

Violence against women

# AF presents half yearly report

■ As many as 952 women victimised in the province

By Asad Farooq

**KARACHI:** Aurat Foundation (AF) Regional Director Mahnaz Rahman has presented a report on violence against women during last six months across the Sindh province.

She presented the report on Thursday during a press conference at the Karachi Press Club.

According to the report at least 952 women were victims of violence during the period, showing an increase in attacks on women compare to figure of the earlier six months, during which 819 women had become victims of violence.

Speaking on the occasion, Rahman said that a significant increase was observed in crimes against women including murders, honour killings, sexual harassment, acid throwing incidents and rapes.

Presenting statistics in this regard, Rahman said that the six months data of violence showed that total of 155 attempts of honour killing occurred, in which 135 people including 61 men

were targeted, 75 cases of rape had been reported, while 76 incidents of suicide took place in the same period. Rahman added that 167 cases of murder and attempt to murder against women were reported, 101 cases of abduction, 29 cases of sexual assault, 85 cases of domestic violence, and 54 incidents of custodial violence were occurred, besides numerous other cases of customary practices, attempts to suicide, threat to violence, trafficking and torture occurred across the province including Karachi.

The report revealed that 46 Jirgas were held over women related issues, in which 16 girls were given as compensation to settle the tribal issues and free will marriage disputes. Against such Jirgas holders about 30 cases were registered. In majority of Jirgas accused had enjoyed bail before arrest.

Further details disclosed that 91 women were tortured or arrested by Police because their accused male family members could not be arrested. Most of

the women were released next day or after one or two days. Incidents of harassment and sexual abuse at workplaces were also on a rise. Violence against women including rape and domestic torture left victims with physical injuries, illness and psychological trauma.

The foundation's report pointed out that despite banned imposed by the Sindh High Court, Jirgas were held on women-related issues. The foundation's office bearers were of the view that tribal Jirgas were the major cause of rising violence against women including honour killing, besides lack of awareness and education in the province. The report was compiled on the basis of reported incidents in the media.

Member Provincial Assembly belonging to Pakistan Muslim League-Functional Nusrat Sehar Abbasi, AF Coordinator Shireen Aijaz and AF Policy and Data Monitoring Project Programme Officer Fareeda Hanan were also present on the occasion.