

Thursday, December 11, 2014

# Non-implementation of laws on women's rights bemoaned

## Staff Report

**ISLAMABAD:** During the last few years, many significant laws have been passed by parliaments in the country; however they could not be implemented effectively.

Civil society and women's rights activists expected notable change in the situation of women in Pakistan. The facts are other way round. Thousands of women are still tortured or face one or another kind of violence. These views were expressed by Rabeea Hadi, Director Advocacy, Aurat Foundation, during a public solidarity event titled 'Apno Ki Yaad' on International Human Rights Day, December 10, 2014.

Giving a situation analysis of violence against in Pakistan she said that during the nine month period i.e.

January – September 2014, 1543 cases of kidnapping / abducting women were reported i.e. 4 women per day; 1256 women were murdered i.e. 3 women per day; 1149 women were raped and gang-raped i.e. 3 women per day which shows 17% increase compared to last year; 708 women committed suicide at the rate of 2 women per day; 604 women were killed in the name of 'honour' i.e. 2 women per day; and 392 cases of domestic violence were reported during the period i.e. 1 case per day.

Similarly, despite the passage of The Criminal Law (Third Amendment) Act, 2011 (the laws which deals with the anti-women customary practices like wanni, swara etc), forced marriages and child marriages still being made e.g. during the nine month period 22 cases of forced marriages

and 7 cases of child marriage were reported. Thus, a total of 7450 of violence against women were reported during the nine months i.e. January to September, 2014, sufficient to realize the increase in violence against women in Pakistan. Asyia Nasir, Member National Assembly, JUI-F, during her address to the public rally, condemned the forced conversions of minority women and girls and their forced marriage to Muslims. She said that 'women's rights' shall be valued, respected and implemented as 'human rights'. In order to end domestic violence from each and every home, we need an effective legislation on domestic violence, she further emphasized. Each religion honours and respects women's rights. She said that for effective implementation of women friendly laws, the government, law

enforcement agencies, human rights organization and civil society organizations shall work hand-in-hand.

While giving the key findings of the events under '16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women', Ms Feroza Zahra, National Programme Manager, AAWAZ Programme, Aurat Foundation, said that women, religious and ethnic minorities and persons with disability are the main focus of AAWAZ Programme. Giving details of the activities with its partner communities in 450 UC's of 45 districts, she said that data from 26 districts shows that more than 14,823 people attended these activities out of which 10,051 were women; 128,464 signatures/hand prints are received from 39 districts which pledged to 'Stop domestic violence, early and forced marriages'; 'Apno ki yaad' memorial

in each district at UC level to commemorate the women of that particular area who died and lost their lives due to violence were also held.

'Meet our sisters / Meri hamjoliyan' were arranged in 45 districts visits to Dar-ul-Aman, shelter homes, jails, meeting HIV aid patients, persons with disabilities to discuss the issues and challenges of these intuitions and people living there; 'Meeting with legislators / Siyasi Bethak' meetings arranged where representatives of various political parties, lawyers, media etc. were invited for a discourse on need of legislation for stopping early child and forced marriages was initiated at district level. Provincial conferences on need of legislation for stopping early child and forced marriages were held in Peshawar, Lahore as well.