

Press Release

WAR AGAINST RAPE STRONGLY CONDEMNS THE GUJRAT PANCHAYAT RAPE INCIDENT

KARACHI, 15th November 2016: War Against Rape (WAR), Karachi, expresses its outrage and sadness at the recent death of the woman raped on the order of Panchayat in the village of Dhillu Gharbi of Gujrat district.

War Against Rape strongly condemns the barbaric incident in Gujrat, where a Panchayat announced the punishment of a wrong done by a man, by ordering a rape on his daughter. Rape itself is highly deplorable, but to be given as punishment, using a woman as the means, is shocking and shameful. The fact that such punishment was even conceived and considered by a village panchayat sadly reflects the mindset of our society.

This system of informal parallel justice continues to violate women's rights, ordering women to be killed for supposed infringements of their families or a community's honour, punitively rape or forced to be married to settle disputes in order to pay for the alleged crimes of their family members.

Under tribal code, women are perceived as men's property and the repositories of their honour, thus they are deemed a legitimate sacrifice when dishonour is to be redressed. An inter-tribal dispute is often resolved under the Jirga or panchayat system by giving a woman in marriage to the rival group. In such a social setting, a woman's life, let alone her happiness, has little worth.

In Pakistan, many tribal leaders are themselves parliamentarians, members of the civil administration or have family links with the administration. In their official capacities, they speak the language of good governance, of the separation of powers, which entails respect for the independence of the judiciary and of human rights. But, in their constituencies, they preside over tribal courts.

WAR strongly feels that had justice been done in the Mukhtaran Mai case and an example made of the perpetrators of this heinous crime, such incidents would have been reduced significantly, rather than increased in our society.

WAR urges the State to reform the system and either do away with these primitive methods of governance or act as a regulator and overhaul the system in some way. WAR also urges the State & relevant authorities to bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice and ensure strict punishment against the rapist and all those involved in the illegal Jirga/Panchayat. As per the recently passed Anti Rape Bill the case should be resolved within the time frame of 3 months to ensure speedy access to justice.

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For further information, contact:

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War Against Rape (WAR) is an apolitical, Non-Profit and Non-Government Organization working since 1989 for providing sexually abused women and children FREE legal aid, psychotherapeutic counseling, basic medical assistance and crisis intervention for survivors of rape, incest and other forms of sexual violence.

War Against Rape (WAR) also has an aggressive advocacy component through which various activities are undertaken for awareness raising and capacity building purposes. Included as part of its advocacy programs are sensitizing and training sessions for other stake holders i.e. police officers, in particular women police officers, medico-legal doctors, lawyers & journalist etc. As part of its advocacy programs, War Against Rape (WAR) has held community based awareness sessions, as well as sessions in Universities / Colleges & Schools.

War Against Rape (WAR) publishes annual newsletters, reports, statistics & data including many Research Publications on topics of its core interest including Incest, Criminal Justice System etc.