

# ACID ATTACK ON WOMEN IN INDIA

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## ***ABSTRACT***

This thesis explores the issue of acid attack violence: a sadistic and cruel form of violence that involves the intentional throwing of corrosive acid onto another person with the intention of disfigurement. Acid attack violence occurs in many countries but is particularly prevalent in: Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Cambodia. Global statistics suggest that attacks are predominantly perpetrated by men as a result of shame and loss of face or loss of honour. Developing an understanding of the motivations and aetiology of this form of violence is the focus of this thesis as much of the current discourses and interventions are focused on the victims of these crimes, and do not address or investigate underlying root causes. Drawing on Heisler and colleagues' adapted socio-ecological model, this thesis will explore factors that contribute to the acid attack violence and will refer to high-profile cases in Cambodia, Bangladesh and India. Acid attack is a deep rooted social evil. Over the years, the intensity of this crime has attracted social activists, legislators, judges as well as researchers to identify measures to curb this evil. A lot of work has already been published that deals with the various aspects of the cruel act of acid throwing. As the degrading act of human rights abuse through acid throwing is attracting the interest of researchers to study the various aspects of this crime; it is necessary to study and review the existing literatures so that the efforts put by the earlier authors are not repeated. In this paper, the author makes a humble attempt to review the existing literatures on acid attack in India. Further, the paper also identifies the gaps that may be taken up for further investigation and research. Acid attacks or violence is such violence where acid is intentionally thrown on the victim to maim, disfigure or to blind her. It is a bitter aspect of many women's life all over the globe. Many of these attacks are the acts of revenge because a woman spurns sexual advances or rejects a marriage proposal. These men feel so insulted that a woman could turn them down and have an attitude of "If I can't have you, no one can." It reflects a deeply entrenched misogyny against women by husbands, disgruntled lovers and other male relatives. Survivors are unable to bear the long drawn treatment and left to nurse emotional and physical scars for life, while their assailants roam free and get away with minimal or almost no punishment from an apathetic, ignorant and uncaring state. India still categorizes it as a grievous hurt, doling out penalties which are lenient and jail terms which are bailable. India is the fourth most dangerous place in the world for women to live in as women belonging to any class or creed and religion can be victims of this cruel form of violence and disfigurement, a premeditated crime intended to kill or maim her permanently. The Apex Court of India i.e. the Supreme Court has also laid down certain provisions on the sale of these acids, thereby paving the way to the Criminal Amendment Act, 2013. This act contains certain major provisions on acid attack violence which was never before.

## *Introduction*

Women constitute half the population in the society and it is presumed that best creation belong to the women. It is harsh reality that women have been ill-treated in every society for ages and India is no exception. Violence against women is largely unreported. Fear and stigma often prevent women from reporting incidents of violence or seeking assistance. Violence against women can fit into several broad categories. Among them one of the most heinous crimes committed against women is acid attack. Over the last decade India is witnessing an alarming growth of acid attack especially on women.<sup>1</sup>

A search of Indian newspapers found 153 reported cases of acid violence from January 2002 to October 2010. According to data gathered by the Cambodian Acid Survivors Charity on people treated in hospitals for acid attacks, there have been 271 acid violence victims between 1985 and June 2010 in Cambodia. Governments in these countries do not keep official statistics of acid attacks, and there are likely many more attacks than these figures reveal. In India there is no reliable statistics on acid attacks since a large number of cases go unreported, even national crime record bureau (NCRB) doesn't carry any statistics on acid attack, this lack of data shows that how casually the country treats the phenomenon. Some NGO'S organization such as acid survivor foundations, Bangalore-based Campaign and Struggle against Acid Attacks on Women (CSAAAW) and Kolkata-based Acid Survivors Foundation India (ASFI) has initiated work for the collection of statistics. As everyone know that criminal justice system has always discourage the acts or omission which in general can affect the right in rem and violators have always been punished with strict sanctions but in acid attack cases it is an awfully

<sup>1</sup>*Indian penal code, 1860*

pathetic situation that the perpetrators get least punishment or sometimes he may try to escape from the clutches of law without getting any punishment. And added to these victims are not given adequate compensation to meet with their medical expenses and there is no proper mechanism to monitor to regulate the sale of acid in the market. This highlights the lacuna in our criminal justice system.<sup>2</sup>

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It has been contended by those working for these victims that the Criminal law relating to grievous hurts in Sections 320, 322, 325 and 326 of the Indian Penal Code (I.P.C) is insufficient to deal with the phenomenon of acid attacks. Section 320 deals with grievous hurt and reads as under

**Section 320 Grievous hurt.** - The following kinds of hurt only are designated as "grievous":-

First. - Emasculation.

<sup>2</sup>*Criminal law (Amendment) Ordinance Bill 2013, India*

<sup>3</sup>*Criminal law (Amendment) Ordinance Bill 2013, India*

- Secondly. - Permanent privation of the sight of either eye.
- Thirdly. - Permanent privation of the hearing of either ear,
- Fourthly. - Privation of any member or joint.
- Fifthly. - Destruction or permanent impairing of the powers of any Member joint
- Sixthly. - Permanent disfiguration of the head or face.
- Seventhly. - Fracture or dislocation of a bone or tooth.
- Eighthly. - Any hurt which endangers life or which causes the sufferer to be during the space of twenty days in severe bodily pain, or unable to follow his ordinary pursuits.

This definition of grievous hurt has been criticized as the definition does not take within its purview the various kinds of deliberate hurt that is inflicted on important parts of a female's body nor does this definition apply to offences like acid attack in which multiple types of grievous hurts occur. Section 322<sup>4</sup> IPC defines voluntarily causing grievous hurt and Section 325<sup>5</sup> IPC provides for punishment for grievous hurt. The offence is punishable by imprisonment up to seven years and is cognizable, bailable, and compoundable as well as being triable by a first class Magistrate. The offence of grievous hurt is not caused unless the offender both causes grievous hurt and intends, or knows him to be likely, to cause grievous hurt.

Section 326 of the Indian Penal Code which applies in cases of voluntarily causing grievous hurt by means of any corrosive substance is punishable with imprisonment for life or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 10

years and fine.<sup>6</sup> Thus, punishment for voluntarily causing grievous hurt even by corrosive substances like Acid can be imprisonment for life or with imprisonment for a

<sup>4</sup>Section 322. Voluntarily causing grievous hurt.- Whoever voluntarily causes hurt, if the hurt which he intends to cause or knows himself to be likely to cause is grievous hurt, and if the hurt which he actually causes is grievous hurt, is said to "voluntarily to cause grievous hurt." Explanation. - A person is not said voluntarily to cause grievous hurt except when he both causes grievous hurt and intends or knows himself to be likely to cause grievous hurt. But he is said voluntarily to cause grievous hurt, if intending or knowing himself to be likely to cause grievous hurt of one kind; he actually causes grievous hurt of another kind.

<sup>5</sup>Section 325. Punishment for voluntarily causing grievous hurt.- Whoever, except in the case provided for by section 335 (Voluntarily causing grievous hurt on provocation), voluntarily causes grievous hurt, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine.

<sup>6</sup>Section 326 Voluntarily causing grievous hurt by dangerous weapons or means- Whoever, except in the case provided for by section 335, voluntarily causes grievous hurt by means of any instrument for shooting, stabbing or cutting, or any instrument which, used as a weapon of offence, is likely to cause

term which may extend to 10 years. It has been argued that this period of punishment does not match the gravity of the offence.

The petition argues that though in some cases like the petitioner's case Section 307 of the I.P.C has been applied, even this is not enough as courts tend to grant bail easily in cases of Sec.307 I.P.C and mens rea is extremely difficult to prove.

The Laxmi Writ petition further states that compensation to victims of acid attacks is of vital importance as huge medical costs are often involved. The victims of acid attack need both short term as well as long term specialized medical treatments and plastic surgeries. The provisions in the Indian law for giving compensation to the victims are insufficient.

### *Acid attacks and their Consequences*

As stated earlier acid attacks are a form of violence against women, where the perpetrator splashes a person or object with acid in order to deface or kill them.<sup>7</sup> Although acid throwing, also known as vitriol age, has been a form of violence known to be committed throughout history, there has been a steep rise in the cases documented in recent years, particularly in certain South Asian countries. Some of this increase has been attributed to better documentation of cases and also to the fact that victims of attacks have begun to report an attack more often. However, there appears to be a substantive increase in the number of acid attacks that are being committed in recent times due to various factors.

Acid attacks are seen as one of the most vicious crimes as it causes perpetual suffering to the victim. As acid melts flesh and even the bones of a person, it causes an unparalleled degree of pain to the victim and leaves her mutilated and scarred as well as giving permanent disabilities at times such as blindness. Victims face lifetime physical, social, psychological and economic consequences.

Some of the well known effects of acid are as under:

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death, or by means of fire or any heated substance, or by means of any poison or any corrosive substance, or by means of any explosive substance, or by means of any substance which it is deleterious to the human body to inhale, to swallow, or to receive into the blood, or by means of any animal, shall be punished with imprisonment for life or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine.

<sup>7</sup> Wikipedia Encyclopedia

- Acids are corrosive substances that will cause visible necrosis (death) of human skin tissue and will even corrode a metal in higher concentration.
- They can cause serious poisoning, burning and serious injury can result from exposure to strong acids.
- Commonly available acids include Sulphuric acid, Hydrochloric acid Hydrofluoric acid, Phospaic acid etc. Acids are used in laboratories and factories/industries.
- In an acid attack the skin is the main organ of contact. The effects of acid on the skin may include redness, and burns. In severe cases, it could lead to shock and death. Some other effects include permanent hair loss and

The consequences of acid attack have been well documented and include the following<sup>8</sup>:

### **INJURIES AND PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES:**

Acid eats through two layers of the skin, i.e. the fat and muscle underneath, and sometimes not only eats through to the bone but it may even dissolve the bone. The deepness of injury depends on the strength of the acid and the duration of contact with the skin. Burning continues until the acid is thoroughly washed off with water. Thrown on a person's face, acid rapidly eats into eyes, ears, nose and mouth. Eyelids and lips may burn off completely. The nose may melt, closing the nostrils, and ears shrivel up. Acid can quickly destroy the eyes, blinding the victim. Skin and bone on the skull, forehead, cheeks and chin may dissolve. When the acid splashes or drips over the neck, chest, back, arms or legs, it burns everywhere it touches. The biggest immediate danger for victims is breathing failure. Inhalation of acid vapors can create breathing problems in two ways: i.e. by causing a poisonous reaction in the lungs or by swelling the neck, which constricts the airway and strangles the victim. When the burns from an acid attack heal, they form thick scars which pull the skin very tight and can cause disfigurements. For instance, eyelids may no longer close, the mouth may no longer open; and the chin becomes welded to the chest. The following information on physical consequences has been described by an NGO<sup>9</sup>:

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<sup>8</sup>Living in the Shadows: Acid Attacks in Cambodia, 2003 LICADHO Report

<sup>9</sup>Medecins Du Monde and doctors at Calmette hospital in Phnom Penh

**Skull:** May be partly destroyed or deformed. Hair is often lost.

**Forehead:** Skin may shrink, as though stretched tightly, and be scarred.

**Ears:** Shriveled up and deformed. Deafness may occur immediately or later. Cartilage in the ear is usually partly or totally destroyed, exposing the victim to future infection and hearing loss.

**Eyes:** Direct acid contact or acid vapors can damage eyes, causing blindness. Even if the eyes survive the acid attack, they remain vulnerable to other threats which can cause blindness during the victim's recovery. Eyelids may have been burned off, or may be deformed by scarring, leaving the eyes to dry up and go blind. This is very difficult to prevent.

**Nose:** Shrunken and deformed. Nostrils may close completely because the cartilage is destroyed.

**Cheeks:** Scarred and deformed.

**Mouth:** Shrunken and narrowed, and may lose its shape. Lips may be partly or totally destroyed. Lips may be permanently flared, exposing the teeth. Movement of the lips, mouth and face may be impaired. Eating can be difficult.

**Chin:** Scarred and deformed. The scars may run downward, welding the chin to the neck or chest.

**Neck:** Often badly damaged. It may have a thick cord of scarred flesh running down from the chin to the upper chest, or a wide, heavily-scarred area on one side of the neck. Victim may be unable to extend the neck, or the head may constantly lean to one side.

**Chest:** Often badly scarred. The chest may have narrow lines of scars or wide patches of scars from acid splashes or drips. In girls and young women, the development of their breasts may be stopped, or their breasts may be destroyed completely.

**Shoulder:** May be badly scarred, especially around the underarm, which may limit the victim's arm movement. In some cases, one or both of the victim's upper arms may be stuck like glue to the sides of their body.

The first thing that should be done when the acid gets in contact with the skin is to flush the burned flesh with water for at least 60 minutes and to wash off the acid with water for as long as possible.

Emergency treatment at hospitals should include cleaning and bandaging the burns, and relieving any breathing problems caused by acid fumes. Infection is a major danger because the dead tissue around deep burns becomes easily infected and prevents the burns from healing. Infection may spread to the healthy part of the skin, and may even kill the victim and it can attack the victim at any stage during the weeks and months right after the attack. Thus the wounds need to be kept clean and antibiotics need to be given to fight infection. The eyes are very vulnerable to infection and can cause blindness. Most important is to ensure that victims can close their eyes, preventing them from becoming dry and infected. Surgery may be needed to rebuild the eyelids, if they were destroyed by acid, or remove thick scars around the eyes as burns heal. Eating enough food is vital because victims' bodies require a lot of energy to fight infection and heal the wounds. This may be difficult if the victim has burns around the mouth and has difficulty swallowing, or cannot afford the necessary diet. It can take 3 to 12 months for burn wounds to heal. Thick scars, which are painful and itchy, grow over the healed burns. The scars grow and change over 1 to 2 years. As the scars thicken and contract, they can cause permanent disability by stiffening joints and restricting movement. For example, the scarring on the neck and shoulders can prevent a patient from moving his head or arms. Doctors may need to perform many operations to release the scars and graft new skin over them. Scars may also grow over the nostrils or ear canals, and surgery is required to remove them. Long periods of physical therapy are needed to minimize victims' lack of movement from scarring, and special elastic bandages can dramatically reduce the thickness and stiffness of scars. The final stage of treatment is to try to restore the appearance of the victim as much as possible. By now, the wounds must have healed completely and the full extent of scarring and deformities of the body must be visible. The victim may require many operations over a period of two to three years.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES**

Victims of attacks do not only undergo severe physical trauma but also undergo traumatic changes in the way they feel and think. Psychological trauma is caused by



both the terror victims suffer during the attack, as they feel their skin burning away, and after the attack by the disfigurement or disabilities that they have to live with for the rest of their lives. Victims suffer psychological symptoms such as depression, insomnia, nightmares, fear about another attack and/or fear about facing the outside world, headaches, weakness and tiredness, difficulty in concentrating and remembering things, etc. They feel perpetually depressed, ashamed, worried, and lonely. Victims suffer severe psychological symptoms for years, if not forever, because they are reminded every day of their physical scars. The feeling of lack of hope and worth may never leave them.

### **SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES**

Victims face a lifetime of discrimination from society and they become lonely. They are embarrassed that people may stare or laugh at them and may hesitate to leave their homes fearing an adverse reaction from the outside world. Victims who are not married are not likely to get married and those victims who have got serious disabilities because of an attack, like blindness, will not find jobs and earn a living. Discrimination from other people, or disabilities such as blindness, makes it very difficult for victims to fend for themselves and they become dependent on others for food and money.

The consequences of an acid attack handicap the victim in almost every possible way. An attack of this nature not only leaves the victim grotesquely disfigured but also traumatized for the rest of her life. It becomes extremely difficult to cope with life after an acid attack. The victim loses her identity and becomes socially isolated. Medical treatment is expensive and time consuming. Therefore, the victim may be forced to give up education, job or other activities in life. If married deserted by her own family members including her own lovable kids. If unmarried, the victim may even find it difficult to get a suitable groom.

### ***Legal Effect of Acid Attack***

Till recently there was not any specific law in India to deal with the cases of acid attack.

The Section 326 of the Indian Penal Code which deals with voluntarily.

Causing Grievous Hurt by Dangerous Weapons or Means was not so effective in dealing with this heinous form of crime because it does not include acid attack. The

eighteenth law commission of India which was headed by Justice A.R. Lakshmanan then proposed a new section 326A and 326B in the India Penal Code and section 114B in the Indian Evidence Act.

The scope of the definition of section 326 is very narrow but it does not deal adequately with the issue of acid attack because:

- It does not cover the various kinds of injuries inflicted because of an acid attack
- The section does not cover the act of administering acid attack, i.e, planning it.
- The section also does not specify who the fine should be awarded to.
- The section does not punish the intentional act of throwing of acid if no injuries occur

Further in cases of acid attack a presumption is incorporated in the Indian Evidence Act as Section 114B. The proposed Section 114B of the Indian Evidence Act shall read as under:

Presumption as to acid attack– If a person has thrown acid on, or administered acid to, another person the court shall presume that such an act has been done with the intention of causing, or with the knowledge that such an act is likely to cause such hurt or injury as is mentioned in Section 326 A of the Indian Penal Code. This section was introduced to give wide perspective to acid attack. Acid Attack was recently introduced as a separate offence under the Indian Penal Code through Criminal (Amendment) Act, 2013.

According to the Section 326A of Indian Penal Code “Acid” includes any substance which has acidic or corrosive character or burning nature that is capable of causing bodily injury leading to scars or disfigurement or temporary or permanent disability. The long term consequences of these attacks may include blindness, as well as permanent scarring of face and body, along with far-reaching social, psychological, and economic difficulties. Section 326A and Section 326B of Indian Penal Code includes punishment which is given to an accused which read as follow:

Section 326A lays down the punishment for acid throwing. The minimum punishment is 10 years imprisonment. It can extend up to life imprisonment with fine.

Section 326 B lays down the punishment for attempted acid throwing. The minimum punishment is 5 years imprisonment. It can extend up to 7 years imprisonment with fine.

This amendment included punishment for those people who practice this heinous form of crime but the amendment was useless because after also people use to practice. So the best punishment will be tit for tat i.e., same thing should be done with those people who practice this crime. They should give realization by throwing acid on their face and on their family members. These will be the best punishment which can be awarded to them.

## ***CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS***

The preceding chapters highlight that acid attacks are an increasing phenomenon in India. However, since no special section in the Indian Penal Code deals with acid attacks, the incidents are not even recorded separately. Section 326 of the I.P.C, which deals with causing grievous hurt by throwing of a corrosive substance etc. is insufficient/ inadequate to deal with the issue. *Firstly*, the definition of grievous hurt is not broad enough to cover the various kinds of injuries which are inflicted during acid attacks. *Secondly*, the section does not cover the act of administering acid. *Thirdly*, the section gives a wide discretion to the courts as far as punishment is concerned. The cases on acid attacks in India show that normally inadequate punishment is awarded in these cases. *Fourthly*, the section in the I.P.C does not punish the intentional act of throwing of acid if no injuries occur. *Lastly*, the section also does not specify who the fine should be awarded to.

We also feel that if a person has thrown or administered the acid on another person a presumption should be raised against the person, who has thrown or administered the acid that he has done so deliberately.

Apart from the above we feel that the distribution and sale of Acid should be banned except for commercial and scientific purposes. Acid should be made a scheduled banned chemical which should not be available over the counter. The particulars of purchasers of acid should be recorded.

We have also examined the various laws in different countries relating to compensation for criminal injuries. While the U.K Act provides for the setting up of a scheme, the Canadian statute sets up a Criminal Injuries Compensation Board to dispense compensation to victims of violence. The suggestion of the National Commission for Women for setting up a board specifically for acid victims has also been examined by us. We however feel that since not only victims of acid attacks but other victims of different crimes also need compensation for rehabilitation, like victims of rape, a law should be enacted to set in place Criminal Injuries Compensation Boards at the Centre, State and District levels in our country.

Acid attack is possibly one of the most heinous crimes which a human being can commit. It takes an elaborate degree of sadism and depravity to indulge in something as cruel and inhuman. The criminal justice system needs to be stricter in its handling of acid attack cases. The Union Government has come out with a proposal of providing free treatment to the victims and launching an Insurance scheme that would cover reconstruction surgery and proposal towards control sale of acid above 20% concentration. Recently in 2012 while confirming the sentence of 10 years rigorous imprisonment on the accused, the Madras High Court had directed the Government to provide G.Valentina M.Phill Degree holder in Microbiology an acid victim employment as Junior Assistant on Compassionate grounds.

The Government of India is taking some positive proposal on the acid attack victims which are a welcome sign which would add upon the objectives of the Criminal Justice System. The compensatory Jurisprudence should also include within its preview the accidental victims of acid attack. The distribution and sale of acid should be banned except for commercial and scientific purposes. Acid should be made a scheduled banned chemical which should not be available over the counter. The particulars of purchasers of acid should be recorded. The acid offences prevention act 2002 of Bangladesh need to be examined in India either as a special Act or special provisions to be incorporated in the Penal code. The concept of Restorative Justice should be effectively implemented in the justice system. The idea of restorative justice is emerging as answer to these issues. Justice has to necessarily move from retributive and deterrent to Restorative. “Restorative justice is fundamentally concerned with restoring relationships, with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships.” At a more concrete level, restorative justice “involves the victim, the

offender, and the community in a search for solutions which promote repair, reconciliation, and reassurance.”

**The basic principles of restorative justice are:-**

1. Holding the wrongdoer directly accountable for the individual victim and the specific community affected by the wrong act;
2. Requiring the wrongdoer to take direct responsibility for making "things whole again" to the degree that this is possible;
3. Providing the victim(s) purposeful access to the courts and correctional processes, which allows them to assist in shaping the wrongdoers' obligations; and
4. Encouraging the community to become directly involved in supporting victims, holding wrong doers accountable, and providing opportunities for wrongdoers to reintegrate into the community. Restorative justice seeks to redefine crime, interpreting it not so much as breaking the law, or offending against the state, but as an injury or wrong done to another person or persons. It encourages the victim and the offender to be directly involved in resolving any conflict through dialogue and negotiation. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as technique helps the restorative justice to achieve its objectives. The ADR refers to any ways and means of resolving conflicts and disputes outside of the courtroom. ADR includes arbitration, mediation, early neutral evaluation, and conciliation. By applying the Alternative Dispute Resolution and similar techniques, many crippling problems of the justice process have been overcome. If implemented systematically, the restorative model of justice in India can offer highly imperative results. In case of acid attacks Restorative justice would at the maximum solve the emotional problems between the victim and the accused for the reason that the victim stands as a real person before the accused. Psychiatry treatment has to be introduced for the victim, accused and the victim's family members. Acid attack victims after long struggle lose hope and end up their life by committing suicide. They consider their face as a prison. They need Psychiatry treatment. For the reformation of the convict Psychiatry treatment is needed in any prison. General public awareness regarding the problems of acid attack victims stands necessary. Thus, there is an urgent need to legislate distinct sections in the I.P.C to deal with acid attacks and to setup a

Criminal Injuries Compensation Board in India to deal with such cases in an effective and efficient manner, to help the victims of acid attack to get compensation for medical expenses and rehabilitation.

5. We therefore propose that a new section 326A be added to the Indian Penal Code. The proposed Section 326 A will read as follows-

**326 A. (i) Hurt by acid attack-** Whoever burns or maims or disfigures or disables any part or parts of the body of a person or causes grievous hurt by throwing acid on or administering acid to that person, with the intention of causing or with the knowledge that he is likely to cause such injury or hurt, shall be punishable with imprisonment of either description which shall not be less than 10 years but which may extend to life and with fine which may extend to Rs. 10 Lakhs.

Provided that any fine levied under this section shall be given to the person on whom acid has been thrown or administered.

#### **CLASSIFICATION OF OFFENCE**

Minimum Imprisonment of 10 years extendable upto imprisonment for life and fine-- cognizable-- non-bailable—triable by court of session—non-compoundable.

**(ii) Intentionally throwing or administering acid-** Whoever throws acid on, or administers acid to, any person with the intention of causing burns or maiming or disfiguring or disabling or causing grievous hurt to that person shall be liable to imprisonment of either description for a term not less than 5 years but which may extend to 10 years and with fine which may extend to Rs. 5 Lakh.

#### **CLASSIFICATION OF OFFENCE**

Minimum Imprisonment of 5 years extendable upto 10 years and fine-- cognizable-- non-bailable—triable by court of session—non-compoundable.

We further propose, for the reasons stated above, that in cases of acid attack a presumption be incorporated in the Indian Evidence Act as Section 114B. The proposed Section 114B of the Indian Evidence Act shall read as under.

**Section 114 B: Presumption as to acid attack-**If a person has thrown acid on, or administered acid to, another person the court shall presume that such an act has been

done with the intention of causing, or with the knowledge that such an act is likely to cause such hurt or injury as is mentioned in Section 326 A of the Indian Penal Code.

6. We propose that a law known as “Criminal Injuries Compensation Act” be enacted as a separate Law by the government. This law should provide both interim and final monetary compensation to victims of certain acts of violence like Rape, Sexual Assault, Acid Attacks etc. and should provide for their medical and other expenses relating to rehabilitation, loss of earnings etc. Any compensation already received by the victim can be taken into account while computing compensation under this Act.
7. We further recommend that the distribution and sale of acid be strictly regulated and the sale of Acid across shop counters be banned.

My further recommendations to deal with the Acid attack cases are following:

1. There are no specific laws against acid attacks in our country. According to the organizations working on acid attacks, it is mostly women who are victimised of the acid attacks. A concrete law could be brought in effect if acid attacks are categorized under violence against women, physical, mental and sexual assault.
2. In most acid attack cases, the victim does not die, but her face and life is ruined. Hence, acid attacks must be dealt separately and specifically and must be categorised under heinous crime. We demand the minimum sentence to be life imprisonment.
3. Acid attack is a cruel and inhumane crime, which calls for immediate medical treatment to the victim, irrespective of court's decisions. But, the present laws do not stand sufficient, as many victims are exhausted with running around courts for years together after having to brave a life-long health complication because of the chemical injuries they sustain. Along with specific laws to deal with acid attack cases, there must be a provision for fast track courts too, where cases are solved within three months.
4. Even the Supreme Court of India has stated that the victims of the acid attack cases do not get justice. Hence, the government must constitute an agency to process the cases of acid attacks and help the victims get justice.

5. Protection officers to deal with threats and potential risks to women's safety must be appointed to stop acid attacks.
6. Acid attack victims must be given complete legal support to ensure they do not have to struggle a lot to get justice.
7. The Centre and state governments must facilitate the victims with compensation and government jobs to help them take charge of the streams of their lives.
8. The women victims of acid attacks mainly face the struggle of expensive surgeries, which hinders their appropriate and speedy treatment. Hence, government must take the responsibility of their treatment.
9. The open sale of acid for domestic purposes should be controlled and preferably banned by the government. For, industrial, commercial and all other purposes, it must be sold under licensed dealers and its procurement be made possible against production of suitable identity proof.
10. The physical and psychological trauma following an acid attack makes life very difficult for the victims. The government must take steps to rehabilitate acid attack survivors with counselling and other provisions

