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16 women killed in Kunduz since March: AIHRC

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Sixteen women have been killed since March 2012 in northern Kunduz province, where 70 cases of violence against women were registered over the past 10 months, officials said on Monday.

Last year, there were 125 cases of violence in Kunduz, including two murder, between March 2011 and March 2012, but the number of women killed increased to 16 since March 2012, Afghanistan Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) chief for Kunduz, Nadra Gayah, told Pajhwok Afghan News.

These include forced marriages, runaway from homes, divorces, acid attacks, abductions, beatings, self-immolation and rape, she added.

AIHRC commissioner, Suraya Subhrang, who visited Kunduz City on Monday, said their organisation was deeply concerned over the growing incidents of crimes against women and girls.

She asked security organs to cooperate with AIHRC in bringing to justice the perpetrators, reaching out to the victims and assisting them.

Subhrang also sought government's assistance in implementation of the AIHRC-initiated Tahqiq-i-Milli Programme aimed at assessing the situation of women across the country and highlighting the root causes of violence against them.

The programme has been launched in cooperation with judiciary departments, civil society groups, women rights activists, media outlets, religious scholars and tribal elders.

Poverty, illiteracy, lack of awareness about women's rights are blamed for violent acts against women by men in Afghanistan.

Kunduz governor Mohammad Anwar Jagdalak, however, said the situation of women in his province had improved in recent years. He said the government had investigated many cases of violence against women last year.

“Those involved in killing and rapping incidents have been arrested and referred to judiciary departments,” he said.