

## **Sahar al-Haideri Wins Amnesty Award**

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Iraqi journalist and former IWPR trainee Sahar al-Haideri, who was murdered by gunmen in her home town of Mosul on June 7, 2007, has been honoured in the **Amnesty International Media Awards 2008**.

Her story, **Honour Killing Sparks Fears of New Iraqi Conflict**, published by IWPR in May 2007, about the brutal murder of a young Yezidi woman in the town of Bashika, won the New Media category.

Haideri was killed after receiving 15 death threats because of a series of stories she wrote highlighting the influence of religious extremists, especially in curbing women's rights. Ansar al-Islam has claimed responsibility for her murder.

The journalist, who was 45 and had four daughters, reported from the northern city of Mosul, considered Iraq's second most dangerous location for journalists after Baghdad.

Her investigative report into the honour killing of Duaa Khalil Aswad was one of several she wrote which looked into violence against women in the region.

On April 7, a mob stoned the 17-year-old girl to death while bystanders applauded and filmed the vicious attack on their mobiles. Her only "crime" was to fall in love with a Muslim boy.

When she heard about the incident, Haideri travelled twice to Bashika, 25 kilometres east of Mosul, and talked to eyewitnesses and neighbours.

During her investigation, clashes between Muslims and Yezidis erupted in the area, and dozens of Yezidis were killed in what were believed to be revenge attacks.

The violent murder of the teenager soon escalated into political and sectarian battle in a country already riven by civil war.

Haideri's report, which was republished by many Kurdish newspapers and websites, sparked a debate about honour killings and whether the perpetrators should be prosecuted like any other murderer.

The Amnesty awards ceremony took place on June 17 in the Lawrence Hall in London.

Also short-listed in the New Media category were BBC News Online for its coverage of Buddhist monks' demonstrations against the military junta in Burma, and The Guardian online for its reporting on protests in Tibet against Beijing's rule.

For more about Sahar please see **Iraqi Reporter Latest Victim of Violence Against Women Journalists**.

**Location:** [Iraq](#)

**Topic:** [Human rights](#)

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