

# Lahore High Court gives four children into custody of their mother

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Islamabad

Emotional scenes were witnessed in the Lahore High Court (LHC), Rawalpindi Bench, when four UK national children were given back in the custody of their mother Hasira Nazir from their father Ishtiaq Ahmed who went fugitive with the children in the year 2002.

Advocate Naheeda Mehboob Elahi who was representing Hasira in this case told 'The News' that both Ishtiaq and Hasira were UK nationals and were married in the year 1999. Being an aggressive and violent husband, Ishtiaq used to beat her wife regularly which was reported by one of his children in the school in the year 2002.

As a result, the social service and school administration held a case conference and put the children on the panel of protection register. Due to the fear of losing children's

custody, Ishtiaq took his children and wife to Pakistan while lying to his wife that government would take their children from them.

He promised them that they will return after two months when the matter is dead. He took the passports of his wife and children and refused to return after two months. Being a patient of Crohn's disease, Hasira had to return to UK for treatment but Ishtiaq did not let children to accompany her.

On her return to UK, Hasira filed a petition for custody and court ordered Ishtiaq Ahmed to return all four children to their mother. Ishtiaq on receiving this notice changed his residence whereas his sister in UK alleged that Hasira might have killed her brother as they had no contact with him.

On receiving information from their eldest daughter Sabiha Ahmed, 17, in the year 2003, Hasira came to know that her children were at Dina. When she reached the address,

Ishtiaq hit her on her head with a brick and fled once again.

From there he went to Jhelum and then to Chakwal, every time changing the city when detected. Meanwhile Sabiha secretly kept on writing letters to her mother telling her about the whereabouts.

In 2008, Hasira was informed that Ishtiaq was residing in his ancestral home in Jhelum. They filed case against him in the LHC bench in Rawalpindi and upon the orders of the court local police raided the house and recovered the elder two children, including Sabiha and Qasim Tausif, 15.

The stepmother refused to hand over other two children named Haseeb Rehman, 11 and Sikander Rehman, 10. On Friday, the ordeal of Hasira ended when the LHC, Rawalpindi Bench, headed by Justice Khalid Ahmed, ordered the custody in the favour of mother after listening to the statements of children.

## BHC told to facilitate children's return to UK

By Mudassir Raja

RAWALPINDI, Aug 8: Lahore High Court (LHC) Rawalpindi bench here on Friday handed over four British national children to their aunt and asked the British High Commission (BHC) to facilitate their return to their mother in the United Kingdom.

Justice Khalil Ahmed handed over Sebah Ahmed, 17; Qaim Rehman, 15; Haseeb Rehman, 10, and nine-year-old Sikandar Rehman to their maternal aunt, Sakina Latif, who was appointed the children's guardian by the petitioner, Hasra Nazeer. The judge also asked the BHC to facilitate the return of the children to their mother.

The petitioner had filed a habeas corpus application in the court to recover her children from her husband, Ishtiaq, who had allegedly kept them in illegal custody and was not handing them over to their mother.

According to Naheeda Mehboob Elahi, the attorney of the petitioner, the family came to Pakistan in June 2002 after their eldest child informed her school authorities that her father had beaten up her mother. As a result the social school service personnel started visiting their house to determine whether the children were at risk or not.

When they came to Jhelum, their native city, Ishtiaq, also a British national, refused to go back to England and told his wife that if she wanted to return, she could do so without the children. Hasra went back to England in 2002 and tried to persuade her husband to return as well.

Ms Elahi said Hasra Nazeer moved a British family court for the custody of her children and obtained a declaration stating that the children were habitual residents of United Kingdom and would be under the guardianship of the court.

The petitioner also moved a family court in Jhelum for the custody of the children but the case was disposed of due to non-prosecution as Ishtiaq kept on changing his residences along with the children to evade the court jurisdiction. The respondent, Ishtiaq, on the other hand had maintained that the habeas petition was not maintainable as the children had willingly been living with him since 2002 and did not want to return to the UK. A court bailiff on July 25, 2008 recovered the children from the custody of their father in Jhelum and handed over the two older children to the mother and the younger to the father on interim bail. However on Friday, the court allowed them to return to their mother.