

Several injured as conservatives throw stones at Women's Day March in Pakistan

RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal (08.03.2020) – <https://bit.ly/3cJf9Aj> – Several people were reportedly injured as social and religious conservatives clashed with International Women's Day demonstrators in Islamabad on March 8.

RFE/RL's Radio Mashaal reported that participants in a conservative demonstration called Modesty Walk threw stones at demonstrators holding a march to mark International Women's Day.

Ismat Shahjahan, head of the Women's Democratic Front, which organized the march, said four participants suffered head injuries, while three others were less seriously hurt.

Police intervened to stop the violence.

About 1,000 people participated in the Islamabad Women's March.

The Women's March was being held under the slogan, "My body, my choice." Conservative groups, including the Jamaat-e-Islami political party, criticized the initiative as threatening traditional Muslim values.

Many women participating in the rival Modesty Walk wore burqas and chanted, "Our bodies, Allah's choice."

Women's March events were also held in Quetta, Lahore, Karachi, and other cities.

Much of Pakistani society is strictly patriarchal and dominated by strict codes of "honor" that control women's choices regarding marriage, reproduction, education, and other issues.

About 1,000 Pakistani women each year are murdered in so-called "honor" killings, often by their own relatives.