

# PAKISTAN: Teenage girls shot dead by relatives over online footage

*Father of one victim and brother of the other arrested in connection with the murders.*

By Hannah Ellis-Petersen

The Guardian (17.05.2020) – <https://bit.ly/3bKqy0A> – Two female teenagers in Pakistan have been murdered by family members after a video emerged online of them associating with a man.

The pair, said to be aged 16 and 18, were shot dead by male relatives in their remote village in North Waziristan this week after footage was posted online of them in the company of a young man in a secluded area.

After they were shot, the pair were then buried in the village by their family members.

Local police confirmed they had arrested the father of one of the victims, and the brother of the other victim, in connection with arranging and carrying out the murders, and they were now being held in custody.

The police are searching for two other family members believed to have been involved in the killings.

The footage of the women, which is less than a minute long, was said to have been filmed last year but only appeared on social media a few weeks ago. The police said they were still searching for a third young woman who also featured in the video to ensure she did not suffer the same fate.

The tribal areas in North and South Waziristan, which borders Afghanistan, are known for the strict "honour code" imposed on women, whose movements are heavily restricted and who are often not allowed out of the house unaccompanied.

So called "honour" killings remain common in Pakistan's tribal areas, mainly against women who are believed to have brought shame on a family, and activists say up to 1,000 such killings are still carried out every year.

The issue was brought to the fore in Pakistan in September after three men were found guilty and sentenced to life behind bars for the killing of three women in Kohistan who had been caught on video singing and clapping at a wedding in 2011. The women's bodies were never found.

Though against the law, "honour" killing cases were previously difficult to convict owing to a loophole in the law that allowed perpetrators to walk free if they were given a pardon by the victim's family member.

However, the crimes now come with a mandated life sentence.