

Asalam o Laikum,

This is Dr Shazia Khalid speaking to you. I am extremely upset that I can not physically attend the symposium arranged by you. I thank all of you to give me a chance to talk to you via phone.

I am that Dr Shazia whose parents were eager to send her to medical school. I wanted to be a doctor so I can serve humanity. On June 23rd, 2003, I joined Pakistan Petroleum Limited as medical officer. PPL supplies 40-50% natural gas supply of Pakistan. The place in Baluchistan where natural gas is produced is an underdeveloped area. Knowing all this, I still went there as there are no restrictions in my profession. Also, PPL officials assured me that I “will be safer there than in my own house in Karachi”. When I was appointed, I was also told that my my husband Khalid who is a petroleum engineer will also get the job at PPL. Later on this never came to fruition.

I was very happy with my job and my life and was doing very well. It is extremely difficult for me to recount those horrible moments, but I will do it for those thousands of sisters who are stuck in the grind of this society, this savage society. I will recount that sad story so I can be the voice for all my sisters who also suffered like me. I will do it so nobody else can desecrate the honor of other women. I will do it so no other shazia can feel threatened and leave the country. I will do it so no court can just do paperwork and be a puppet for the government and victimize the victims. I will do it so no other mother or sister's life and their careers' ruined. I will do it so every woman should be treated with respect.

On the night of January 2, 2005, at the PPL Sui field hospital, I was subjected to such a sad reality that ruined my life. My happiness was changed into mountains of woe, and my pure profession was desecrated. My honor was desecrated, I was tortured, I was beaten, dragged; when I screamed, and begged for mercy, and asked for help from God and Prophet; a telephone cord was tied to my neck and I could not breathe very well. If that cruel man kept on pressing the cord a little bit more, then maybe, today you would not be listening to me. I often wish that he should have killed me so I would not be subjected to living like this begging for justice, and would not be telling you a tale of my lost honor.

I am very disappointed that the government of Pakistan did not get me justice. My rapist is still roaming free somewhere. I am even more disappointed at the way PPL treated me. I kept asking for help, but nobody listened to my cries; instead they threatened me to be quiet; I was given tranquilizers; I was not sent to my family; I was not given a medical examination; I was forced to sign statements that I did not want to go the police; I was not given any treatment; Blood was dripping from my head and clotted off; My hands were swollen; I was bleeding from my mouth. I was kept hidden for three days and police were not allowed to see me. I was not even allowed to go to my room so I could get some essentials. The clothes that I was wearing the night I was raped, that were drenched in my blood were thrown away. Once things got heated up, PPL officials transferred me to a psychiatric hospital. Later on, also many injustices were done; I was threatened, and made to feel scared every step of the way. Finally, we had to leave our country; now we are helpless and homeless. We had a nice life that has been taken away from us. We are

away from our parents, and loved ones; our careers have been ruined. We have no desire to live any more. What will be our future? What will be our identity? We don't know.

I pray to God that no other sister should go through this. I am thankful to all of you who have raised a voice to get me justice: ANAA, Aurat Foundation, and Pakistan Medical Association's Dr Shershah. I pray that Pakistan's government should understand that fundamental need for our country is to get justice for victims, and to protect the honor of women, not to desecrate her honor in the name of justice. God willing, all mothers and daughters of Pakistan and the whole world should have their honor protected. This dishonorable act is not just happening to poor and uneducated women, but also happening to educated and qualified women like me.

Thank you,
Allah hafiz