan face the brunt of honor killings*)

An immigration and Refugee Board of Canada response to a request for information on honour killings in Pakistan, in a section headed “Background”, states:

“Sources indicate that women in Pakistan are considered to be the carriers of the honour of their entire family or the village. Honour killings usually take place when a man claims that a woman brought dishonour to the family or the community. The rationale is that the woman needs to be killed to ‘restore’ that honour. According to Deutsche Welle (DW), a German news source,

perpetrators also kill the woman because they are 'forced by social pressure' and because honour killings are recognized as a way to 'protect family honour'. In a report on honour killings, Agence France-Presse notes that honour and the preservation of a family's good name are 'highly valued' in Pakistan. Sources cite an influential religious cleric as stating that killing in the name of honour is 'a local custom and a religious practice' in Kohistan. (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (15 January 2013) *PAK104257.E –Pakistan: Honour killings targeting men and women*)

In a section headed "Motives" this response states:

"According to AHRC, honour killings are committed primarily against women who are thought to be engaging in pre-marital or extra-marital relations. The HRCP highlights that, according to media monitoring and field reports from HRCP volunteers, out of the 943 honour killings committed in 2011, 595 were because the woman was having an 'illicit relation,' and 219 because she demanded to marry a man of her choice. Other reasons for honour killings also include the following:

- woman going against family wishes; property disputes; inheritance rights;
- woman marrying a man without family approval;
- woman demanding a divorce; woman being raped;
- woman talking to a man (DW 20 Mar. 2012; *International Business Times* 22 Mar. 2012; DW 20 Mar. 2012) or smiling or sitting next to a man; and
- woman perceived as having 'somehow dishonoured' her family

Sources indicate that perpetrators are mostly husbands, brothers and fathers of the victims. According to the National Commission on the Status of Women of Pakistan, 'in rare cases, however, due to social and emotional pressures women are forced to commit "honour' killing". Honour killings can take place because of suspicions or misunderstandings.(ibid)

A report published by the Islamabad-based women's rights organisation the Aurat Foundation, in a section titled "Honour Killing-Top 10 Districts for Honour Killing from 2008-2013" (section 3.5), states:

"Honour killing is the killing of women and men over suspected immorality by members of their family. This practice is often carried out under the patronage of influential feudal, landowners and politicians. Contrary to common belief that honour killing is more common in Sindh than other provinces, most honour killings were reported from Punjab in 2013, with Sindh's districts making an appearance at the fourth position in the list of top ten districts [Jacobabad]. Most honour killings were reported from Lahore [29] for the second consecutive year, with Faisalabad following close at its heels [28] in 2013." (Aurat Foundation (30 December 2014) *Annual Report 2013: Situation of Violence Against Women in Pakistan*, p.15)

The 2013 US Department of State country report on Pakistan, in a section titled "Women (sub-section headed "Harmful Traditional Practices")", states:

"A 2004 law on honor killings and the Prevention of Antiwomen Practices Act 2011 criminalizes acts committed against women in the name of traditional

practices. Despite these laws, hundreds of women reportedly were victims of honor killings. Many cases went unreported and unpunished. The Aurat Foundation reported 2,773 honor killings between 2008 and 2012 and estimated less than 2 percent of honor killings were reported. The practice of karo-kari or siyah kari – a premeditated honor killing that occurs if a family, community, tribal court, or jirga determines that adultery or some other ‘crime of honor’ occurred – continued across the country. Karo-kari derives from ‘black male’ (karo) and ‘black female’ (kari), metaphoric terms for someone who has dishonored the family or is an adulterer or adulteress. Once a woman is labeled as a kari, male family members assume there is justification to kill her and any coaccused karo to restore family honor. In many cases the karo is not killed but is able to flee. Human rights groups criticized the federal law banning honor killings because it allows the victim or the victim’s heirs to negotiate physical or monetary restitution with the perpetrator in exchange for dropping charges.” (US Department of State (27 February 2014) *2013 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices – Pakistan*, p.49)

This section of the report gives several examples of honour killings which occurred during 2013 as follows:

“On June 25, Dawn reported a mother and her two daughters were shot and killed in their home during an honor killing. According to police, the attack was motivated by a video of the girls playing in the rain. The mother’s stepson allegedly considered the video to be an ‘assault on the honor of his family,’ and he killed the three women in an attempt ‘to restore the family’s honor.’ On September 16, a jirga council in KP ordered the death of a 22-year-old woman after it judged her guilty of ‘illicit relations.’ According to media reports, she was shot and killed along with two older female relatives who assisted her attempt to flee her husband and elope with another man. Police eventually arrested two suspects linked to the honor killing. On April 28, a woman’s family severely injured her and killed her husband in an honor killing attack in Nowshera. The victim’s decision to elope and marry without her parents’ consent motivated the attack. Five of her male relatives carried out the honor killing. Police filed a case against the suspects, but all five men were able to escape following the attack.” (ibid, p.49)

An International Crisis Group report, in a section titled “Institutionalised Violence against Women (sub-section headed “The State’s Failure to Protect”), states:

“In 2014, 898 were victims of ‘honour killings’. Because the law protects those responsible, women are murdered with impunity by family or community members for reasons ranging from marrying for choice, financial motives or being raped.” (International Crisis Group (8 April 2015) *Women, Violence and Conflict in Pakistan*, p.6)

The 2014 report from the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, in a section titled “Honour crimes and acid attacks”, states:

“The Aurat Foundation estimates that more than 3,000 have been killed for ‘honour’ since 2008 in Pakistan. HRCP database recorded that 923 women and 82 minor girls fell victim to ‘honour’ killings in 2014. The count included 21 deaths in Gilgit-Baltistan. The total number of victims of these crimes is usually higher as both men and women are targeted in such incidents. The

predominant cause of these killings in 2014 was alleged illicit relations where both the boy and girl believed to be involved in the relationship were murdered as a result. Firearms were the most commonly used method of carrying out these killings. Lahore witnessed one of the most brutal cases of honour killing in 2014. A pregnant 25-year-old woman was stoned to death by her family outside the Lahore High Court. Her father, two brothers and former fiancé were among the attackers. Farzana had been engaged to her cousin but married another man. Her family registered a kidnapping case against him but Farzana had come to court to argue that she had married of her own free will. In response to this incident, the Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) issued a statement declaring that murder in the name of honour is 'haraam' and that there is no permission in Islam 'for such a callous offence'. In November 2014, the Lahore High Court handed death sentence to the four men involved in Farzana's murder." (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) (16 April 2015) *State of Human Rights in 2014 [Chapter V Rights of the disadvantaged - Women]*)

A BBC News report states:

"This year alone, more than 1,000 women have been murdered for so-called honour crimes - and these are just the ones of whom the authorities are aware. In May, the case of the young, pregnant woman Farzana Parveen shocked the world. She was stoned to death by her family for marrying the man she was in love with, rather than the man they had chosen for her. What was most shocking was that it happened outside Lahore's high court, in front of policemen and passers-by. In November, following worldwide media attention, Ms Parveen's father, brother, cousin and former fiance were all found guilty of murder and given the death sentence, while another brother got 10 years in jail. But more often than not, those who commit these brutal acts against women are never charged, protected by tribal laws. Some hard-line religious scholars believe that only through the killing of an offending family member - usually a woman - can honour be restored to the rest of the family and tribe." (BBC News (12 December 2014) *How Pakistan's women are punished for love*)

A 2015 report published by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in a section titled "Women's Rights", states:

"Women and couples were murdered, often in extremely brutal circumstances, in so-called honour killings across Pakistan. In May, Farzana Parveen was stoned to death by her family outside the Lahore High Court for marrying a man of her choice. The brutal nature of Parveen's killing triggered outrage around the world. Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond condemned the murder as 'barbaric', commenting that 'there is absolutely no honour in honour killings', and urged the Pakistani authorities to bring those responsible to justice. At the end of the year, four of Parveen's male relatives were sentenced to death for her murder." (UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (12 March 2015) *Human Rights and Democracy Report – Pakistan*)

A Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty report states:

"A young couple in Pakistan have been killed by the woman's relatives for marrying against their wishes. Police said the bride's father, mother, grandfather, and two uncles were arrested on June 28, a day after the killings.

The 17-year-old girl and 31-year-old man had married earlier this month without the consent of their families in Pakistan's eastern province of Punjab. They were lured to the woman's family home on June 26, where they were tied up and had their throats slit with scythes. A majority of marriages in conservative Pakistan are decided by the family elders, and couples risk reprisals if they choose their own partners. Last month, a pregnant woman was killed by her father and brothers in front of a high court in Lahore for marrying a man of her choice." (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (28 June 2014) *Young Couple Killed In Pakistan Over Love Marriage*)

See also Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty report which states:

"A Pakistani court has sentenced four men to death over the mob killing of a pregnant woman in a so-called 'honor' killing. Farzana Iqbal, 25, was beaten with bricks on a busy street outside a courthouse in Lahore earlier this year. On November 19, Lahore's high court sentenced to death the father, brother, cousin, and a man claiming to be her ex-husband. They were found guilty of beating her to death because they disapproved of her marriage." (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (19 November 2014) *Four Pakistanis Sentenced To Death For 'Honor' Killing*)

A report from Reuters

"An 18-year-old Pakistani has survived being shot and thrown in a canal by her family for marrying the man she loved, police said, weeks after the 'honor killing' of another woman drew worldwide condemnation. Ali Akbar, a local police official, said Saba Maqsood had been attacked and shot by her father, uncle, brother and aunt and thrown into the waterway in the city of Hafizabad in Punjab province. 'It is an honor-related incident,' Akbar told Reuters. 'The victim, Saba ... married her neighbor Muhammad Qaiser for love five days ago against the wishes of her family. They took her to Hafizabad, shot her twice and threw her in the canal after putting her in a sack, presuming that she was dead.'" (Reuters (5 June 2014) *Pakistani woman survives after being shot for marrying for love*)

A 2010 article on honour killings from the Sindh-based English language newspaper the Daily Regional Times states:

"The incidents of Honour killing (Karo Kari) have risen in some districts of lower and upper Sindh in the last week of November 2010. About ten persons including six women were killed in the name of so-called revenge. In limits of Kot Ghulam Muhammad police station Masmal Nazeeran Mallah, 26, pregnant with seven months was found dead at her village while the visible marks of torture were also found at her neck. Police said that deceased Nazeeran Mallah, was strangled by her husband Akbar alias Aku Mallah in doubt of having illicit relations with her paramour." (Daily Regional Times (1 November 2010) *Ten more killed on charges of honour killing*)

A report from the Pakistani news agency Right Vision News states:

"A 20-year-old pregnant woman was stabbed to death allegedly by her father for honour in Gulshan Colony, Nawan Kot police area on Monday. The deceased was identified as Nabeela, wife of Shan and daughter of Khalid Ali, a resident of Gulshan Colony, House No 91, street No 11 Nawan Kot. Police

said that Nabeela, who married Shan a year back, was stabbed to death allegedly by her father over the allegation of having illicit relations with a local of the area. The victim's husband had alleged that his wife had developed illicit relations with a local of the area, they added. The police said that Nabeela was pregnant but her husband suspected that the child did not belong to him, adding that the victim's husband had thrown her out of his house over the charges of bad character. She was currently living at her father's." (Right Vision News (8 June 2011) *Pakistan: Man stabs pregnant daughter to death*)

A BBC News report states:

"Police in Pakistan-administered Kashmir say they have arrested a couple on charges of murdering their own daughter in the name of honour. The couple admitted to killing the unmarried 18-year-old when they found out she was pregnant, police said. Villagers found the girl's chopped-up body parts in a river, and were able to identify her by the disembodied head. Such killings were once rare in Kashmir, but police say they are now happening much more frequently." (BBC News (25 March 2013) *Kashmir couple arrested over gruesome 'honour killing'*)

A report on a suspected honour killing from the English-language Pakistani newspaper Dawn states:

"The victim's family said as the girl had committed suicide they completed the rituals but later her uncle suggested that the police should be informed to avoid any complication. The police shifted the body to hospital for autopsy. Later, the investigators approached the neighbours to gather information and came to know that the victim had run away from her parents' house four days back - on May 8 - and returned to the house of her maternal uncle on May 11. The autopsy on the body showed that she was four months pregnant. Besides, injuries were also found at nine spots on the body, including neck, cheeks, chin and hands. The autopsy report said it was "homicidal strangulation." In response, the police registered a murder case against unidentified killer(s) but believed that her family was behind the death in the name of honour." (Dawn (20 May 2013) *Woman's suicide turns out to be honour killing*)

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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