# Pakistani Man Institutionalized After Attempt to Establish First Gay Club Sparks Backlash



A Pakistani man, who attempted to establish the nation's first gay club, was institutionalized in a mental hospital following allegations by religious conservatives that he pursued the effort upon returning from the U.K. The individual, whose identity remains undisclosed, submitted an application to create the club in Abbottabad, a conservative city in northern Pakistan. The proposed establishment, named Lorenzo, aimed to serve homosexual, bisexual, and even some heterosexual residents.

Gay sex is criminalized in Pakistan and can result in prison sentences of up to two years. The deeply conservative culture further complicates the open expression of homosexuality. Consequently, the man faced significant backlash from local citizens and politicians, including threats from members of the Jamiat Ulema Islam (JUI) party and comments from Pakistan Awami Tehreek party members indicating severe repercussions if the club were to open.

On May 9, the man was transferred to Sarhad Hospital for Psychiatric Diseases in Peshawar. According to his friends, who are concerned for his wellbeing, they have been unable to visit or gather information about his condition.

In his application, the man clarified that the club would not permit any sexual activity beyond kissing, with clear signage enforcing this rule to avoid legal issues under Pakistan's anti-sodomy laws. Prior to his hospitalization, he expressed his commitment to advocating for human rights and intended to seek judicial support if authorities denied his request.