

## Report: Honor killings in Turkey on the rise

Around 200 people fall prey to honor killings each year in Turkey and the figure is increasing, according to the author of a recent report on the subject.



Professor Hasan Tahsin Fendođlu, head of the Prime Ministry's Human Rights Directorate, on Thursday released a report titled "Honor Killings between 2003 and 2007" during a meeting held at İstanbul's Swissôtel.

"Honor killings in our country are on the rise. This increase is not at dramatic levels, but is still thought-provoking," he said. According to the report, 220 people in different regions of Turkey in 2007 were victims of honor killings, while this figure was 150 in 2003 and 216 in 2006. The total number of honor killings in the last five years exceeded 1,000.

"Though Turkey has recently taken significant steps in the fight against honor killings, the number of victims continues to rise. The main reason behind such killings is our society's patriarchal structure," said Fendođlu.

He also noted that honor killings are committed mainly in big cities, which see a high level of intercity migration. "More than half of honor killings committed in the last five years all across Turkey were committed in İstanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Bursa, Diyarbakır and Antalya. İstanbul takes the lead among these cities with 167 killings. Another striking fact about İstanbul is that the number of honor killings committed in this city almost doubled in 2007. While 27 people were murdered in honor killings in 2006 in İstanbul, this figure rose to 53 in 2007," stated Fendođlu.

Fendođlu also emphasized that the victims and perpetrators of honor killings are generally uneducated. "Contrary to general belief, not all honor killing victims are females. Sometimes males are also the target in such killings. Nine percent of honor killings are perpetrated by children," he said.

He noted that imposing tougher penalties on perpetrators of honor killings has a deterrent effect on such crimes. "We believe an increase in the number of women's shelters will help reduce violence against women," Fendođlu remarked.