

# NEWS SHEET

## HUMAN RIGHTS IN DETENTION!

It has been over two weeks since academic Dr Homa Hoodfar's detention in Evin Prison in Tehran. This comes after three months of interrogation starting in March. Though there is still no official confirmation with respect to the charges against her, her niece, Amanda Ghahremani, has said that according to news leaked on the country's conservative media associated with the



Working since 1975 as a leading women's rights organization, Shirkat Gah (SG) continues to contribute towards sustainable change across its core focus areas that include (i) family/ personal status law matters (ii) sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) (iii) a gendered perspective in sustainable development, green economics and globalization (iv) new areas of women's leadership and peace-building.

Revolutionary Guards, she is being accused of “fomenting a soft feminist revolution” in the country.

Dr Hoodfar still has not been allowed to meet family or seek legal counsel. In addition to this, she has not been provided medical aid despite the fact that she suffers from a rare neurological problem.

Iran does not recognise dual nationality either and that makes the situation more complex. Despite carrying three passports, Dr Hoodfar is still considered to be just Iranian.

“What is extremely worrying is not having access to a lawyer, not knowing presumably what the charges are, not getting medical attention and not being able to meet family. That defies all human rights’ norms,” says feminist academic and founder of Women’s Action Forum (WAF), Nighat Said Khan.

“Iran has been trying to get rid of its old image and replace it with a new, more progressive one. If it is to do that, then it must follow global standards of human rights,” agrees human rights activist and director of Program of Women’s Empowerment & Leadership Development, Shirkat Gah, Gulnar Tabassum.

Enum Naseer

June 26, 2016

## Free Homa Campaign:

On 6th June Dr Homa Hoodfar was arrested without any indication of the reasons or charges for which the authorities were detaining her. Her lawyer and family have not been allowed to see her, nor has the cause of arrest been explained to them. She has also



been refused medical care despite suffering from a rare neurological illness.

Amnesty International has called on the Iranian government to release Hoodfar, calling her a prisoner of conscience. A website was set up to help mobilize support for Homa: [www.homahoodfar.org](http://www.homahoodfar.org). A petition was started on Avaaz demanding her release. Over 4,600 professors also signed a petition on the Hoodfar website calling for her release. Her students wrote an open letter in support, with 103 signatories. A social media and letter-writing campaign has also started online.

## FAMED QAWWAL **AMJAD SABRI** GUNNED DOWN IN KARACHI



Renowned Qawwal Amjad Sabri was shot dead in Karachi Wednesday afternoon, after unknown assailants fired at his vehicle in the city's Liaquatabad area.

Qari Saifullah Mehsud, spokesperson for the TTP Hakimullah Mehsud group, has accepted responsibility for the attack.

Sabri, 40, and an associate were travelling in a car in Liaquatabad 10 area, when unidentified gunmen fired at their vehicle, critically injuring him. The two were shifted to Abbasi Shaheed hospital immediately, where Sabri succumbed to his injuries. (Dawn)

A couple of hours after the killing, Noha Khawan Farhan Ali Waris escaped an attack by armed militants. (The News)

Well-known painter/muralist S.M. Raza and philanthropist Aqib Faiz joined hands to pay tribute to Sabri with nothing but paint and an idea. We Painted for over three hours - "it was very quick painting," says Raza - the finished mural, situated near the Memon Institute, is a faithful rendering of a photograph taken of Sabri while he performed in Trafo, Budapest. It shows Sabri mid-qawwali, with a finger raised to the skies as he addressed his Creator. (Dawn Images)

National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage, Lok Virsa would organize a reference for the popular Qawwal (late) Amjad Sabri on June 30.

Lal Band from Lahore also will join the reference and perform to pay tribute to the tradition which has to go on. (The News)



Amjad Sabri's soul-stirring qawwalis have left thousands, if not millions, in tears, but no one could have ever predicted that his last performance would be one where he wouldn't be able to hold back his own.

The legendary qawwal appeared on Samaa TV's Sehri transmission the day he was shot dead. What's strange is that while reciting his last naat — Ae Sabz Gumbad Wale Manzoor Dua Karna — Amjad couldn't hold back his tears. (Express Tribune)

## Smashing patriarchy – city’s walls sprayed with feminist slogans

By Zoya Anwer  
March 14, 2016  
The News

Keeping in view that the message of women empowerment ought to be told to a maximum number of city dwellers, members of the National Students Federation (NSF) Pakistan, were joined in by a number of students from various varsities on the final day of their week-long graffiti campaign, held to bring the debate over gender equality out in the open.

Starting from Karachi Press Club and moving to Il Chundrigar, Saddar, M A Jinnah Road and Numaish, the students and members were seen rigorously shaking and spraying away paints while others held stencils for support.

A group of men who watched the activity from afar were quick to comment that there was no need for such a drive, while another boasted of an act of ‘honour’ killing committed by his grandfather.

Laila Raza, stated that it was time notions such as women being incapable of becoming leaders, whether at home, workplace or at the level of the state, were challenged.

The messages sprayed on the wall appreciated women who had been in the struggle to achieve their rights and also called for more women to join the ranks, while some other denounced rape culture and domestic violence.

## Female burn victims mainly come from joint family system

March 18, 2016  
The Nation  
Ashraf Javed

LAHORE - Many married women who attempted self-immolation or set afire by relatives this year in different parts of the province were part of a joint family system. Among the victims were several young and newly married women who took the extreme step either to get rid of domestic violence or as punishment to their in-laws. Either these young women took their own life by using kerosene oil, petrol or acid or they were burnt by their spouses or in-laws. Almost in every suicidal case of a married woman, her in-laws were booked on murder charges on the complaint of her parents or other relatives

Last year, the police had also reported dozens of such deaths which took place in different parts of the metropolis. Under such circumstances, the provincial government has come up with a new legislation to protect women against violence, particularly domestic torture. The government’s plans to empower and protect women by introducing legislations annoyed the religious circles as many clerics and scholars rejected the bill and announced to stage countrywide protest demonstrations. Some



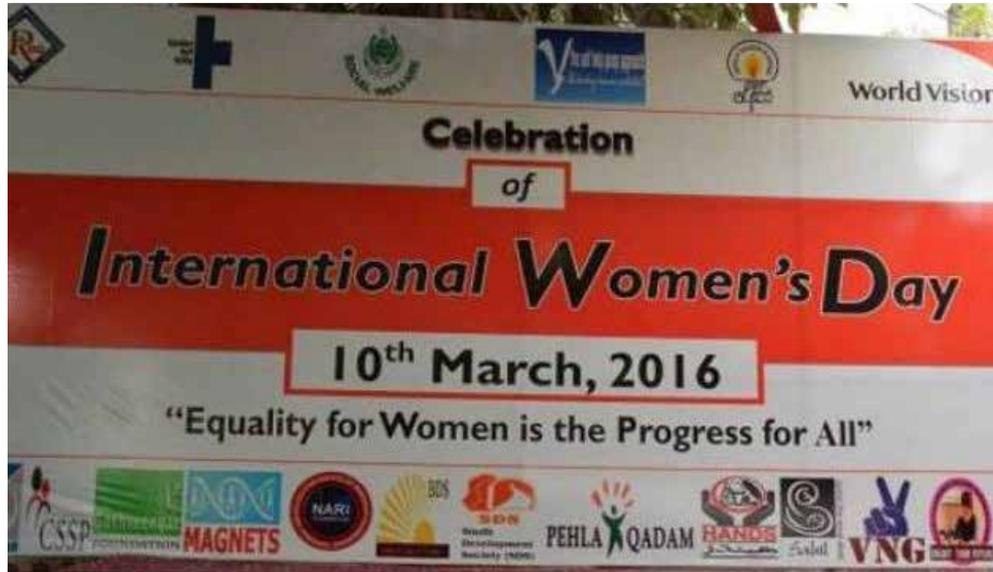
religious scholars termed the laws against the basic spirit of Islam and others said it would destroy the joint family system. “We have seen during the last so many years that women are subjected to torture by in-laws. Apart from physical abuse they undergo mental torture. Since they live together, they fight frequently,” a police officer said while referring to joint family system. Normally, domestic disputes develop between the couples, in a joint family system, over respect and service of the parents and relatives of the bridegroom.

## Fighting for rights: 'Laws made to protect women are not implemented'

**SUKKUR:** We have devised laws to protect the women but they are not implemented, said Riverside Development

Organisation (RDO) executive-director Munawar Gill.

Despite the fact that women are working in all fields in Pakistan, they are treated as second-grade citizens when it comes to their rights. Gill was speaking at a seminar titled, 'Equality for women is the progress for all', on Thursday. The event was organised by RDO in collaboration with World Vision, Idara-e- Taleem-o- Aagahi (ITA), Pehal Pakistan and Social Welfare Department in Sukkur in connection with International Women's Day. (Express Tribune)



wing parties, official sources say (The Nation)

**LAHORE** - The much-reviled women protection law, passed by the Punjab Assembly on February 24 and signed by the governor on February 29, has not been enforced so far, official sources said yesterday. According to the common practice, an enactment signed by the constitutional head of the province after the passage by the provincial legislature comes into force immediately with a gazette notification. But this legislation is an exception because of a "note" mentioned in this law's gazette notification which says the law will not come into practice unless the provincial government notifies or allows it. The provincial government wants to make the law functional in different phases by enforcing it in some regions of the province as a test case in order to determine the reaction from common people and political forces, particularly the extreme right-

**LARKANA:** Police officials were stressed at a training workshop to adhere to the laws concerned to protect the rights of women. The workshop was held about special laws on women and organised by the Civil Society Support Program (CSSP) in collaboration with the Enhanced Democratic Accountability and Civic Engagement (EDACE). Speaking at the workshop, SSP Korejo said violence against women was rampant and interior Sindh witnessed many forms of it that included domestic, honour killing, physical and mental abuse, rape, acid throwing, burning etc. But, he said, the police was oblivious of the latest laws that could protect women from such violations. (Dawn)

**PESHAWAR:** The government has planned to extend the Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2010, to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas to ensure a safe and non-discriminatory working environment for the local womenfolk.

## Woman attacked with acid in Lahore

March 19, 2016  
Express Tribune

**LAHORE:** A woman told police on Friday that unidentified assailants had thrown acid at her in Nawab Town area. Yasmin Bibi, a resident of Fateh Garh, said she was on her way to Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre along with her sister and a nephew, when two people threw acid at her on the road leading to the hospital from Thokar Niaz Beg.

She said she was taken to Jinnah Hospital where doctors discharged her after giving her first aid. She told police she had separated from her husband nearly six years before;

The sources told Dawn that the Directorate of Social Welfare Fata has prepared a summary for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Iqbal Zafar Jhagra to seek the approval of President Mamnoon Hussain to extend the law to all areas of Fata. They said that would be the first pro-women law to be extended to Fata if the president signed the summary. (Dawn)

the couple had two children. In 2005, she had lodged a rape case against one Muhammad Riaz. Riaz was granted bail nearly a month ago. She said she believed that Riaz was behind the attack.

## 1,096 WOMEN **KILLED** FOR 'HONOUR' IN 2015



The Nation  
April 02, 2016  
Our Staff Reporter

**LAHORE** - Human Rights Commission of Pakistan database recorded 987 cases of honour killings in 2015, with 1,096 females and 88 males of whom at least 170 were minors, said an HRCP report on state of human rights yesterday. In 2014 about 1,000 women died in honour-related attacks and 869 in 2013. The parliament made 20 laws.

The president promulgated 12 ordinances. The provincial legislatures adopted 120 laws. With 40 laws enacted, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had the highest legislative output, followed by Sindh (32), Punjab (31) and Balochistan (17).

The provinces continued to use expanded legislative authority under the 18th Constitutional Amendment to enact several important laws, but implementation mechanism lagged behind. Sindh and Punjab adopted laws with regard to employment of physically challenged citizens. Legislation was adopted to set up eight universities across Pakistan. Laws were enacted to regulate the conduct of local government elections in all the provinces, in the federal capital and in cantonments. (The Nation)

**KARACHI:** Only two per cent crimes in the name of honour get reported in the media, while most of such complaints being reported to the police are lodged by men as women approach the law enforcement agency only in seven per cent cases.

These views were expressed by Dr Salman Asif, an expert on gender, on Saturday while speaking at a consultative workshop on Safety Challenges for Female Media Professional in Pakistan. The event was organised by the Pakistan Press Foundation (PFF) with the support of Open Society Institute. The workshop, which discussed safety challenges faced by women in general and those working in the media in particular, was divided into two sessions. One focused on the aspects related to gender-based violence and the second session focused on the challenges faced by women in the media where women journalists from Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh shared their experiences. (Dawn)

## Minister has his suspicions over alleged rape at Pims

Ikram Junaidi  
April 13, 2016  
Dawn

**ISLAMABAD:** State Minister Dr Tariq Fazal on Tuesday visited the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, rocked by a rape scandal, and said "it seems that, at least, rape was attempted" in the hospital.

Dr Fazal told reporters that an internal inquiry covered all aspects of the reported rape of a 20-year-old patient in the Intensive Care Unit of Pims. "Medical examinations have been conducted and statements of the Pims staff, the victim and her parents have been recorded," he said.

"But the inquiry is not finished, it is continuing and it has been decided to suspend all the staff of ICU and ensure a secure environment in the hospital in the future."

**ISLAMABAD:** A paralysed woman, subjected to violence by a Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) staffer lost the battle for life on Monday morning.

A male nurse had been booked and suspended from service for attempting to sexually assault the



mentally-challenged woman with multiple health problems at the hospital's surgical ward's intensive care unit (ICU).

The woman was said to be suffering from a rare immune disorder which affects body's peripheral nervous system. The disease had affected spinal cord of the woman and paralysed her. (Express Tribune)

## 18 booked in Vani case in Kot Addu

The Newspaper's Correspondent  
May 13, 2016  
Dawn

**MUZAFFARGARH:** Kot Addu police registered a case against 18 people, including members of a panchayat, for being involved in Vani on Thursday.

Ashiq Hussain's son Shakeel had contracted a court marriage with Noreen, a divorcee, last month. A panchayat meeting, headed by Shahid Channar, was called at the outhouse of Hafiz Basheer two days back. The panchayat asked Ashiq to give his daughter, Tahira, as Vani to a relative of Noreen, identified as Shahbaz. Tahira holds a master's degree and is working in a school as educator. When Ashiq resisted against the decision, he was given threats by the panchayat members.

The affected family had to leave their home and take shelter with a relative in another village. However, the suspects followed them and attacked the house they were living in.



## GIRLS IN GREEN TOUCH BASE IN KARACHI

Dawn,  
April 8th, 2016

**KARACHI:** It is a rare honour to return to your alma mater as a hero and see the pride in your teachers' eyes while the students there look up to you. The captain of Pakistan's women's cricket team Sana Mir was lucky enough to enjoy such moments on Thursday.

Sana, who now lives in Lahore, touched base in Karachi along with a few other teammates from the city, when they visited the Defence Authority College for Women.

The college principal, Dr Farhat Agha, also said that she was proud of all students, especially those like Sana who have overcome gender barriers and made a name for themselves not only on the national level but also on the



international stage.

Sana herself said that she felt the same as she used to when studying at the college. "Though my college didn't have a cricket team, I was captain of various other outfits here such as the basketball team, the swimming team, etc. This place gave me the confidence to lead," she added, remembering how she would sometimes

bunk classes with her friends to gather at a particular spot behind the spiral staircase in the basketball court, which they called 'khadda'. "We would sit there to exchange notes about what happened in class and reflect," she shared.

Later, in the evening, the Girls in Green arrived at The Second Floor (T2F), courtesy Girls at Dhabas, to meet a different audience. Former captain Urooj Mumtaz Khan also came to join them there.

## GIRLS PROVE THEY ARE NO LESS IN SPORTS

By Fahmida Jan  
Photo: Ayesha Mir  
April 26, 2016  
Express Tribune

**KARACHI:** With big hopes to achieve success at national and international levels, the young girls of Pak Shaheen Boxing Club and Karachi United Club train themselves every day after school for boxing and football.

Some of these girls shared their stories and talked about their passion for sports on the last day of Creative Karachi Festival during a session, titled 'Girls in action: Lyari Boxing Club and Karachi United Football Team in conversation', on Sunday evening.

Speaking at the session, the ambitious Lyari girls talked about overcoming gender barriers to learn boxing. Hafsa, who is one of the 18 girls who are currently being trained at the club, said, "We want to fight on international level and we will not disappoint our nation, unlike our cricket heroes."



The young boxers also demonstrated some of their boxing moves for the people at the session. The girls showed the audience the fierce side of themselves, proving that they cannot be stopped once they put on their boxing gloves.

Three girls from the Karachi United Club shared their stories with the audience at the session. The club has been offering free football coaching to young girls since 2010.

**KARACHI:** In a dense and dusty neighbourhood in the city of Karachi, eight young girls lined up against a cement wall, touching their hands to their faces in prayer before boxing practice began.

For the last six months, these athletes-in-the-making have been training at the Pak Shaheen Boxing Club in Lyari, a packed Karachi ward known more for its internecine gang warfare than

for breaking glass ceilings.

During the week, a dozen girls, aged eight to 17, go to the club after school to practise their jabs, hooks and upper cuts for hours in the hope of one day bringing a medal home to Pakistan.

## “Laws Don’t Cause Divorce, Domestic Violence Does.”

By Vaqas Asghar  
April 17, 2016  
Express Tribune

### ISLAMABAD:

*“Laws protecting women from abuse don’t cause divorce. Wife beating causes divorce.”*

A fair point by Fouzia Saeed, and yet, one that would be considered debateable by some people — the same ones who would believe that by punishing men for using their wives as organic punching bags, the law would emasculate them.

The Saturday ILF session “Women’s Protection – Yeh Bill Maangay More” saw the expected left-right schism between human rights and cultural misogyny, as some criticised the weaknesses of the bill, while others considered it too far reaching.

Moderator Khurshid Nadeem opened the session by speaking of how fathers and brothers sometimes treat the women of their families like cattle and will file honour killing cases against each other so that they can later



forgive them and let the crime go unpunished.

Council of Islamic Ideology member Samia Raheel Qazi, who is also a Jamaat-e-Islami leader gave a long critique of Punjab’s domestic violence “bill” ended with the chair asking her for specific flaws in the law.

Justice (retd) Nasira Iqbal opened by correcting Qazi, saying, “This is not a bill. It’s an act.”

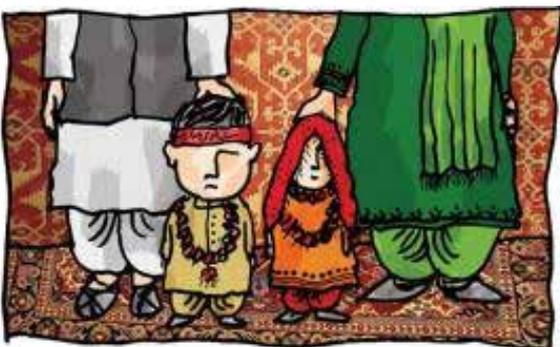
She also criticised parts of the act. “The act [in its current form] criminalises nothing and is very weak,” she noted.

She also criticised right wingers for comparing ankle monitors and GPS trackers used to track stalkers with bracelets (choorian).

## ANOTHER AMENDMENT TO CHILD MARRIAGE BILL

Mar 25, 2016  
Dawn

**ISLAMABAD:** The National Assembly on Thursday sent to committee a proposed amendment to the same law that PML-N MNA Marvi Memon had tried to amend earlier this year, and failed.



MQM MNA Kishwar Zehra tabled the bill to amend the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929, seeking increased punishments for the offence of child marriage. The amendment called for increasing the sentence of those

found guilty from one month to three years, and raising the fine imposed from Rs1,000 to Rs300,000.

Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Yousuf did not oppose the bill, suggesting that it be sent to the committee. But knowing what became of the last such amendment, Ms Zehra attempted to block the minister’s suggestion.

“Similar amendments, such as the one moved by Marvi Memon earlier, have also been turned down by the Council of Islamic Ideology, so there is no use of sending the bill to them,” she said.

However, the minister argued that under the Constitution, no laws repugnant to the Holy Quran or the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) could be enacted. “The CII is a constitutional forum and it has the right to review the bill, which is related to Sharia,” he said.

“I do not agree with the CII’s viewpoint,” retorted the MQM lawmaker, prompting NA Speaker Ayaz Sadiq to intervene. “You can disagree with them on the record, let the bill be sent to the committee,” he said, winding up the matter.

## From fearful to fearless – opening up about sexual violence



**KARACHI:** “It happened when I was a child but this is the first time I am opening up about it,” was a phrase repeated by almost all female participants in an open discourse on sexual harassment, organised by the National Students Federation (NSF) at the University of Karachi this past week.

The session comprising students from various departments of the varsity, was held in a bid to make campuses safe for students, whose complaints on sexual harassment almost always went unheard or unaddressed.

Initially divided between male and female attendees, the session started off with each participant being handed over a document on harassment in order for them to understand the basic concept of harassment and sexual violence.

The segregation, stated Laila Raza - NSF’s unit secretary at KU – was done so that women could open up about their incidents comfortably, since the concepts of ‘shame’ and ‘honour’ had made it difficult for women to speak up about their incidents in public.

The session comprising of male students focused on making them realise the effects of harassment, otherwise taken as fun by boys. Most of the male participants acknowledged that they had either done or stayed quiet while a friend did such things.

The session was concluded with the resolve to form a body of students which could serve as a platform for registration of complaints. (The News)

**KARACHI:** Stories of sexual harassment and personal accounts were shared by students and graduates as they sipped tea at a roadside dhaba in Gulistan-e-Jauhar on Saturday. The meeting was organised by the National Students Federation (NSF) to discuss the issue of sexual harassment at educational institutions and the legislation dealing with it.

To raise the issue of sexual harassment and spread awareness, the group plans to hold street theatres, starting from KU. They also called for the revival of student unions, adding that a member of the student union be included in the inquiry committee investigating cases of harassment. (Express Tribune)

## A matter of ‘Honour’: Young man remanded into police custody for killing sister

by Faraz Khan  
April 28, 2016  
Express Tribune

**KARACHI:** A judicial magistrate remanded on Thursday a young man, who murdered his teenage sister for ‘honour’, into police custody for four days.

Hayat stabbed Sumera multiple times after beating her severely in their house in Fareed Colony, Orangi Town, the investigating officer (IO) of the case, SI Gulfaraz Awan, told District West judicial magistrate Abdul Basit Kalhoro.

The accused has also confessed to the crime in police custody, saying that he caught his sister talking to a boy at the doorstep of their house. He was inside his bedroom and as soon as he arrived at the door, the boy fled away.

According to the IO, the 17-year-old girl begged her brother to take her to the hospital but he refused and tried to escape. However, the neighbours caught him and informed



a matter of honour Karachi case story (AFP)

the police. The girl was rushed to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital but she succumbed to her wounds on the way, said Awan, describing the cause of her death as excessive bleeding.

The judicial magistrate sent the suspect in police custody on a four-day physical remand and directed the IO to bring a progress report at the next hearing.

## Female journalists in Pakistan call for safer working environment



KARACHI: Threats, intimidation and sexual harassment of females at workplaces are pervasive in Pakistan's media organizations and is a serious barrier to the entry of women in the professionals.

By PPI  
May 16, 2016  
The News

This was the consensus of the Consultative Dialogue on Safety Challenges for Female Media Professionals organized here by Pakistan Press Foundation (PPF) with the support of Open Society Institute (OSI).

The meeting felt newspapers, radio and television channels in Pakistan have not done enough to promote a sense of safety for women to work there. This is evident from the fact that only a handful of media houses have set up the in-house inquiry committees to investigate complaints of sexual harassment of their female staff. Under the Protection of Women against Harassment at Workplace Act 2010, all organizations in Pakistan are legally required to set up these three member in-house committees.

The meeting felt that sexual predators especially target the most vulnerable and needy female staff members and it was necessary for their employers to provide a safe and secure working environment for all female employees.

The meeting urged all media organizations to encourage and facilitate their members to ensure the creation of the committees which would promote the sense of security for their female staff members and also encourage other women to enter the profession.

The meeting also urged media organizations to promote awareness of Code of Conduct at the Workplace against Sexual Harassment which is part of the Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act.

## Women commission rejects CII bill

31 May 2016  
Dawn

**LAHORE:** The Punjab Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) has rejected the Council of Islamic Ideology's (CII) proposed 'model' bill for the "protection of women" and condemned it as unconstitutional, illegal and in complete violation of fundamental human rights.

The CII's proposal contravened fundamental rights of women enshrined in the Constitution and violated international laws and treaties Pakistan signed and was bound by, said the PCSW in a statement on Monday.

The CII bill contains some 163 recommendations addressing issues of property, marriage and motherhood, besides crimes (including violence) committed against women. It also proposes steps like allowing men to "lightly beat their wives" and banning co-education past the primary level, that sparked a controversy.

All the rights that the CII claims to grant women under its "model" bill are already enshrined in the laws, the PCSW argues.

It ridicules the CII advice of getting codified in law that "women will not be permitted to receive foreign officials and state guests" and urged all concerned citizens and government bodies to reject the bill as unconstitutional



Women Commission Reject CII bill

and redundant for it not only impinges on the women's rights but also reverses the rights gained over a century through a process of evolution of fundamental rights and freedoms.

Criticising CII recommendations for women on co-education, breastfeeding, ban on formula milk, use of contraception, criminalising abortion after 120 days, barring women from labour-intensive work and military combat, the PCSW says women all over the world have excelled in every walk of life.

From accomplishing the most physically challenging of tasks to running governments and big corporations, there is nothing that women have not been able to accomplish, it says, adding Pakistan is among one of the few nations in the world which has had a female head of the state.

## Transgender Activist Succumbs To Injuries After Being Shot Multiple Times In Peshawar

By Iftikhar Firdous  
May 25, 2016  
OSHARES

Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Trans Action Alliance coordinator succumbed to her injuries on Wednesday after she was shot six times in Peshawar.

Alesha was shifted to Lady Reading Hospital in Peshawar in critical condition on Sunday night. However, LRH authorities could not provide her urgent care as they kept her waiting for over an hour while deciding whether to shift her in the male or female ward.

Qamar Naseem, coordinator of Blue Veins programme said LRH authorities are to blame for Alesha's death as they "failed to provide her with urgent care or necessary facilities as she was transgender."

Despite several requests to move her to the female ward, the injured was shifted to the male ward, triggering a protest from the transgender community and her relatives.

"We put Alesha on a bed in front of the lavatory," Qamar explained, adding that those were the only terms acceptable to the people in the ward.



K-P Transaction Alliance says Alesha was targeted by extortionists asking for porn videos. PHOTO: FACEBOOK

However, Naseem said despite being moved to a private room in the hospital's Bolton Block, no doctor came to see Alesha. "We urged LRH authorities to move Alesha to the ICU due to the nature of her injuries but they refused."

Qamar Naseem said that 45 transgender people were targeted in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa since January 2016 alone.

There has been an increase in incidents of violence against transgender people in K-P, where they have been beaten and their heads have been shaved. In more extreme cases, they have been targeted and killed.

## WOMEN IN JUSTICE

May 18, 2016  
The Nation

Women are severely under-represented in the superior judiciary of Pakistan. Not a single woman has ever been elevated as judge of the Supreme Court in Pakistan's legal history. An observation by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) states that only 5.8 per cent of high court judges in the country are women, one of the lowest number in the region. Another report published last year concluded that opportunities and work conditions in the country discriminate greatly against female lawyers.



Those who do manage to garner the required level of professional recognition will ultimately suffer due to lack of sufficient support amongst the male-dominated collegiate of judges who eventually determine revered appointments.

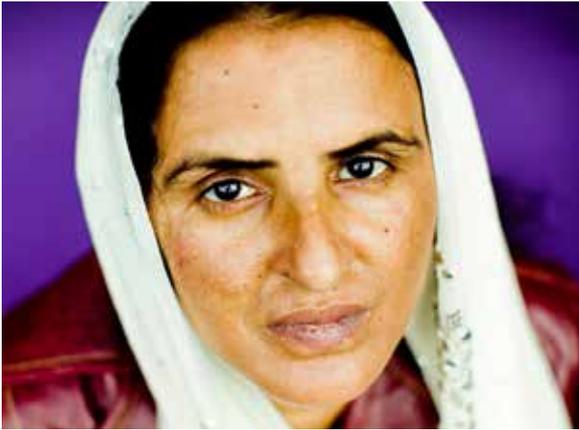
It is a sorry state of affairs that there are no women judges in Islamabad High Court where as the highest number of women judges is three in Lahore High Court with two in Peshawar High Court and one each in Balochistan High Court and Sindh High Court. Since 1947, there had been only one female president of the Supreme Court Bar Association.

Justice Majida Rizvi was appointed to the Sindh High Court on the same date (June 6, 1994) as Justice Rana Bhagwandas. However, male skewed approach prevailed in a time when Pakistani politics had been ready to appoint a woman when she was first recommended in 1989 under Bhutto.

It is about time that Pakistan rectified this grave under representation of women in the judicial profession and gave at least fair if not an equal opportunity to women to aim for the highest honour in the judiciary.

## Hope of belated justice for Pakistani woman gang-raped as a punishment

Review of Mukhtar Mai's case, who was assaulted at behest of village council before high court acquitted the attackers, could end her 14-year struggle for justice.



*Women's rights and gender equality is supported by Ford Foundation*

June 3, 2016  
Alia Waheed  
The Guardian

The gang-rape of Mukhtar Mai in 2002 prompted an international outcry. The 28-year-old woman, from a remote village in Pakistan, was attacked on the orders of the village jirga (council) as a punishment after her 12-year-old brother was wrongly accused of having an illicit relationship with an older woman from the dominant clan in the village.

Six of the 14 men accused of the crime were given death sentences, but they appealed and five were acquitted by the Lahore high court, a ruling that was upheld by the supreme court three years ago.

Now, in an unprecedented move by the highest court in the country, a judge has ordered that the original verdict be reviewed.

A judicial review of a supreme court decision is rare and represents a major breakthrough in Mai's 14-year battle for justice.

Sidra Humayun, from War Against Rape Lahore, said: "In Pakistan, so few rape cases even reach the doors of the Supreme Court, so [the review] is a major breakthrough.

"Most people are scared to even report rape because of fears about their safety and family honour. When they are brave enough to report it, it is left to the lower courts to hear these

cases, and when medical and legal support is not conducted fairly – either due to political pressure or pressure from the accused – rape cases are disposed of.

Despite numerous offers to leave Pakistan, Mai decided to remain in the area where she grew up and used the 500,000 rupees (£3,300) compensation she received from the government to set up the Mukhtar Mai Women's Organisation, which includes a school and women's refuge.

## Brazil and Argentina unite in protest against culture of sexual violence

Ford Foundation  
Uki Goñi in Buenos Aires and Jonathan Watts in Rio de Janeiro  
June 3, 2016  
The Guardian

Two different protests, two different countries, but the same continent and the same cause: violence against women in "macho" Latin America.

Demonstrators in Brazil and Argentina will join rallies on Friday that highlight both the persistence of gender violence and a growing campaign to stop it.

Coincidental rather than coordinated, the protests have been sparked by separate outrages: the alleged gang rape of a 16-year-old in Rio de Janeiro in May and the murder of a pregnant 14-year-old girl in Argentina's Santa Fe province last year.



In the past 12 months, there have been protests in Mexico, Bolivia, Colombia, Argentina and Brazil.

Rio has had two in the past week, with another scheduled on Friday. The rallies were prompted by the alleged rape of a girl by more than 30 men, at least two of whom posted images of the assault and its aftermath on social networks.

Campaigners say the case has raised awareness and shown that women need not be silent in the face of physical and psychological abuse.

Studies suggest between 7.5% and 10% of Brazilian women report cases of sexual violence.

Andrea Machado, who organised a protest on Wednesday in the centre of Rio, said the online abuse of the girl "shows how deep-rooted machismo is in our society".

## The 'Avon ladies' of Pakistan selling contraception door to door

Sabrina Toppa in Allah Bachayo Khaskheli  
Wednesday 1 June, 2016  
The Guardian

From 8am to 4pm, 25-year-old Samina Khaskheli travels door-to-door in rural Pakistan handing out free samples of condoms, birth control pills, and intrauterine devices.

Samina is a worker for the Marginalised Area Reproductive



Health Viable Initiative – Marvi – once a popular emblem of female independence in Sindhi folklore. Today, Marvi refers to a network of literate or semi-literate village

women aged 18 to 40 who travel door-to-door selling contraceptives. “In our village, there was no information about family planning. Many women died during childbirth,” says Samina about what inspired her to join.

Trained by the Karachi-based Health and Nutrition Development Society (Hands), roughly 1,600 Marvis are dispersed throughout Pakistan’s remotest villages, where government healthcare facilities are scant or nonexistent. Pakistan’s contraceptive prevalence rate is low – out of a population of more than 190 million, only 35% of women aged 15-49 use contraception. Nevertheless, demand is high in rural areas, where women give birth to an average of 4.2 children, compared to 3.2 children in cities.

In addition to birth control options, Marvi workers also teach women about birth spacing, or providing a gap between pregnancies to protect the health of a mother.

“We are not trying to limit the number of children – a woman or a family has a right to choose as many number of children as they want, but they must keep in mind the pregnancy period is important for a woman’s health,” says Anjum Fatima, the general manager for health at Hands.

“Before the culture was rigid, but now they’ve gradually accepted family planning,” says Samina, the Marvi worker.

## ‘I just got trapped’: Nepal tries to expand girls’ horizons beyond marriage

Liz Ford in Kathmandu  
The Guardian  
Wednesday 18 May 2016

Child marriage in Nepal is denying girls education and the country a boost in GDP, but the government is slowly challenging the status quo



*Sajita Tamang was married at 14 and is now separated from her abusive husband. She has a 17-month-old baby. Photograph: Jane Mingay/Girls Not Brides*

Sajita Tamang was 14 when she got married. She says love had nothing to do with it.

Thirteen days after the marriage, the verbal abuse started.

“My husband [came] home drunk and [said] filthy, nasty things to me,” she remembers. “He said, ‘Get out of my house.’”

Sajita’s story is not uncommon. An estimated 10% of girls in Nepal are married before their 15th birthday and more than 40% before they turn 18. Nepal is among the countries with the highest rates of child marriage. Nationally, the average age a girl weds is 17.

Poverty, culture and a belief that a girl’s life goals should be marriage and motherhood are the main drivers of early marriage among girls in Nepal.

But the government is attempting to challenge the status quo with a new strategy. It comes at a time of renewed global action to end child marriage – defined by the UN as any union before the age of 18. Rates of child marriage in Nepal have been falling, but change is slow. The transition to democracy has enabled activists to lobby for action, however, and the Girl Summit, held in the UK in 2014, proved pivotal.

Last year, the government raised the legal age for marriage to 20 and abolished the clause that allowed girls to marry younger if their parents consented. But in its national strategy, drafted with the support of the UN children’s agency, Unicef, and Girls Not Brides Nepal, the government will take aim at the root causes: ensuring girls have access to quality education – including sex education, and skills training for girls who are married and out of school – increasing their economic opportunities.

## INDIA TO HAVE PANIC BUTTONS ON PUBLIC BUSES & MOBILE PHONES TO CURB SEX ATTACKS



India To Install Panic Button (Karen Dias for the Guardian)

Agence France-Presse  
The Guardian  
25 May, 2016

Panic buttons are to be made mandatory on India's public buses "to ensure the safety of women", the transport minister has said, more than three years after the fatal gang rape of a student on a bus in Delhi.

The government said a series of measures designed to curb sexual violence against women would become law on 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

"To ensure the safety of women after the unfortunate incident, we have decided to make it mandatory for public transport buses to install emergency panic buttons, CCTV cameras and GPS-enabled vehicle tracking devices," Nitin Gadkari told reporters in New Delhi.

The state of Rajasthan is pioneering trials of the new measures on 20 of its vehicles. Panic buttons are placed above the front doors which, when pressed, send an emergency message to a police control room that can then view live footage of the bus interior.

The government's latest measure to prevent sex attacks follows its announcement last month that all mobile phones sold in India would have to have a panic button from the start of 2017. The button would allow users to call emergency services by pressing a single key on their phone.

Officials decided that having a physical "panic button" was faster than using an application for the mobile phone, Gandhi's ministry said. In addition, all mobile phones will be required to have GPS by 2018.

## The Empowerment of Women Will Be Central to Realising Sustainable Global Development



By Mary Robinson Reprint | | Inter Press Service  
Mary Robinson, former president of Ireland, (1990-1997) and former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (1997 to 2002).

DUBLIN,  
Mar 4 2016  
Inter Press Service  
"Planet 50-50 by 2030

Step It Up for Gender Equality" – the theme of this year's International Women's Day serves as a timely reminder that, despite incremental progress of recent years and the ambition of the new global development agenda, we must redouble efforts to achieve a world underpinned by gender equality.

For me, this requires targeted approaches to ensure that all women have a voice in the formulation of decisions that impact upon their lives. This is particularly important when it comes to facilitating the engagement of grassroots women. To realise the "leave no-one behind" approach called for in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the commitment "to reach the furthest behind first", grassroots women must be recognised as key actors in global sustainable development.

The impacts of climate change are different for women and men. Grassroots women are more likely to bear the greater burden in the face of climate change, particularly in situations of poverty

In concluding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change, world leaders signalled a willingness to change course – to leave behind the unequal and unsustainable traditional development models and move towards a future free from poverty and want, with abundant clean energy and a healthy environment.

As we "step it up for gender equality", I call on all those in positions of influence to provide the platforms for grassroots women to speak to for themselves. Listening to, and valuing, their knowledge and experience will help to shape progress towards 2030 that is good for people, the planet and gender equality.

# With women at the top, UN climate body has chance for real change

Wednesday 18 May 2016  
Climate change news

Ed King for Climate Home, part of the Guardian Environment Network

Women now hold six of the most influential positions at global climate talks, but can they make a difference on the ground? As of 17 May, the six most influential positions within the UN process are all held by women, a significant increase on last year's total of two. Outgoing UN climate chief Christiana Figueres has held her role for six years, but it's the steady arrival of other women in top jobs that is a sign of change.

France environment minister Ségolène Royal is now president of the talks, aided by two UN "climate champions": Moroccan minister Hakima El Haite and Paris Agreement architect Laurence Tubiana. In May, Saudi Arabian diplomat Sarah Baashan and New Zealand's former climate ambassador Jo Tyndall took charge as co-chairs of the UN talks.

A UN official said appointment of the pair as co-chairs was "spontaneous", but others eye a desire by the 196 countries at the negotiations to start implementing the 2015 Paris Agreement. The landmark deal contained five references



With Women At The Top (UNFCCC)

to gender – an issue that was discussed "behind the curtains to the last moments," says veteran Finnish and EU diplomat Aira Kalela.

Outside the UN bubble, gender equality is far from a given, as a recent report published by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and Climate Development Knowledge Network revealed. Focused on communities in India, Africa and Latin America, the study determined that women are frequently left out of initiatives to improve resilience to extreme weather.

Despite clear benefits, including women in climate adaptation planning was often seen as "slowing and complicating" by some communities. That, recommended the study, has to change if vulnerable communities are to stand a chance of coping when hit by climate-induced floods, droughts or crop failures. It's a challenge the UN climate body's women should be equal to, suggests Kalela, especially given the number of women in positions of power this year.

# Nigeria anger as Gender and Equal Opportunity Bill fails

16 March 2016  
BBC from the section Africa

Nigeria's Senate has been condemned for rejecting a proposed bill aimed at eliminating "all forms of discrimination" against women.

Rights activists say the bill would promote women's equality in marriage, inheritance and education.

But some lawmakers voiced opposition, saying the Gender and Equal Opportunity Bill is not compatible with Nigerian culture and religious beliefs.

In Islam, women get half of men's share in inheritance and it is unacceptable for anyone to change that, a Muslim senator told the BBC.

One Christian lawmaker also quoted some sections of the bible to condemn the bill. But the Senate's decision to throw out the bill has been widely condemned.

Human rights activist Bukky Shonibare says it was a sad day for Nigerian women... "It shows how backward we are and how much we want to hold on to our lopsided religious and cultural beliefs," she told the BBC's Focus on Africa radio programme.



It is unfortunate that some men who see the emancipation of women as a threat are the ones being trusted with making laws and order, she added.

"Every Senator that voted against the bill should hide in shame," said prominent actress Uche Jombo.

Some activists have started circulating a petition urging the Senators to reconsider.

## DRESSES TO DEGREES: UNIVERSITY OPENS ITS DOORS TO BANGLADESH GARMENT WORKERS

28 March, 2016

The Guardian

Sarah Lazarus in Chittagong

A new scheme offers free degree courses at the Asian University for Women to improve the prospects for workers in Bangladesh's clothing factories.

When Rubina Yasmin was 13, her father died, and finances became increasingly tight. "My uncle said I must leave school and get married."

For poor families, early marriage can ease financial pressure as it means one less mouth to feed.

Yasmin refused to marry and fought to be allowed to complete her education. Her family gave in and she stayed at school. On graduating, she moved to Dhaka, to work as a quality control inspector in a garment factory.

She could not imagine her situation improving, until she was called to a meeting at the factory and learned of a scheme – the first of its kind – launched by the Asian University for Women (AUW) to provide free university education to women working in



*Dresses To Degrees (David Levene for the Guardian)*



Bangladesh's garment factories.

The AUW opened in 2008 in Chittagong to educate the brightest young women with

the greatest potential, and create a new generation of female leaders. The AUW is a regional university, attracting students from 15 countries in Asia and the Middle East.

The garment factory workers' university fees are covered by charitable donations, but the AUW requires factory owners to continue to pay wages while the women study. Their families rely on the income and would not let them attend otherwise.

Mowmita Basak, one of the AUW's first graduates, was given the task of convincing factory owners to agree to these terms and send their employees.

Of 653 applicants, 22 were offered a place in the first intake this year. Yasmin was one of them. "I never imagined this could happen to someone like me," she says. "It's like a dream come true."



## Putting Women At The Centre Of Family Planning



“Women’s health is not only about technical solutions or contraception but it’s about women’s agency, choice and quality of reproductive health services...family planning services need to be convenient and adequately meet the requirements of the consumer. One of the ways of accomplishing this could be through the creation of a hub or a one-stop-centre.

The Hindustan Times  
Sanjay Jaiswal  
June 11, 2016

Family planning in India has always been looked upon as something that is synonymous with regulating family size and reproductive behaviour. However, in 2012, when India made a commitment at the London Summit on Family Planning, this provided the much-needed impetus to re-imagine the agenda of family planning in India. The Family Planning 2020 goals promised an increased basket of contraceptive choices for women in the country, equity to the poorest and most vulnerable, and improved service delivery, making family planning a matter of women’s rights, gender justice and equity. It enforced the fact that young people, especially women, must have a say in decisions relating to their reproductive health and not be subjected to coercive practices.

Women’s health is not only about technical solutions or contraception but it’s about women’s agency, choice and quality of reproductive health services.

### Wide disparities and inequities in women’s access to healthcare persist.

To implement an effective and sustainable programme, family planning services need to be convenient and adequately meet the requirements of the consumer. One of the ways of accomplishing this could be through the creation of a hub or a one-stop-centre.

Some of the requirements that are essential for an efficient QoC in the country are: An adequate infrastructure, requisite clinical competencies, positive provider attitudes, incentives, motivation and an acknowledgement that service providers and field workers are the heroes of family planning.

It is imperative for the government to stay the course in terms of a sustained policy environment for family planning in the national development agenda and to keep the momentum of the commitment going.



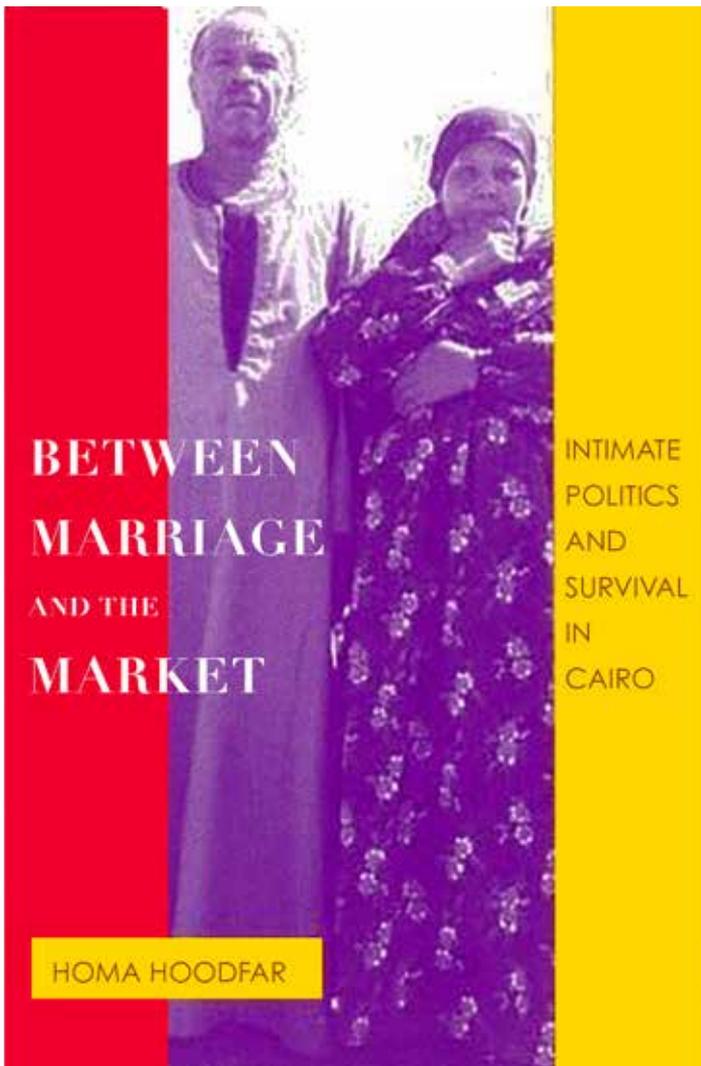
# HOMA HOODFAR

**P**rofessor Homa Hoodfar holds a B.A. in Economics (University of Tehran), an interdisciplinary M.A. in Development Studies (University of Manchester) and a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology (University of Kent). Her teaching and research activities relate to development, culture and gender in the Middle East. Currently, she has been jailed in Iran allegedly for 'dabbling in feminism and security matters' and has not been

allowed any visitors, including doctors or

lawyers. Amnesty International has called on the Iranian government to release Hoodfar, calling her a prisoner of conscience. Over 4,600 professors have also signed a petition on the Hoodfar family's website calling for her release.





# Between Marriage and the Market: Intimate Politics and Survival in Cairo

by Dr Homa Hoodfar

## Urban Women in the Labor Market: The Historical View

Urban women of Egypt have traditionally been involved in trade and cottage industries. Middle- and lower-class women worked in family enterprises with their husbands or independently as members of the numerous women's guilds that were active up to the beginning of the twentieth century (Ibrahim 1980: 51). Judith Tucker (1976, 1985, 1993b) documents women who bought raw materials and traded the final products in the market, often independently; this was particularly true of women from the Delta. Records from 1889 list many women as green grocers, midwives, servants, pastry cooks, cotton workers, singers, and dancers (Ibrahim 1980; Tucker 1985; Danielson 1991).

In Egypt's initial short-lived phase of industrialization, Mohammed Ali (reigned 1805–1848) established a state-controlled "putting-out" system. The state took over entire guilds, provided workers with raw materials, and paid them for the finished product (Sullivan 1981; Tucker 1985). According to the registers, many of these pieceworkers were women. When factories were established during the same period, many women participated, especially in the textile industry. However, during the period of colonial influence, the British, who were opposed to the industrialization process in Egypt, pushed the economy into the production of raw materials, mainly cotton for British factories. This left the guild system, which had become dependent on the government after more than two generations of state intervention, in considerable disarray.

Cottage industries, in particular, women's guilds, never regained their economic significance (Gran 1977; Tucker 1993b).

Despite the destruction of the cottage industry, women remained integrated in the urban economy and participated in petty production independently or as part of household enterprises, with little professional gender segregation. This pattern still prevails in the old quarters of Cairo. For example, Sawsan el-Messiri and others have reported on women who were butchers and important traders (el-Messiri 1978a; Rugh 1979; Tucker 1985; Singerman 1996a). Although my own research was based in newly urbanized, informal residential neighborhoods, I also found many "traditional" women who engaged in a variety of occupations they had established or inherited, including bicycle repair, trading, and baking. Nevertheless, women were marginal to waged labor during the first half of the century, when new factories were being established. Tucker (1985: 71-99) specifies two reasons for this. First, the availability of male labor for wage work, particularly in rural areas, distanced women from opportunities in commercial agriculture and wage work in general. Second, following the decline of the cottage industry and the displacement of women workers, the transition to factory work took almost a century. By the time large-scale industries emerged in the second phase of Egyptian industrialization, women's role in the production process in home industry was a distant memory.

The impact of capitalism on Egyptian women of different classes is diverse. While upper-class women moved into public life and politics (el-Sayyid Marsot 1978; Nelson 1991; Badran



1995), the women of the newly emerged petit bourgeoisie became more isolated due to the separation of domestic and production units. With much of the economic activity moving out of residential areas, women were no longer able to move between the family enterprise and home, or to share their husbands' professions. The sexual division of labor became more rigid: men became producers of goods and services for the formal labor market while women remained in the informal market so they could also attend to their domestic responsibilities.

# The Legal Position of Women in the Labor Market

The revolution of 1952 improved women's legal position in the labor market. Women's organizations had participated actively in the anticolonial movement and had developed influence in nationalist parties, such as the Wafd, and successfully brought to the fore the position of women as one of the most pressing political issues needing redress (Abdel-Kader 1988). Across the spectrum, nationalists, modernists, and socialists saw the education of women and the development of Egypt as closely linked (Jayawardena 1992). Nasser's new state, anxious to win the support of the more liberal factions of society, gave equal importance to female and male education. At the same time, by the standards of the 1950s, very liberal labor laws were passed and women's participation in the labor market was actively encouraged. In fact, Nasser called it a duty for women to participate in building the national economy (Ibrahim 1980; Abdel-Kader 1988; Badran 1995).

Nasser's state has always been credited for its liberal attitudes toward women; indeed, no other single factor has exerted comparable influence on the legal and actual position of women in the recent history of Egypt. However, his eagerness to encourage women's entry into the labor market brought about the early stage of official devaluation of women's domestic labor in Egyptian social history. Women's participation in reproductive activities, both on day-to-day and generational bases, was not considered significant and noteworthy. Women's domestic responsibilities were seen unproblematically as



Image courtesy: <http://english.ahram.org.eg/UI/Front/MultimediaInner.aspx?NewsContentID=136003&newsportalname=Multimedia>

the extension of a woman's biological function. Neither the facilities nor the new educational system was designed to influence the prevailing domestic sexual division of labor. Thus the state completely disregarded the reality that in both rural and urban areas the survival of many households depended on the hours of labor contributed by women, despite the value that Egyptian culture traditionally attached to women. The fact that women were simply expected to extend their efforts into the two domains with a minimal change in the domestic sexual division of labor has been an important influence on the existing structure of female labor participation.

## Meet Some of India's Super-Fast Women Racers

Last month, TVS Racing signed on Shreya Sundar Iyer, its first woman rider for the Indian National Rally Championship. 16-year-old Mira Erda is one of the youngest professional racers in India, and she's barely out of school yet. Erda says that her fascination with racing began while go-karting at a track in Vadodara, her hometown.



"When you race you're completely awake, every single second that you're on the race track. Every single sense in you is awake. I love the feeling of adrenaline at that time; I love that element of pushing yourself, and knowing whether you can make this corner or not. It's thrilling," says Chithra Priya, who's the only Indian female biker to complete the Saddle Sore endurance ride.

For Bombay-based racer Sneha Sharma, it's the precision required to be a racer that brings her back to it time and again.



“Recognition is really hard,” Priya says, “our country doesn’t respect motorsports. Millions of people, talented people, they have no solution. There are so many hierarchies that you have to break. But it is what it is. I’m a very positive person. You come to a point where you either give up, or you just keep going. I could never give up; I’ve tried! I’m sure it’ll be worth it in the end. At the end of it, if there weren’t so many risks, it wouldn’t be as fun!”



Erda adds that her school has been very understanding and supportive about her career. “It’s also changed the way my schoolmates look at me – they all think I’m very cool!” she laughs.

(Left: Erda, bottom-left: Sneha Sharma bottom-right: Chithra Priya)



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