



ISLAMABAD: Human rights activists and civil society members protest against the killing of Farzana Parveen here on Thursday.—Tanveer Shahzad/White Star

## PM orders immediate action in woman murder case

**UK Foreign Secretary William Hague describes the murder as barbaric and calls for full investigation**

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Thursday demanded "immediate action" over the brutal murder of a pregnant woman who was bludgeoned to death with bricks outside a court in Lahore while police stood by.

"This crime is totally unacceptable and must be dealt in accordance with law promptly," Mr Sharif said in a statement.

He directed the chief minister of

Punjab to take immediate action and submit a report to his office.

Farzana Parveen was attacked on Tuesday outside the Lahore High Court building by more than two dozen brick-wielding assailants, including her brother and father, for marrying against the wishes of her family.

Women are often murdered by

### Related reports on Page 3

relatives supposedly to defend family 'honour', but the brazen nature of Tuesday's attack has shocked rights activists.

The fact that police officers guarding the court apparently did nothing to intervene to save the 25-year-old has added to the outrage.

"I am directing the Chief Minister to take immediate action and report must be submitted by this evening to my office," Mr Sharif said in the statement.

Farzana Parveen, who was three months pregnant, had gone to court to testify in defence of her husband Mohammad Iqbal – who was accused by her relatives of kidnapping her and forcing her into marriage.

Mr Iqbal, 45, said the couple had survived a previous attack during the first hearing of the case on May 12 and demanded justice for his wife.

He told the BBC that police officers at the court were "watching silently" while his wife was beaten

Continued on Page 5

## PM orders immediate...

Continued from Page 1

to death, despite desperate attempts to get them to act.

"One of my relatives took off his clothes to catch their attention," he told the broadcaster.

"A naked man was crying for help in front of the High Court but nobody intervened." The incident gained prompt attention from the global media and international human right activists reacted to it.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay condemned the killing on Wednesday, urging the government to take "urgent and strong measures" to put an end to so-called honour killings in the country.

British Foreign Secretary

William Hague described the murder as "barbaric" and urged the government to fully investigate it.

"I am shocked and appalled by the death of Farzana Parveen: both for the appalling manner of her death, and the unspeakable cruelty and injustice of murdering a woman for exercising her basic right to choose who to love and marry," Mr Hague said in a statement.

"There is absolutely no honour in honour killings and I urge the government of Pakistan to do all in its power to eradicate this barbaric practice.

"I call on the Pakistani authorities to investigate this atrocious murder fully and bring those responsible to justice."—Agencies