

Message from the Chief Crown Prosecutor

West Midlands Crown Prosecution Service is working very closely with partners in the criminal justice system and the voluntary sector in order to raise the public's awareness that forced marriages and so called honour crimes are criminal offences that will be dealt with robustly.

Forced marriages and so called honour crimes are not condoned by any faith group. The commission of offences of this type can never be excused on the grounds of 'restoring honour.'

My message, to anybody who feels that they may be a victim of such crimes, is **"Do not suffer in silence."** There is support available to you from the CPS, the police and the voluntary sector. Appropriate contact details are on the back page of this leaflet.



David Blundell
Chief Crown Prosecutor
CPS West Midlands

Useful contact information

Ashram: 0121 764 3817

Email: EDVP@ashramaha.org.uk

Asian Women's DV Forum: 0845 130 6610

Awaaz: 01902 571 260

Birmingham & Solihull Women's Aid:

0121 685 8550

Website: www.bswaid.org

Doli Project: 0845 6581 057

Forced Marriage Unit: 0207 008 0151

Email: fmu@fco.gov.uk

Website: www.fco.gov.uk/forcedmarriage

Humdard: Text: 07913 876 092

Panaghar Asian Women's Project:

02476 228 952

Sandwell Organisation Against Domestic

Abuse: 0845 3597 525

The National Domestic Violence Helpline:

0808 2000 247

UK Asian Women's Centre: 0121 523 4910

West Midlands Police:

Emergency number: 999

Switchboard: 0845 113 5000



CPS West Midlands

**Love, "honour"
and obey**



Photo: The Doli Project

What is an “honour crime”?

So called “honour crime” is a crime in which mainly girls or women are punished at the command of male family members for alleged immoral behaviour, which is deemed to have gone against the family or community honour code and caused shame.

Alleged immoral behaviour may include:

- Inappropriate dress or make-up
- Having a boyfriend
- Rejecting a forced marriage
- Kissing in a public place

What is a “forced marriage”?

A forced marriage is a marriage which does not have the free consent of both parties or where force is used.

Forced marriage differs from arranged marriages. An arranged marriage is very different. An arranged marriage is entered into freely by both people, although their families take a leading role in the choice of partner.

The law

Honour crimes and forced marriages are already covered by the law, and can involve a range of criminal offences.

Case studies

Examples of crimes which cut across a range of cultures and communities:

- As Sathinder became a teenager everything she did was scrutinised. At first it was just arguments, but then it led to acts of violence against her by family members – ASSAULT.
- A 21-year-old woman who was a Hindu was living with her Muslim boyfriend. Her refusal to be forced into marriage by her family led to racial and physical abuse of her and her boyfriend – RACIALLY AGGRAVATED ASSAULT.
- Shajda was stabbed to death by her cousin in her bedroom on the day of her marriage to Mohammed. Members of the family felt that the 'family honour' had been violated because the groom was a divorcee and not a cousin. The killer fled to Pakistan – MURDER.
- Hamida, who was 16 years old, was stabbed to death by her father after running away from home to be with her boyfriend – MURDER.
- Parmjit was removed from college and taken to India to be married. When she refused, she was locked in a room and then forced at gunpoint to marry a man she had never met before – KIDNAP and FALSE IMPRISONMENT.
- Reena escaped from an abusive arranged marriage. Her father arranged for her to be kidnapped. She was raped, strangled and buried in a suitcase – MURDER, RAPE, THREATS TO KILL, KIDNAP and ASSAULT.

What do I do next?

If you feel that you have been a victim of honour crime / forced marriage, or you are being threatened to enter into a forced marriage, you need to contact the police, on their emergency number, who should be able to assist you.

Support to you at court

CPS West Midlands has 10 Witness Care Units that, with the police, will provide support to victims and witnesses as they go through the court process and update you on the progress of the case.

If you require special safety, or treatment in the courtroom, the CPS can apply for special measures on your behalf, likewise if you have children and, as a result, attending court is difficult the Witness Care Units can arrange an appropriate registered childminder.

The voluntary sector is also available to provide you with support and guidance up to and after any trial. Their contact details are printed on the back of this leaflet.

For further information please contact:

CPS West Midlands
Colmore Gate
2 Colmore Row
Birmingham B3 2QA
Tel: 0121 262 1300;
www.cps.gov.uk