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# Indian Legal Framework on Honour Killing

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MONIKA<sup>1</sup> AND HADIYA KHAN<sup>2</sup>

## ABSTRACT

*For every human existence, honour is a prized possession. Nobody has the right to take another person's precious life in the name of traditions and culture. Killing someone in the name of honour is illegal and a contravention of the most important fundamental right, the right to life. The right to life and dignity have been guaranteed to all citizens by the Constitution. Honour is intact with life of a human. The Indian Constitution guarantees this fundamental right. Every person has the right to be protected from threats to their lives. The right to live in society with dignity cannot be violated by social or cultural forces. However, it is illegal to kill someone in the family's honour; therefore, laws have been put in place to confront these unfair practices. The aim of this research was to examine the notion of honour and honour killing in India within the context of the fundamental legal system. This article highlights the legal provisions that address crimes of honour killing. The reasons for honour killings and international provisions concerning honour crimes are also examined in this article. To get to the judicial interpretation of the legislation, some significant rulings from the Supreme Court are also covered.*

**Keywords:** honour, dishonour, liberty, killing, unconstitutional, human rights.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Honour has proven to be something that is valued beyond all else in Indian culture. To protect the "honour" of their family, they would slaughter their loved ones without a second thought. In a country like India, which is considered one of the fastest-developing countries in the world, heinous crimes like honour killing still exist. Honour killing is essentially a "planned murder" committed to preserve a family's reputation and honour in order to keep it from falling in the eyes of people. Honour killing, also known as shame killing or customary killing. It is a planned murder because the family member who committed the murder believed the victim had brought dishonour upon the name of the family. The purpose is to remove the humiliation and disgrace that the victim has brought. Different families may accord different kinds of honour. Honour

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killing perpetrators frequently defend their actions by claiming that they will serve as a deterrent to others and stop them from carrying out similar crimes that would bring dishonour to their families and communities. Such acts may be supported by other members of the group closely associated with the perpetrators because they feel they have done something honourable to uphold the dignity and reputation of their caste, religion, or clan. As per the findings of the police investigation into these deaths, the offenders typically exhibit a certain level of pride in carrying out these killings rather than any sense of guilt. With women usually the primary victims and men the secondary ones, honour killings transform into a horrible form of gender-based violence.

By abusing the current legal system and court rulings, certain Indian organizations, such as Khap panchayat, control and fund honour killing. It is important to remember that India is a democratic country where everyone is subject to the law and no one is above it. Under the guise of upholding social or cultural norms, no one has the right to mess with the rights of others. Killing someone in the name of honour is illegal and a violation of a fundamental rights. When one considers this, the conduct appears to be cruel, inhumane, brutal, callous, insensitive, vicious, barbaric, and painful, violating the victim's basic rights. Nobody is authorized to break the very rules that govern the law, and those who do so should be placed under the authority of the mandate. When a woman is mistreated, tortured, tormented, mutilated, raped, forced into marriage against her will, imprisoned inside her own home, or, most heinously, murdered with the intention of protecting and upholding the honour of the family, we deny her fundamental right to life and liberty in the name of the honour.

## **II. CAUSES OF HONOUR KILLING**

The principal rationale behind the perpetuation of honour killing is the conviction that the deceased has caused disgrace to the family. This dishonour may differ because it is arbitrary, and various families define honour in different ways. For example, in some conservative families, it is forbidden to wear inappropriate clothing and is linked to family prestige. In other families, love marriage is considered taboo; one cannot choose their spouse; one must strictly abide by parental orders; live-in relationships are not acceptable; pre-marital sex is not acceptable; discovering one's gay, lesbian, or third gender, etc. Another aspect is that, as was mentioned at the outset, India is a diverse country where the caste, religion, and gotra systems are still very much in place. India has two distinct mindsets: one is urban (India), and the other

is rural (Bharat). While rural populations stick to the bounds of ethics and culture and dislike outsiders interfering with their way of life, urban populations are typically more accepting of modernity in terms of cultural and societal growth. Therefore, it is required that males uphold these customs and conventions and shield families from shame, fulfilling the traditional role of men as protectors of the family. On the other hand, women are required to conduct themselves honestly and are not allowed to breach any boundaries for the sake of maintaining cultural traditions and society's shame.

This understanding of the notion lends credibility to the very social norms governing women's behavior as well as to the persistent hostility directed against them. This could be the cause of the higher rate of honour killing in rural areas compared to metropolitan areas. However, when instances of honour killings increase; this division seems made up. Another factor contributing to the prevalence of honour killing cases is illiteracy. When one considers this aspect, it appears to be very weird, inhumane, callous, cruel, brutal, vicious, and agonizing conduct that violates the victims' unalienable rights. We deny a woman her fundamental right to life and liberty when she is subjected to abuse, torture, torment, mutilation, rape, forced marriage against her will, imprisoned inside her home, or most worst of all, murdered with the intention of upholding and defending the honor of the family. All of these acts occur in the name of honour. The girl may have chosen a life mate based on her preferences, but it is certain that the boy belongs to a different caste, subcaste, gotra, or opposing group. Her rights to privacy, autonomy over her body, life, liberty, freedom, marriage, and family are all completely unalienable. Rights are replaced by coercion and the crimes of a member of her own family, and in addition to her own life being in danger, her partner's life is also in jeopardy. It is important to understand that murdering a couple will not end the problem with honour. Instead, it causes immense trauma to the families affected and tears apart the social fabric of the community.

#### **(A) Demographics**

In India, an enormous number of Honour killing instances occur annually. The study demonstrates that the number of these instances is rising in northern India. Honour killing is disgraceful for modern and developing India. In India, there are many cases of honour killings that go unreported in both rural and urban areas. Based on data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there were 25 honour killings in India in the year 2020 and 25 in the year

2019. In 2021, the number increased to 33.<sup>3</sup> The actual number could be far higher because these figures are based on reported data. There are more cases of honour killing in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. The primary cause of these killings is people getting married without getting permission from their families, particularly when these marriages are between people who belong to different castes, religions, statuses, or backgrounds. This is particularly true in northwest India, where marriages take place between members of an exogamous clan or same gotra. Over 30% of honour killings in the country occur in the western part of Uttar Pradesh, as per the survey conducted by the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA).<sup>4</sup> In India's various parts, noticeably west Bengal, honour Killings were abolished around a century ago. Because of the activism and impact of reformists like Vivekanand, Vidyasagar, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and Ramakrishna.<sup>5</sup> In Punjab and Haryana, more cases are documented as a result of the role played by khap panchayats. Khap panchayats are a kind of community organization or group that are especially common in Northern Indian communities and are used to influence social issues in the community. It is alleged that khap panchayat encourages honour killing and intervenes in people's private affairs.<sup>6</sup> These kinds of organizations must be completely prohibited in order to prevent them from taking over the nation's legal system and manipulating its populace.

### **III. INTERNATIONAL LAWS REGARDING HONOUR KILLING**

Under International Human Rights Law, "honour killings" are regarded as a type of violence against women because they infringe women's rights to life and personal safety. As mandated by international law, states have to stop using "honour" as an explanation for violent crimes against women and protect women against gender-based violence, including that which comes from family members. Honour killings are the most severe and heinous infringement of human rights, breaching not only the fundamental right to life but also all other articles of the 1948 international convention on human rights. The existence of laws that give "honour killings" a low priority also shows a flagrant contempt for the 1996 International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, which safeguards people from the death penalty except in the most egregious

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<sup>3</sup> Ashwini M. Sripad, "Killing Honor in the name of Honor killing".

<sup>4</sup> "30% Honor killings of the in west UP; AIDA survey" News 18, 29/10/2015.

<sup>5</sup> "Honor killing in India" Daily Life in India, 16/ 6/ 2010. Retrieved 3/9/2010.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

of cases.

The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) also gets infringed by honour killings.

Article 1 of the convention states that any form of sex-based discrimination, exclusion, or restriction, that aims to prevent or interfere with women's exercise of their fundamental freedoms and human rights in any sphere- political, social, cultural, or otherwise- regardless of their status in relationships and on the basis of equality with men is considered discrimination against women "for the purposes of this convention."

Article 2 of the convention, states parties denounce distinction against women in all of its manifestations and commit to swiftly and appropriately pursuing a policy of eradicating such distinction and, to this end, undertake:

- Placing women's rights on the same level as men's rights in terms of legal protection and ensuring that other public institutions and competent national tribunals adequately safeguard women against discrimination.
- To reform or remove existing laws, regulations, customs, and behaviors that discriminate against women, and to take all necessary steps to do so, including adopting legislation.
- To eliminate all national laws that constitute injustice against women.

Over 90% of the world's members of the UN, or 185 countries, have signed this charter, including the majority of nations where "honour killing" is practiced. "Honour killings" are against the letter and the spirit of this legislation. It also includes India.

Additionally, the United Nations General Assembly resolution that established the Human Rights Council in 2006 stated that the council would be accountable for promoting universal respect for the defense of all fundamental freedoms and human rights for everyone, without exception, and in a just and equitable way. Consequently, it is clear that honour killings are prohibited by international human rights legislation, which also declines to defend them on the basis of "cultural or traditional rights."

#### **IV. LEGAL ANALYSIS OF HONOUR KILLING IN INDIA**

##### **(A) Constitution of India, 1950:**

The offense of honour killing violates Articles 14, 15, 19, 21, and 39 of the Indian Constitution. The act of honour killing is completely incompatible with constitutional provisions.

The articles of the Indian constitution that cover honour killing:

- Article 14 addresses the right to equality.
- Articles 15(1) and 15(3) address the prohibition of discrimination based on religion, race, estate, coitus, or place of birth.
- Article 17 addresses the abolition of untouchability.
- Article 19 addresses freedom of speech and expression.
- Article 21 addresses right to life and personal liberty.

**(B) Indian Penal Code, 1860 & Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973:**

As said before, honour killing perpetrators are regarded as murderers. It is possible to identify lawbreakers, even if it may be challenging, because community members often guard acts of killing. Furthermore, the criminal may raise the defense under Section 300 of I.P.C., arguing that his actions were a reaction to a grave and sudden provocation and that nothing was premeditated or planned. The victim's deed was so profoundly moving that he had lost complete self-control and simply followed his instincts, which led him to humiliate the family. Apart from this, Section 299-304 deals with capital punishment for all those convicted of culpable homicide and murder. Murder carries a life sentence, the death penalty, and a fine. Non-murder culpable homicide carries a life sentence or a maximum 10-year sentence in prison, as well as a fine. Section 307 deals with penalties that include up to 10 years in jail and a fine for making death threats. If someone is hurt, they may receive a life sentence in prison. Section 308 deals with a fine of up to three years in jail, or both, for attempting to commit culpable homicide. If it results in harm, the offender faces a maximum 7-year jail sentence, a fine, or both. Anyone who engages in criminal conspiracy is subject to penalties under sections 120A or 120B. The penalties for aiding and abetting murders are found in Sections 107-116. Additionally, several individual criminal acts with a common objective are penalized under sections 34 and 35.

It is challenging for the authorities to identify real perpetrators in northern regions because khap panchayats, who run the court system, issue death warrants for members of their own families. The police filed no FIRs since the law has not succeeded in identifying the offenders and gathering proof. Conviction rates are practically nonexistent if a formal complaint is lodged and

the cases are prosecuted. The Criminal Procedural Code's legal requirements for filling out a FIR seem to be a pointless exercise for khap panchayat governance.

**(C) Indian Evidence Act, 1872:**

This act criminalizes anyone who aids in concealing facts before, during, or after the alleged crime. In order for it to be established, understanding the concept of honor killing, in particular, requires an understanding of Section 13 of the Act. Facts relevant when discussing propriety or custom: To determine whether a right or custom exists, it is necessary to consider the following information: (a) any transaction that created, claimed to have modified, acknowledged, asserted, or denied the right or custom in question; (b) specific instances where the right or custom was asserted, recognized, exercised, or its exercise was contested; and (c) any transaction that created, claimed to have modified, acknowledged, asserted, or denied, or that conflicts with its existence. The objective of this act is to assure justice for those harmed by decisions made by Khap panchayats. This organization operates in accordance with its own set of rules.

**(D) Indian Majority Act, 1857:<sup>7</sup>**

For legal purposes, this act deals with an individual's major age; Section 3 states that, unless their personal law specifies a different age, a person residing in India achieves the age of majority when they reach the age of 18. Nevertheless, the age of majority will be 21 rather than 18 in the case of a guardian designated for such a kid. Regarding honour killing, this Act comes into effect when married couples who would normally be eligible for such a marriage because of their age or other circumstances have been forcibly separated by khap panchayat. It aids in defining the opinions of members of the khap panchayat and their contempt for the law. These circumstances unquestionably violate several of the Act's prohibitions.

**(E) Hindu Marriage Act, 1955:**

The fundamental conditions for a lawful marriage are provided in Section 5 of this Act. The provisions state that specific prohibited degrees of relationship must be maintained in order for a marriage to be recognized legally. Marital relationships are protected by both civil and criminal laws, which penalize violations by imposing severe penalties in the case of civil law. The Act makes it clear that Hindus are permitted to marry outside of their caste, as the Act imposes no restrictions on choosing a spouse.

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<sup>7</sup> Act No. 9 of 1857



**(F) Special Marriage Act, 1956:**

This Act covers specific types of marriages for Indian citizens without regard to caste, class, or religion. This Act facilitates inter-caste marriages by recognizing and registering them. In India, inter-caste marriages are more common in urban areas than in rural ones due to the country's rigid caste system. The Act states that the parties cannot be in a forbidden relationship; however, a marriage may be legally consummated even if the parties are in an illicit relationship if at least one of the parties abides by the tradition.

**(G) Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989:<sup>8</sup>**

The Indian Parliament passed this Act in order to prevent any kind of offense against scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The Act's main goal was to make it easier for Dalits to integrate into Indian society at large. The abuses covered by this act include forcing a woman who identifies herself as a scheduled caste or scheduled tribe to leave her family or community, abusing her sexually, and assaulting, outraging, and dishonoring her modesty. This Act was passed with the belief that it has a connection to honor killing, as caste and religion have been found to be significant contributing factors in some cases of honor killings.

**(H) Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005:<sup>9</sup>**

The rights of women that are granted by the Indian Constitution are more effectively protected by the provisions of this Act. These women all seem to have experienced some form of violence inside their families, whether it was related to or unrelated to them.

**(I) Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act, 2006:**

This act establishes commissions and courts to ensure the protection of everyone's human rights. Despite these regulations, honour killings continue to occur frequently, which results in infringements of human rights. Therefore, it would appear from the context of current legislation that there isn't a particular act that deals with the subject of honour killings. On the pretext of embarrassing their families, thousands of youngsters are cruelly slaughtered. The threat of honour killing continues to be poorly understood by the legal system and the judiciary. The government is held responsible for handling these offenses negligently. There is no legal description of the offense, no recognition of the various elements of the offense, no safeguard for self-choice couples, no preventative measures, no accountability, and no punishment. Most

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<sup>8</sup> Act No. 33 of 1989

<sup>9</sup> Act No. 43 of 2005

of these killings go unreported because they are categorized as either culpable homicide or murder. Therefore, there is limited trustworthy data regarding these killings in India.

## V. JUDICIAL ASPECTS

One such institution in India that has gained recognition for its generous contributions is the judiciary. Indians have great hopes and aspirations for the sanctuary of justice. The journey, spanning over seventy years, has resulted in a significant contribution to the system of governance. The judiciary is responsible for promoting peace, fostering harmony and balance, administering justice to all citizens, settling disputes, and maintaining harmony among various departments of government. Over time, the judiciary broadened its scope and produced revolutionary rulings. The early stages may have been inflexible, making decisions only based on the legal interpretation of statutes and regulations. The judges expanded the scope of fundamental rights and protected and upheld all laws by formulating their decisions as the creators of justice through the application of technical, procedural, scientific, and methodological approaches. Through a number of opinions, it provided various guidelines for defending the human dignity and rights of the people of India, with particular attention paid to issues pertaining to women, children, bonded labor, the fate of prisoners, socially and educationally disadvantaged individuals, environmental jurisprudence, etc. Thus, the recommendations of the highest court also represented this delicate subject of honour killing. Despite India's moderate and secular pledges, honor killing has persisted as a social reality. In India, instances of honour killing were usually recognized in court as manslaughter or homicide. But after courts considered the facts and circumstances of the case, courts were also utilized to uphold the alleged "honour" of the family in the name of which the horrible crime was committed, and usually perpetrators were spared.

In the landmark judgment of *Chandrapati v. State of Haryana and Others*,<sup>10</sup> Babli and Manoj were the case's victims. Due to their love for one another, they decided to elope and get married. Knowing this, the family members became enraged and went in search of the victims. After the family brought the matter before the khap panchayat, they were told not to contact the victim since doing so would result in a 25,000 fine for everyone who comes into contact with them. After discovering their whereabouts, the family presented them before the khap panchayat, which was also against them. They made a decision that was unfavorable to the victim because

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<sup>10</sup> AIR (2010) Punjab & Haryana High Court

they belong to different castes. In the interest of society, a choice based on religion and caste was made. In order to honour the family, the khap panchayat was also implicated in the victim's murder. Those connected to Babi were charged with the murder since Babi's grandfather was the leader of khap panchayat. Even still, they abducted the victims and killed them. When this case was brought before the Karnal district court, however, five of the murder's perpetrators were given life sentences. This is the first case involving an accused person receiving a life sentence for honour killing, marking a significant ruling in the field. A seven-year prison sentence was imposed on the driver who took part in the kidnapping. Honour killing is regarded as the most heinous offense as well.

In the case of *State of UP v. Krishna Master and Ors*,<sup>11</sup> Supreme Court Pronounced life imprisonment to three individuals, a whole family of six members, in the case of "honour killing" in the village of UP in 1991. The Allahabad High Court's verdict of acquittal was reversed by a bench of justices J.M. Panchal and H.S. Bedi, and after the trial, awarded them the death sentence. The bench determined that the trial court's decision to execute the respondents was fully justified because it is beyond dispute that the killing of six individuals and the extermination of almost an entire family under the flimsy pretense of upholding the honour of the family would qualify as one of the rarest of rare cases.

In the case of *Lata Singh v. State of UP*<sup>12</sup> and others, a bench of SC presided over by Justice Markandey Katju declared that honour killings are nothing more than cruel, cold-blooded murders, and there is no honor associated with them. Inter-caste marriage and inter-religious marriages should be promoted in society's social fabric; according to SC, the caste system should be eliminated as soon as possible because it is a national concern. In fact, at a time when unity is required to tackle the challenges facing the country, it is dividing the nation. Inter-caste marriages are consequently in the best interest of the nation because they would ultimately result in the destruction of the caste system. But concerning reports are coming from many different regions of the country, showing that young women and men who marry outside their caste either face actual violent acts or threats of violence. We believe that these kinds of violent, intimidating, or harassing acts are completely forbidden and that those who carry them out ought to face harsh penalties. A person can marry anybody they choose after they become a major in this free and democratic nation. A boy's or girl's parents are not permitted to abuse, carry out,

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<sup>11</sup> AIR (2010) 12 SCC 324

<sup>12</sup>AIR (2006) 5 SCC 475

or support acts of violence against, or assault, an individual who enters into an inter-caste or inter-religious marriage. The most they can do in such a situation is cut social ties with their offspring. Honour killings are simply barbaric and horrible acts of murder carried out by vicious, feudalistic people who ought to be punished severely. There is nothing honourable about honour killings.

In the case of *Shafin Jahan v. Ashok k M*,<sup>13</sup> also known as the “Hadiya Case,” Justice DY Chandrachud upheld Hadiya’s marriage to Shafin Jahn. This decision was an important victory for women's rights to marry the person of their choosing. The case was heard by the Apex Court's larger bench, which included Justices Dipak Mishra, Ajay Khanwilkar, and Dhanjay Chandrachud. Hadiya, a Hindu married to a Muslim, converted to Islam in this instance and took on the name Islam. Hadiya’s parents were successful in opposing her marriage. The High Court upheld her father's custody claim, even though she was twenty-five years old, and gave her over to him. Because of this occurrence, the media popularized the term "love jihad." The Apex Court lifted the burden from her parents for the sake of family honour by upholding her fundamental right to select her religion and life partner, thereby establishing the validity of her marriage.

In the case of *Shakti Vahini v. Union of India*,<sup>14</sup> the Supreme Court harshly criticized in their judgment Khap panchayat and how they handled the issue of honour killing. SC declared in a fifty-four-page judgment authored by its then-chairman, Shri Dipak Mishra, that “the practice of honour killing puts the rule of law into catastrophic crisis” and stressed the need for the government to protect the lives and dignity of people who are persecuted by khap. It is further said that no person or organization has the authority to obstruct the consensual and legal connection of an adult couple. It reaffirmed that the right to respectable life, as protected by Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, is closely related to freedom of choice and provided the police with the necessary instructions to video record khap panchayat sessions. A court judgment stipulates that employees who know about illegal acts but choose not to take action against such khap panchayats will be subject to disciplinary action within six months. The court’s earlier decisions make it explicit that acts of honour killing are not morally righteous. Chief Justice Mishra said that the Indian Constitution is a compassionate document that guarantees both the right to life and the right to decent living. A person's personal dignity is

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<sup>13</sup> AIR (2018), SC 1136

<sup>14</sup> AIR (2018), SC 1601

contingent upon their ability to select their life companion. It is not within the power of any individual or group to interfere with a legally sanctioned marriage. It eliminates any human or collective involvement in the process of selecting a life partner. In the landmark judgment, Justice Mishra said that the human rights of people are not mortgaged to the so called “honour” of the family. He continued by saying that mistreatment of both men and women who exercised their right to choose a life partner is also considered an honour crime, in addition to honour killing. The court used the word "a moment of existence" to express how clearly it felt about honour killings. In addition to ordering the federal government to collaborate with state governments to draft legislation against the practice, the court also mandated a corrective action: the police should protect couples who are under threat and, if they so choose, assist in getting married and having their marriage registered. As a follow-up to earlier actions, the government was mandated to establish safe houses under the supervision of the superintendent of police or the district magistrate for such couples. This service will be available to single couples as well as couples from other castes or religions who are in danger.

In conclusion, the court determined that disciplinary actions should be taken and police officers penalized within 6 months if the official learns about a khap panchayat's violation of the norms and takes no action. This historic ruling has undoubtedly set the stage for the law's implementers to wake up and take action to uphold the rule of law and their legitimate obligations. At the same time, the government is charged with safeguarding the lives of those who are suffering by directing the implementation of various measures that must be carried out by the federal and state governments. Undoubtedly, the Supreme Court's use of liberal jurisprudence is demonstrated in this decision.

## **VI. SUGGESTIONS**

- Discussions, education, and awareness are the best ways to deal with honour killing.
- The public’s perception of victims’s rights and the unconstitutionality of khap panchayat decisions can be greatly influenced by the media.
- Women should be freely accepted and supported in all of their life decisions by society.
- Politicians and other powerful individuals should work for the welfare and advancement of society as a whole, regardless of themselves.

- Improving the falling sex ratio is crucial. The main reason honour-based crimes arise in societies where men predominate is because of it.
- When it comes to honour killing, laws need to be made explicit and severe. These restrictions will serve as a disincentive for anyone to conduct such horrible actions.
- The victims of honour crimes should have access to a convenient legal system so they can air their complaints and understand the legal safeguards they can use to ensure their safety.
- The majority of individuals living in rural regions believe that it is their responsibility to follow Khap.
- Panchayat decisions rather than using them as a barometer of what is right or wrong. Some individuals believe that marriage between different castes brings disgrace to the family name. Such a mindset needs to be altered. People who follow such a road ought to be made aware of the dangers and the manner in which they are betraying their loved ones.
- Families' natural tendency to uphold the decisions made by their loved ones means that honour killing will inevitably begin to show a downward trend. As a result, through counseling, families can learn about their own limitations, the laws that are in place, and how breaking the law and severing ties with others only serves to make everyone's life more miserable than honourable.
- Non-governmental organizations must take proactive steps to raise awareness about the negative impacts of honour killings and to safeguard the rights of individuals whose lives have been disrupted or impeded by violence motivated by honour.

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

The purpose of honour killing is to uphold the dignity and grace of the family. However, killing someone is never honourable, especially if that person is someone you love deeply; it is definitely not worth it. The use of "religion" and "culture" as justifications for the murder of women or any other person is forbidden because both religion and laws are inherently arbitrary and open to interpretation. Everybody is entitled to a fair and honourable life. Therefore, the only effective way to stop such dishonest conduct is through aggressive regulation. No religion or culture can defend the horrible practice of honour killing. We have already discussed various aspects of laws related to the issue of 'honour killing'. Formal governance and proactive policing should be used to actively implement the aforementioned laws in society. Custom

should not take precedent over codified laws in a country that upholds the rule of law, especially when it comes to horrible crimes like “honour killing”.

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