

WAF Meeting Minutes

23rd February 2022

Participants

1. Elaine Alam
2. Erum Kashif
3. Khawar Mumtaz (Rani)
4. Nida Usman
5. Nighat Dad
6. Nighat Khan (Bunny)
7. Tauseef Hyat
8. Ume Laila Azhar

Agenda item # 1: PECA Ordinance Amendments

Nighat Dad not sure how this affects WAF as there is no fake news by us. But Bunny pointed out that we do give strongly worded statements on issues.

Nighat Dad explained the amendment (sec 20) by Ordinance to the Peca Law, basically three main points

- Crime can be punished by 5 years compared to the previous 3 years.
- Is non-bailable.
- Is not person specific includes institutions and any person can complain about defamation, not necessarily person concerned.

Nighat Dad had attended a meeting of lawyers and one lawyer, Ahmed Hossain, had suggested that it should be taken straight to the Supreme Court. He wanted to know if WAF wanted to be a petitioner. Nighat Dad will try and arrange a meeting so that Ahmed can explain his point of view. Some of the other High Court lawyers had not agreed with his view on this.

Khawar said we had already given a strong statement and other organizations were going to court but we would be happy to hear Ahmed's point of view before a final decision.

Consensus was that we should give clear statements but avoid personalization.

Nighat Dad said there should be no compromise and we should ask for the withdrawal of Sec 20. which has been the WAF position.

Agenda item # 2: Qandeel Baloch Murder Case

Nighat Dad said that she and other lawyers would dissect the judgment as it had a lot of technical aspects to it.

Nida said there needs to be a discussion on what is ‘honour’ killing as an objective definition is needed. Nighat Dad agreed that we need to understand the loopholes which exist in the amendments which have been made in this law. Nida suggested we hold a Webinar on the criminal justice system. It was agreed that we should. Nida and Nighat Dad, along with Sahar Bandial, would will organize it for next Wednesday and also ask Aurat March members to join.

The NCSW is planning to challenge the judgment which has set Qandeel Baloch’s brother, the murderer, free.

Khawar said we should put pressure on the Government re the Qandeel case.

Nighat Dad reminded the members that it was Lahore WAF who had followed the Qandeel case closely right from the beginning.

Agenda item # 3: Schedule Meeting with New Members

Bunny suggests that Rani could give new members a brief and then Nyla and others could talk about her coming into WAF. Then they could ask questions. Try and make it a lively situation.

Discussion on when to invite them. The 2nd had been suggested, but then the Webinar was fixed for the 2nd, which they could attend of course. Meeting with them needs to be scheduled for another day.

Agenda item # 4: Aurat March Preparation

We need to nominate some WAF Members to liaise with AM. Nida, Nyla and Erum nominated as our reps for Aurat March. Erum has already attended one gathering of AM and she and Nida will attend their fundraiser in Ichra on Saturday. Erum will meet up with Nyla to look at some of the older banners, and see if some are relevant and can be used without the WAF logo showing. Other placards can be made. Nighat Dad has some Qandeel Masks. Placards highlighting the problems of the LHV should also be made. Given that Justice is the theme of AM this year it was agreed that the issue be highlighted by WAF also.

WAF dupattas will be worn but no WAF logo on any of the banners or placards.

Agenda item # 5: JAC re: Blasphemy Law

JAC Meeting on Monday. JAC wants WAF to kick off meeting on Blasphemy. Khawar and Bunny will attend and Bunny will start the discussion. JAC Meetings are open to all WAF members. But only Rani can give the official WAF position as she is the WAF rep.

At JAC Meeting WAF wants to discuss the Blasphemy Law and to discuss strategies to at least get false testimony punishable. Also witness and accused protection to prevent extra-judicial murder.

Agenda item # 6: Rubina Saigol Research Award

Nida wanted to know if men could also be selected for the Award. And she wanted some WAF members to form a committee to review submissions and select the winners. After some discussion it was decided that men may take over too much space instead of young female researchers.

The members decided that for the time being it should be limited to women only and give them this space and later we could revisit this decision. Review Board/Committee could have men on it. Khawar suggested that Review Board/Committee design the criteria for all the reviewers to follow. Nida will request WAF Members to volunteer for reviewing the papers for the Award.