

## Current year witnessed 4,448 cases of violence against women

■ 3,035 cases reported from Punjab, 819 from Sindh, 389 from KP and 133 from Balochistan and 72 from Islamabad

### Staff Report

**ISLAMABAD:** Aurat Foundation's Policy Data Monitor-Violence Against Women (PDM) Programme has observed sharp increase in the reported cases of violence against women during January to June 2011 as compared to the same time period in last year.

The statistics revealed that a total of 4,448 cases of Violence Against Women (VAW) were reported during January to June 2011, as compared to 4,061 reported during same period in year 2010.

Out of the total 4,448 cases of VAW during first six months of the current year, 3,035 cases were reported from Punjab, 819 from Sindh, 389 from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and 133 from Balochistan, whereas 72 cases were reported from Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

Abduction and kidnapping topped the list of violence against women with 1,137 cases reported in only six months. Murder of women for various reasons (including property dispute, men going for more marriages etc, but not including the 'honour' crime) was the second

largest crimes with 799 number of women murdered during the reported period. Rape / gang rape were the third largest category with 396 cases reported. Increase in committing suicide among youth, was another alarming factor which indicated the violent environment women of the country live in - During the reporting period, 402 precious lives were lost as they killed themselves.

Contrary to overall increase in reported cases of violence against women in the country, the number of reported cases in Sindh province shows a decline in violence against women,

compared to the figures composed last year. This might be due to fact that print media put on its priority the coverage of law and order situation in Sindh during the reporting period. Compared to last year's figure of 940 cases, this year, during the same period, i.e. January to June 2011, 819 incidents of violence against women were reported in 23 districts of Sindh.

The foundation believes that these statistics are just the tip of the iceberg and majority of VAW cases remain unrecorded due to social and traditional norms. Lack of access to

reporting system of violence which women face, the so-called tradition of 'keeping family's respect unbroken'.

Aurat Foundation has entered its fourth year in monitoring and highlighting the cases of violence against women from all the provincial regions of Pakistan and the ICT (not including the region of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB)); however, Aurat Foundation is in a process of setting an office in GB, and monitoring the violence against women in the region). The objective behind releasing qualitative and quantitative analysis on bi-annual and annual basis

has always been to lobby with legislators, particularly women legislators in the National Assembly, the Senate of Pakistan, and the four provincial assemblies, for recognizing violence against women as an offence and mobilizing law enforcing agencies and communities to take necessary measures like introducing required legislation, effective arrangement for legal literacy on the issue to the concerned implementing state institutions including lower courts, and sensitizing police institutions towards reporting cases of violence against women properly.