

AI Index: PRE 01/221/2011
21 April 2011

Pakistan must bring justice to rape victim

The Pakistan Supreme Court's acquittal of five men charged with the gang rape of Mukhtaran Mai highlights the failure to bring perpetrators of such crimes to account, Amnesty International said today.

“A woman has been brutally gang-raped but the Pakistani authorities have failed to bring anyone to account for this horrific crime, sending a green light for abuses against women to be committed without fear of punishment,” said Sam Zarifi, Asia-Pacific Director at Amnesty International.

“This failure discourages victims of sexual violence to report their cases to the police or the courts and also allows for Pakistan’s informal parallel justice mechanisms ('jirgas') to continue violating women's rights, ordering women to be killed for supposed infringements of their families’ or community’s 'honour', punitively raped or forcibly married to settle disputes to pay for the alleged crimes of their family members.”

“Amnesty International believes Mukhtaran Mai’s safety may be at risk and urges the Government to ensure her protection against reprisals and to ensure that the perpetrators of gang rape, and those who order it, are brought to justice without recourse to death penalty.”