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Couple Arrested After Allegedly Aborting Unborn Daughter Due to Gender Preference

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In a disturbing case underscoring deep-rooted gender bias, a couple in Punjab, Pakistan, was arrested for allegedly aborting their six-month unborn daughter and abandoning her remains near a roadside gutter. Authorities have launched a full investigation, calling it a tragic outcome of societal discrimination against female children.

Police in Tandlianwala City, a town in the Faisalabad district, registered charges under Section 338-C of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC), which pertains to causing death through

illegal abortion. The suspects, identified as Muhammad Ehsan and his wife, Meraj Bibi, are currently in custody.

According to police statements, Ehsan, a daily wage laborer, and his wife had been married for eight years and were already raising three daughters and one son. When Meraj became pregnant again, an ultrasound confirmed the fetus was female, reportedly triggering repeated arguments between the couple.

Rather than continue with the pregnancy, Meraj sought help from an unlicensed traditional birth attendant and underwent an illegal **D&C (Dilation and Curettage)**, a medical procedure often used for abortion or miscarriage management. The procedure resulted in the premature birth of a six-month-old baby girl.

Shockingly, the newborn was allegedly left near a gutter in Mahi Chowk. Locals discovered the infant's remains and alerted law enforcement. Station House Officer (SHO) Sheikh Shoaib Ahmad responded to the scene, collected evidence, and began questioning local midwives. Within 24 hours, authorities traced the act back to Meraj Bibi, who later confessed during interrogation. Her husband, Ehsan, was also implicated and arrested.

“This is a tragic case rooted in societal pressure and ignorance,” SHO Ahmad stated, adding that the law would take its full course. He emphasized the need to address cultural attitudes that devalue the lives of girls, calling it a matter of both justice and moral responsibility.

While the Pakistani government has implemented various laws to curb illegal abortions and gender-based discrimination, enforcement remains inconsistent, particularly in rural communities where traditional mindsets often prevail. This case not only exposes the legal and ethical lapses in such areas but also calls into question the broader societal silence around gender-selective practices.

Convicted of Double Homicide

In a separate case reflecting the continued challenges facing the country's justice system, a district and sessions court handed down a double death sentence to a man convicted of killing his wife and her alleged lover.

The court found Shaukat Ali Sheikh guilty of murdering his wife, Sumaira Bibi, and Muhammad Zeehan on December 24, 2021, in Chak 246-RB Basti Hussain Shah Kukkar

Wala. According to the prosecution, Sheikh suspected the two of being in an extramarital relationship.

District and Sessions Judge Abdur Raheem sentenced Sheikh to death on both counts of murder. In addition to the capital punishment, the court ordered the convict to pay Rs2 million in compensation to the victims' families. If the amount is not paid, Sheikh will face an additional year of imprisonment.

While justice has been served in this case, it underscores the broader issue of personal violence driven by suspicion and a lack of legal recourse within the family structure.