

Muslim Villager in Pakistan Allegedly Rapes Sixth Christian Girl

A Muslim who allegedly confessed to sexually assaulting five Christian girls raped a 10-year-old Catholic girl in Punjab Province last month, according to her family.

Tarkhani police have charged 25-year-old Muhammad Aftab, also known as Chandu, with raping a minor (section 376 of the Pakistan Penal Code) in a sugar cane field in Village 226-GB, according to First Information Report (FIR) No. 429 at the Tarkhani Police Station. Aftab has been arrested and remanded to Central Jail Faisalabad.

Aftab allegedly raped the girl on Dec. 10, Abid Masih, a 31-year-old relative of the girl, told Compass in village 226-GB, Tarkhani near Gojra.

“Though we had informed the Tarkhani police station, for a day we kept quiet as the rapist had gone underground, and we waited for him to come out,” Masih told Compass at his home. “When the rapist saw that no one has taken action against him, he came out, and our girl immediately identified him.”

Masih said the girl, whose name is withheld, went to a nearby field with 7-year-old Sahil Abid to load sugar cane for transport to a processing plant. The girl’s father, 55-year-old electrician Yousaf Masih, said that Aftab seized her and rushed into the sugar cane fields.

“Sahil Abid started screaming for help, but no one was there to help him,” Abid Masih said. “Therefore he came running to us and told us that a man kidnapped her and has taken her to the sugar cane fields.”

Sahil took him and Yousaf Masih to the site, Abid Masih said.

"As we reached there, that man masked his face and disappeared into the dense sugar cane fields," he said.

Abid Masih took her to the Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital, Samundri, he said.

Family members said that doctors at Samundri THQ Hospital confirmed that the girl was raped, and the FIR also notes that the medical report by doctors at the hospital states that she was raped.

"SHO [the Station House Officer] pleas to the honorable Court of Law to penalize the rapist/pedophile, who has confessed during interrogation to raping at least five other little Christian girls before this sad incident," the FIR states. "The culprit is sent to Central jail Faisalabad under judicial remand on the orders of the court and deserves exemplary punishment."

Abid Masih and Yousaf Masih said that Sahil also was unable to see the rapist's face, but that the girl was able to recognize him because she had been assaulted by him in the fields. They said she identified Aftab, the son of a local land owner.

"It's not the first time he has raped a minor girl," Abid Masih said. "He has raped at least five little Christian girls before this, but those families under pressure kept their mouths shut, and Christians also tried to force us to keep quiet and refrain from filing a police case, as they were fearful that it might worsen the relations between Christian and Muslim villagers."

Area sources said local Christians were angry with the family of Yousaf Masih for taking legal action against the rapist, believing that it would damage relations between Muslims and Christians.