

Tuesday, June 17, 2012

Cases of violence against women rising, says report

By A Reporter

ISLAMABAD, July 16: As many as 32,658 cases of violence against women were registered all over the country from 2008 to 2011, while there was 6.74 per cent increase in such cases between 2010 and 2011.

This was disclosed in a report titled 'Situation of violence against women in Pakistan', launched by Aurat Foundation here on Monday.

Justice (retired) Majida Rizvie, former chairperson of National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW), who

was chief guest at the launching ceremony, said there were many causes behind violence against women but the root cause was perhaps women's dependence on men and men's approach that women were their dependent and hence their property.

Anis Haroon, another former chairperson of the NCSW, said current data showed a rise in cases of violence against women but still this was a tip of the iceberg, adding the actual rate of violence against women could be much higher.

She said though violence against women also happened even in developed countries, in Pakistan this was more problematic and cruel as there was no system of addressing the issue. Cases of 'honour' killings are normally reported as land dispute cases, she added.

Nasreen Azhar, a women rights activist and former member of the NCSW, while presenting the findings, said violence against women was continuously increasing.

Shaigan Shareef Malik,

Secretary Ministry of Human Rights, agreed that only 60 per cent cases of violence against women were reported and even of the reported cases only 40 per cent were registered with the police.

In almost 89 per cent of the cases, he added, the criminals were acquitted. Reports say most of the perpetrators of violence against women were found to be relatives of the survivors or the victims, such as husband, brother, cousin, father, uncle, father and mother-in-law, brother-

in-law, son or stepson. Honour killing is almost always committed by males against female family members who are accused of having brought dishonour upon the family.

During 2011, out of the total 8,539 cases of violence; 6,188 were reported in Punjab, 1,316 in Sindh, 694 in KP, 198 in Balochistan and 148 in Islamabad. Less reporting in Sindh was due to the damage done by the floods in July 2011. The floods not only damaged the main infrastructure but also led

to the loss of official judicial and crime record. The natural catastrophe greatly disturbed the reporting mechanism of violence against women.

However, with an overall 6.74 per cent increase in violence cases from 2010 to 2011, as many as 2,089 cases of abduction, 1,575 murders, 610 domestic violence, 758 suicide, 705 honour killings, 827 rape cases, 110 sexual assault, 44 acid throwing, 29 burning, 1,792 miscellaneous cases against women were recorded.