

Pakistani grooms punished for 'lavish' wedding meals

Islamabad - Grooms in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP) are being sentenced to jail if 'lavish' meals are served at their weddings.

Peshawar Civil Judge Asghar Shah Khilji sentenced Sheraz Khan to one month in prison and a fine of Rs.500,000 Saturday for serving a 'lavish' meal at his wedding. The court has so far sent five men to prison for violating the ban.

NWFP is the first province to enforce the Marriage Functions (Prohibition of Ostentatious Display and Wasteful Expenses) Ordinance, 2000, issued by President Pervez Musharraf to curb ostentation during weddings and other social occasions.

Khan was found guilty of violating the law by serving a 'lavish meal' at his walima reception, the ceremony that follows the nikah (marriage) on Oct 27, 2005. He was shifted to the Peshawar central prison after the court ruling, the Daily Times newspaper reported.

Justice Khilji has been hearing cases of violations of the wedding meal ban registered by the administrations of the four towns in Peshawar.

People connected with such ostentatious weddings are also not spared. Along with the five grooms, the court has convicted the principal of a technical vocational centre for renting out the premises for a wedding. Similarly, the principal of a girls' high school was also punished for renting out the school for a marriage.

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