June 7, 2007

Dear Aruna,

The demand for a law on communal violence emerged from a brutal record of recurring violence in our country, the increasing occurrence of gender-based crimes in communal conflagrations, and complete impunity for mass crimes. The Common Minimum Programme (CMP) had thus promised the citizens of this country a 'comprehensive legislation' that would finally challenge the decades of impunity which communal criminals have enjoyed; which would strengthen our hands in the struggle against communalism; which would allow us to prosecute for mass crimes committed with political will and intent. Unfortunately what we have been offered is a cynical, shoddy, and dangerous piece of legislation, whose first avatar was The Communal Violence (Suppression) Bill, 2005. This was then replaced but not vastly improved by The Communal Violence (Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation of Victims) Bill, 2005.

There is an urgent need to oppose the present legislation as instead of helping the victims, it will end up strengthening the hands of the communal forces in the country.

Some of us have taken the initiative to organize a National Consultation on the Communal Violence (Prevention, Control and Rehabilitation of Victims) Bill, 2005 on June 16, 2007 from 9.30am to 4pm in Delhi.

Please find enclosed a concept note, copy of the bill and a compilation of the various critiques of the bill.

We invite you to participate in the National Consultation. We are trying to raise funds but might not able to raise enough to support everyone's travel, so we request all those who can afford to pay or their organizations can support to manage on their own.

We request you to kindly confirm participation as soon as possible.

Sincerely yours

Justice AM Ahmadi
Farah Naqvi
Gagan Sethi
Shabnam Hashmi

23, Canning Lane, New Delhi-110023
Tel-23070722/ 23070740/ 09811807558