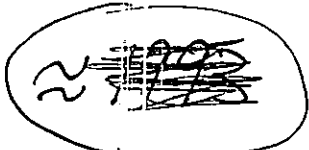


To "The People" OF COLORADO WHO BELIEVE IN DECENCY AND JUSTICE

Bangladesh clerics cane rape victim



By the Associated Press

When Islamic clerics set up a village "court," Saher Bannu thought she would see punishment of a man accused of raping her daughter. She was wrong.

produce three male witnesses to support her allegation that she was raped one day when she went to the fields to pick vegetables.

in remote villages, where most people are illiterate, clerics have far more influence than the police or judiciary.

Instead of convicting the man, the 13 priests sentenced the daughter to 80 lashes with a supple bamboo cane for having unlawful sex.

Such courts have no legal standing, but their punishments are carrying out. Fundamentalists are growing increasingly assertive in Bangladesh, where 90 percent of the people are Muslims.

Women's rights groups say at least 18 women have been killed in recent years after being convicted of violating the Sharia.

lazzera Begum, 20, passed out after receiving 38 blows. The trial and punishment were witnessed by about 200 people, including women and children.

Bangladesh's civil code is based on laws inherited from the British, who ruled the Indian subcontinent until 1947. But local Islamic laws on their own when they hold

Most killed themselves, because they could not bear the humiliation. Women accused of adultery have targeted that

The self-appointed court found her guilty because she couldn't

conduct -- are applying their interpretations of the codes of Islam.

Women accused of adultery have targeted that

THE SITUATION OF WOMAN IS NOT BETTER IN OUR MODERN DENVER COLORADO

I WAS CONVICTED OF ASSAULT BY JUDGE JAMES KIMMEL OF LITZETON CITY COURT AFTER MY SONS FATHER SCRATCHED HIS ARM ON THE BARBARECANI HELD TO SHIELD MYSELF FROM HIM. AFTER HE SIDEMED OUT OF HIS HOUSE AND CHARGED AT ME WHEN HE SAW ME CARRYING MY BABY SON TO MY CAR FROM HIS NEIGHBORS HOUSE, WHERE HE LEFT HIM MALICIOUSLY WITHHOLD MY BABY FROM ME. KIMMEL SAID "YOU HAD NO BUSINESS BEING AROUND HIS HOUSE!!"

MAGISTRATE GRAFTON BIDDLE OF ARAPAHOE COUNTY COURT CALLED MY ABUSER... "A GOOD FATHER"... WHEN I FILED FOR RESTRAINING ORDER, DESPITE THAT I TOLD HIM OF CRUEL ABUSES BY MY SONS FATHER AND PRESENTED WITNESSES THAT BABY'S FATHER BRUTALIZED ME UPON MY RETURN FROM HOSPITAL AFTER CHILD BIRTH IN FRONT OF MY TWO DAYS OLD BABY, MY DAUGHTER AND HIS TWO SMALL CHILDREN WHO WERE VISITING AND MY GIRLFRIEND WHO BROUGHT ME FROM HOSPITAL BECAUSE MY BABY'S FATHER REFUSED TO

BABY'S FATHER SUE ME FOR CUSTODY. JUDGE IN JEFFERSON COUNTY WAS "NOT READY" TO GIVE ME CUSTODY BECAUSE AFTER I TESTIFIED ABOUT HIS KICKING, BEATING AND ABUSING ME SHE SAID... "HALINA HAS NO ABILITY TO INCOURAGE LOVE AND AFFECTION TOWARDS THE CHILD'S FATHER!"

TWO OF HIS WITNESSES WERE ALLOWED TO TESTIFY AND NONE OF MINE DESPITE THAT HE WAS CHARGED WITH ASSAULT IN 1997 FOR HITTING ME ON THE HEAD WITH A BOARD AND IN 1989 I WAS HOSPITALIZED AFTER HE BEAT ME. JUDGE CONCLUDED, DESPITE THAT I TESTIFIED THAT HE BEAT MY DOOR DOWN AND TREW ME ON THE FLOOR THAT... "IT WAS A RELATIONSHIP WITH VIOLENCE INITIATED BY BOTH PARTIES!"

EVENTUALLY JUDGE GAVE ME CUSTODY IN THE SECOND HEARING BUT SHE STARTED THE PROCEEDINGS SAYING... "LET'S SEE IF HALINA CONTINUES TO MAKE DERAGATORY STATEMENTS ABOUT THE CHILD'S FATHER"... DESPITE HIM SUEING ME FOR CUSTODY, JUDGE TOLD ME TO PAY MY OWN ATTORNEY'S FEES DESPITE VERY MIDDLE CLASS CHILD SUPPORT.