

Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Act, 2011

The Prevention of Anti-Women Practices (Criminal Law Amendment) Act 2011 was passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan on Tuesday 15th November 2011 after much great effort and lobbying by the women's movement and the movers of the Bill, led by Dr. Donya Aziz (PML- Q).

This law prohibits several oppressive and discriminatory customs practiced towards women in Pakistan which are not only against the dignity of women, but also violate human rights and are contrary to Islamic Injunctions.

These customary practices are used, specifically against women, in order to exert control over them, discriminate against them, infringe upon their basic rights and to manipulate them. The law has also constantly been manipulated to overlook these practices as 'crimes' and therefore allowing perpetrators to go free.

Customary practices that are criminalized under this Act include:

- Giving a female in marriage or otherwise in badla-e sulh, wanni or swara
- Depriving women from inheriting property
- Forced marriages
- Marriage with the Holy Quran

The "Prevention of Anti-Women Practices Act, 2011" amended Pakistan Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code as well by adding a new chapter to Pakistan Penal Code to bring the punishments into effect.

Section 310-A

Under section 310-A, there shall be punishment for giving a female in marriage or otherwise in badla-e sulh, wanni or swara or any other custom or practice under any name in consideration of settling a civil dispute or a criminal liability, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years but shall not be less than three years and shall also be liable to a fine of five hundred thousand rupees.

Section 498A

Under section 498 A, depriving women from inheriting property by deceitful or illegal means shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to ten years but not be less than five years or with a fine of one million rupees or both.

Section 498 B

Under section 498 B, forced marriages are ten years maximum and three years minimum of jail term along with a fine of five hundred thousand rupees.

Section 498 C

Under section 498C, forcing, arranging or facilitating a woman's marriage with the Holy Quran is punishable with a jail term of maximum seven and minimum three years, along with a fine of five hundred thousand rupees.