

Minutes of WAF Working Committee Meeting

9th December 2020

Attended by:

Neelam Hussein

Sultanaat Bukhari

Nasrene Shah

Nighat Khan (Bunny)

Maryam Hussein

Tauseef Hyat

Agenda Item No. 1. Feedback on JAC Meetings with PDM – i.e PML-N and PPP.

Background: This was discussed at last WAF WC Meeting – 3 issues to be raised with PDM

- (i) How do they intend to get rid of the Government constitutionally
- (ii) Why was PTM sidelined
- (iii) JUI's position on minority communities.

Neelam explained that in response to Mary Gill's tweet (she is a PMN-L Member) suggesting that Civil Society was supporting them. Irfan, Convener JAC had drafted a response and sent it to WAF. Both Bunny and Irfan, had immediately contacted Mary on this issue and she removed the tweet and statement from her fb within an hour.

Hina drastically revised the Statement, and it was a strong statement which reflected WAF's discussion with PDM and was consequently endorsed by WAF. JAC's final draft had not been shared with the WAF WC at the time of this meeting.

Maryam had some questions about the procedure of WAF's engagement with JAC.

Bunny explained that it was not possible to keep everyone informed of what was happening in the various committees. That WAF had given a mandate to some of the WAF members to take decisions without consulting the WAF Working Committee, and this whole procedure worked on trust. Mistakes could be made and discussed at a later stage. This autonomy to Committee Members became essential when there were tight deadlines to be met.

Bunny gave feedback to the meeting with PDM. Two of the WAF concerns, one on the minorities and JUI's attack on Ahmedis and the question of how were they planning to get rid of

the Government constitutionally, were conveyed to them. The point about PTM was dropped, as Mohsin Dawar said that PTM was not interested in joining up with the PDM.

Maryam had some reservations on the letter drafted by Hina Jilani on behalf of JAC. Mainly that their bias in favour of PDM was self-evident. Maryam also said that roles within WAF should be defined carefully, to make the organization more robust.

Bunny asked if WAF WC wanted every communication from all the WAF Committees forwarded to them to which the consensus was that they did not want them forwarded. And once mandate was given the committee was autonomous.

Neelam said that not sending the additions was an error on her and Rani's part, not a procedural issue.

Bunny said she would forward the final JAC statement to all the Members.

Agenda item No. 2 Update on RTI's & follow up on RTI request for the High Court Judges

Bunny explained the very complicated procedures and stages of following up on the RTI's.

Most WAF members dropped out after the first or second round of sending letters. Three members are continuing – Bunny, Naila and Ruby. Bunny said the positive aspect was that the Information Commission was strong. There is still a long way to go but the good news was that DAWN had picked up the story and the Twitter responses were positive.

Najji commented that these battles take a long time and eventually end up in court, one just has to be patient.

Neelam said that pursuing the RTI was a very good precedent, which had not been done before.

Agenda Item No. 3 Neelam's Webinar

The Webinar has been re-scheduled for Friday 18th December.

Agenda Item No. 4 Miscellaneous

Neelam suggested that all those who were part of WAF when JAC came into existence should jot down their memories so that they could get the history straight.

Bunny said that we could then put it on the WAF website. She also requested that members should send her any material they had written on WAF for the website, plus any mementos they had. Bunny also explained that the website may have some mistakes but these could easily be rectified. She would also look for material for the WAF calendar.

P.S Legal Committee Draft on Rape Ordinance will be discussed at next meeting as most members of the committee were unable to attend this meeting.

Suggestions by Maryam Hussein which were on 'chat' in response to Bunny's question asking if she should email 100% of communications to all the WC Members.

- That JAC meetings be minuted.
- That WAF representatives to JAC contact the WAF WC for further consultation and consensus when JAC takes a decision that is in opposition to WAF's consensus decision.
- That under such circumstances the JAC Representative asks JAC to allow WAF a short amount of time for consultation on the matter for consultation with WAF and to make room for input by WAF into texts that are for public or other circulation. Extra time needed could be as short as a few hours, depending on the urgency of the situation.
- WAF Representative could also ask WC for an ok without circulating a particular text back to the WC.