

WAF Working Committee Meeting

7th July 2021

Participants

1. Ayra
2. Bunny
3. Elaine
4. Mehreen
5. Naji
6. Neelam
7. Nida
8. Rani
9. Ruby
10. Tauseef

Agenda Item # 1: Webinar 14th August – Bangladesh, India & Pakistan 74 Years Later

Bunny: Been thinking of this Webinar. We had decided there would be three persons from India and three from Pakistan. From Pakistan Ruby, Noreen Nazir, Nazish Brohi and from India -Uma a historian. Done work on Kashmir. Very active on whole range of issues. Kavita very active on movements in Bengal. Kalpana an activist, Confident that these people will be able to cover the larger canvas of 74 years.

Ruby: Bunny, why don't you do Pakistan yourself. (Bunny agrees.)

Bunny: Rani could be moderator. (This will be decided later.)

Rani: A concept note would be good before we finalize.

Ruby: I will write concept note and share with the whole group.

Bunny: Needs to be done quickly as only a month left.

Ruby: Will have it ready by tomorrow.

Agenda Item # 2: Sub-committees –Processes, Procedures & Autonomy

Bunny: How much autonomy in sub-committees? We took position on NCSW as National without waiting for all the chapters to get back. Consequently, clarified but Karachi not happy with this saying what has been done cannot be taken back.

If we want it to give a National Position, we must give time to chapters to discuss and then reach a consensus. It can be just a Lahore Position by getting a consensus with the working committee.

Rani: Already decided in previous meeting that we follow above procedure. We need to know how much time it will take chapters to take a decision.

Bunny: We need to play by ear, depending on issue, urgency etc.

Rani: We should give 2 days and then a reminder. And if no National Consensus, then we give the statement with the name of the chapters who have agreed.

Agenda Item # 3: RTI Updates – Judiciary and Military

Bunny: Information Commission wrote to judiciary to answer 3 of the 5 questions. But no response. So we are telling Commission. Keeping the ball rolling. Still in the process.

Agenda Item #4: WAF National Convention

Bunny: 40 years of WAF. Consensus that it would be in Lahore. In principle if we agree to host Convention in October the host city looks after housing, and all other logistics.

Funds collected by donations for this.

It was earlier to be in Feb but delayed because of Covid.

Lahore makes Agenda.

Najji: Keep time flexible as Covid situation still uncertain.

Programme needs to be discussed in detail. Agenda takes time.

Najji: For accommodation we have HRCP and Shirkat Gah.

Bunny: For the meetings we need a hall not an auditorium.

Najji: Roof of HRCP could be used for meeting if weather is ok. After permission from Farah Zia.

More discussion on this post the Concept Note.

Agenda Item #5: SNC & OUP

Rani: Talked with Aameena Sayeed, who now has her own Publishing company. She got NOC for Punjab, but needs another NOC for Islamabad. In the Punjab approval has to go to 2 places – 5 Members each of Punjab Text book Board and 5 members of the Ulama Committee. Price has to be negotiated for each book. Aameena negotiated a price of about Rs.13000 per person in the

committee. Individual negotiations. Bigger publishers giving more. Very lucrative source of money.

Nida said that the smaller publishers won't be able to pay.

Rani: They are creating avenues for corruption. We should focus on this issue.

Ayra: We used to get Rs. 5000 for review of books. Now review price to be negotiated with the Publishers but no guide lines given.

All the books go to the Ulema committee for approval.

Rani: All this will raise the price of books and ultimately all costs will be paid by student.

Elaine: Cost of books going up a lot.

Nida: Education will become inaccessible, especially for poor children, therefore defeating the purpose of the SNC.

Najji: Check with other publishers.

Rani: Smaller publishers should be asked.

More fact finding needed.

Nida: Format made for checking the books. Template will be circulated.

We have made out indicators for review.

Ruby: Some very controversial questions. Should add this to the indicators also.

Neelam: Suggests another indicator should be whether information is relevant to subject or is it dated.

Ruby: Template to be shared with W/Committee.

Tentative deadline is 15th August. Work done to be sent to Nida for compilation.

Elaine, Ayra, Neelam and Tauseef have volunteered to help with evaluation of books.