



## **India - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 7 August 2012**

### **Information on honour killings and the availability of police protection. information on revenge taken due to non family consented marriage**

A report issued in January 2012 by *Human Rights Watch* noting human right issues of the preceding year states that:

“...the government did little to address the widespread problems of “honor killings,” dowry deaths, and sexual violence.” (Human Rights Watch (24 January 2012) *India: Disappointing Year for Human Rights*)

The *Asian Human Rights Commission* in January 2012 states:

“The honour killings of those marrying from different communities are rampant.” (Asian Human Rights Commission (19 January 2012) *India's Draft Universal Periodic Report-II: A Case of Forced Marriage?*)

Commenting on events of 2011, a report issued in May 2012 by the *United States Department of State* notes:

“So-called honor killings continued to be a problem, especially in Punjab and Haryana, where as many as 10 percent of all killings were honor killings. In some cases the killings were the result of extrajudicial decisions made by traditional community elders such as “khap panchayats,” unelected village assemblies that have no legal authority. In an April decision, the Supreme Court of India declared the decree or encouragement by khap panchayats to commit honor killings illegal. Statistics for honor killings were difficult to verify, since many such killings were unreported or were passed off as suicide or natural deaths by the family members involved. NGOs estimated that at least 900 such murders occurred every year in Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh alone. On April 20, the Supreme Court directed all states to root out honor killings, warning them to punish officials who fail to act against offenders; on May 11, the court expressed its support for the death penalty in honor-killing convictions. The most common justification for the killings offered by those accused or by their relatives was that the victim married against her family’s wishes.” (United States Department of State (24 May 2012) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011, India*, Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons/Women/Harmful Traditional Practices, p.40)

Commenting on honour killings an article in *The Guardian* in May 2012 states that:

“Such murders to “preserve the family honour” are still common in India and often accepted even among the new middle class.” (The Guardian (11 May 2012) *India's middle-class murder trial stokes concerns about changing values*)

This report also notes:

“The true scale of such murders is unknown. Police routinely demand bribes from bereaved parents to reclassify such deaths as accidental. Campaigners against so-called "honour killings" have seen the failure to convict Rajesh Talwar as a further example of the failure of police to take such cases seriously, particularly officers in conservative, poor and corrupt states...” (ibid)

A report issued in May 2011 by *BBC News* states:

“According to one recent study, hundreds of people are killed each year in India for falling in love or marrying against their families' wishes.” (BBC News (10 May 2011) *Indian 'honour' killers should hang, Supreme Court says*)

This document also states:

“Age-old notions of tradition and family honour are still deeply entrenched in many parts of Indian society. Correspondents say there have been many recent cases in which people have been ostracised or killed for defying such notions. Many victims anger their families by marrying outside their caste. Often "honour" crimes against them are endorsed, or even encouraged, by village-based caste councils.” (ibid)

In May 2012 *BBC News* notes that:

“Hundreds of people are killed each year in India by their families or relatives for falling in love or marrying against their families' wishes.” (BBC News (9 May 2012) *Senior Indian policeman in honour killing row*)

The *Hindustan Times* in July 2012 notes:

“In a suspected honour killing case in Moga district, the police have arrested seven persons on Wednesday, including the father and two brothers of a girl who was allegedly hacked to death along with her husband in village Phullewala in last week. The dead bodies of Kulwant Kaur (20) and her husband Jagtar Singh (25), who reportedly got married against the wishes of their families about a year back, were recovered from two different spots at Channuwala (Moga) and village Behbal Khurd (Faridkot)...The police said that the couple, both neighbours in their village, had fallen in love after which they decided to get married against the wishes of the girl's family.” (Hindustan Times (11 July 2012) *Seven arrested for killing couple of love marriage*)

In July 2012 *BBC News* notes:

“Indian couples that have angered their families by pursuing "forbidden" relationships are increasingly seeking refuge in special shelters run by the police.” (BBC News (30 July 2012) *A hideaway for India's rebel couples*)

This report also states:

“Love is difficult - and dangerous - in large swathes of India where patriarchy, kinship, casteism and family honour hold sway.” (ibid)

This report also notes:

“Relationships in the same village, outside the caste and faith, and within the same gotra (clan on father's side), are forbidden by families and hardline village councils. Kangaroo courts set up the councils often sanction killings of such "erring" couples to redeem honour.” (ibid)

## References

Asian Human Rights Commission (19 January 2012) *India's Draft Universal Periodic Report-II: A Case of Forced Marriage?*

<http://www.ein.org.uk/members/country-report/indias-draft-universal-periodic-report-ii-case-forced-marriage>

(Accessed 7 August 2012)

BBC News (30 July 2012) *A hideaway for India's rebel couples*

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-19010196?print=true>

(Accessed 7 August 2012)

BBC News (9 May 2012) *Senior Indian policeman in honour killing row*

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-india-18005916>

(Accessed 7 August 2012)

BBC News (10 May 2011) *Indian 'honour' killers should hang, Supreme Court says*

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-13348414>

(Accessed 7 August 2012)

The Guardian (11 May 2012) *India's middle-class murder trial stokes concerns about changing values*

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/11/india-middle-class-murder-trial?INTCMP=SRCH>

(Accessed 7 August 2012)

Hindustan Times (11 July 2012) *Seven arrested for killing couple of love marriage*

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/887298.aspx>

(Accessed 7 August 2012)

Human Rights Watch (24 January 2012) *India: Disappointing Year for Human Rights*

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=printdoc&docid=4f2283752>

(Accessed 7 August 2012)

United States Department of State (24 May 2012) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2011, India*

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper>

(Accessed 7 August 2012)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

## **Sources Consulted**

Amnesty International  
Asian Human Rights Commission  
BBC News  
Electronic Immigration Network  
European Country of Origin Information Network  
Freedom House  
Google  
Human Rights Watch  
Human Security Gateway  
Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada  
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre  
International Crisis Group  
IRIN News  
Lexis Nexis  
Minority Rights Group International  
Online Newspapers  
Refugee Documentation Centre E-Library  
Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database  
Reliefweb  
Reuters  
Stop Honour Killings  
United Kingdom Home Office  
United Nations Development Programme  
United States Department of State  
UNHCR Refworld  
World Bank