



The Line

In 2002, there were communal riots between Hindus and Muslims in the city of *Ahmedabad* in India. According to official estimates, 1044 people were killed in the violence. Another 223 people were reported missing, 2,548 injured, 919 women widowed and 606 children orphaned, while unofficial estimates put the death toll closer to 5000, with Muslims forming a very much higher proportion of those killed. When missing people were declared dead after 7 years, total deaths went up from 1044 to 1,267. Following the riots, I wanted to do a performance titled 'The Line', in which I intended to lay a line of flowers from the *Mahim Dargah* (Mosque) to the *Siddhi Vinayak* (Hindu Temple) in Mumbai. I imagined working with members of diverse religious persuasions who would collaborate in laying down the floral line for the fulfillment of the project. By walking from a Muslim Mosque to a Hindu temple, and leaving a trail of flowers - the intention was to engage the community in drawing a symbolic line of peace between two warring factions. The '*Line of Peace*' is also a symbolic defiance of the '*Line of Control*', which refers to the military control line between the Indian and Pakistan, and often is misinterpreted by hardliners as a line between religions. Politically volatile circumstances prevented this work from being realized.

