



ISLAMABAD: Activists of civil societies hold placards during demonstration against Sumbal's rape case, outside Super Market on Thursday.—Saff photo

Civil society vents rage over rapes

ISLAMABAD
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Demanding the government rapists to the task and conduct investigation into such cases, civil society activists on Thursday staged a protest demonstration against the recent series of rape incidents reported in various parts of the country.

Members of the civil society hailing from different parts of the country gathered here to protest against the series of child rape cases. They were outraged against the rape of a 5-year old girl in Lahore and expressed their strongest condemnation over the list of ugly tragedies of inhumanity during a protest staged here at Jinnah Super Market.

During the last week, the shocking number of paedophilia cases have surfaced in various areas of the country including Faisalabad, Dera Ismail Khan, Gujran-

wala, Kasur, Peshawar, Lahore, Shujaabad, Murree, Kasur. Civil Society activists and rights defenders including Mukhtaran Mai, Anis Haroon, Uzma Noorani, Naeem Mirza, Dr Tahira Aftab, Shagufta Alizai, Tahira Abdullah, Naeem Mirza, Dr Farzana Bari, Alia Mirza, Waseem Wagha, Nusarat Zehra, Rabia Haddi and dozens others were also present on the occasion to join hands against the menace of paedophilia.

A large number of activists were carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans against the delayed justice as well as against police, criminals and the government as well. The protestors chanted slogans against the inaction by the concerned quarters over the list of heinous crimes that took place in recent past in different areas of the country.

Pledging to continue series of demonstrations in coming days till the dispen-

sation of justice, the protesting demonstrators have invited the common people to join in solidarity and raise their voices against this inhumanity, as well as to protest the blatant corruption, callousness, indifference and utter failure of the law enforcing agencies in identifying and arresting the perpetrators, and of the hospital security team, medico-legal examiners, forensic/chemical examiners and other government agencies.

Meanwhile, civil society activists and rights defenders organised a rally. The rally started from Super Market and ended in front of National Press Club, Islamabad.

During the protest demonstration the activists and rights defenders have presented a list of demands and also criticised the political and bureaucratic pressure on the highly corrupt and politicised police forces that usually result in faulty

investigation and prosecution, culminating in a conviction rate of under 5 per cent of even the small fraction of the rape cases that are reported and actually registered.

They also strongly condemned the wilful destruction of valuable forensic/chemical/DNA evidence, including the survivor's clothes.

The demonstrators were of the view that the patriarchal attitudes, social stigma and the remnants of the 1979 Hudood Ordinances have resulted in non-reporting of the vast majority of cases of rape and paedophilia.

Besides demanding transparency in releasing the missing video clips of the security cameras of Ganga Ram Hospital, the protest demonstrators have demanded immediate arrest, prosecution and conviction of the Mughalpora and other paedophilia/rape perpetrators.