



## List of Speakers

### **Dr. Akkai Padmashali**

Dr Akkai Padmashali is a transwoman and social activist. In 2012, she became the first male to female transgender woman in Karnataka to complete her sex reassignment surgery. In 2014, she co-founded Ondede, an organization of feminists, activists, thinkers, and academics who recognized the need to converge the interests of three movements in the country – children’s rights, women’s rights, and the rights of sexual minorities. Padmashali has conducted many workshops on sexuality and gender at colleges across the country and she has held seminars on sexual minorities for government officials. Padmashali was a member of the Karnataka Sex Worker Status Committee, Government of Karnataka, and also a member of the Drafting Committee which drafted the Policy for Transgender Persons in Karnataka and is a member of the Planning Committee for Karnataka’s Commission for Transgender Persons, which is the first government commission of its kind in India. In 2016, Dr. Padmashali visited the White House to raise issues about transgender persons and sexual minorities. Padmashali is the first transwoman in the world who received Ashoka Global Fellowship to fight for the rights of transgender persons and sexual minorities.

### **Anand Grover**

Mr. Grover is a designated Senior Advocate, practicing in the Supreme Court of India. He is also the Director of the HIV/AIDS Unit of Lawyer’s Collective (India), and the former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health (2008-2014). In his regular practice, Grover has argued several landmark cases in the field of public interest and human rights law, and constitutional challenges including mass eviction cases (*Olga Tellis & Ors v. Bombay Municipal Council*), environmental cases (the Bhopal Gas Disaster case), and LGBT rights (Naz Foundation case) as well as the recent Right to Privacy case and the challenge to the Aadhaar Scheme.

### **Anindya Hajra**

Anindya Hajra is a transfeminist, transgender rights and social justice activist based in Kolkotta, whose work has spanned nearly two decades. In 1998 she founded the *Pratyay Gender Trust*, one of the earliest community led initiatives in India that became a support space for kothi identified and other gender non-conforming/transgender youth facing harassment, stigma and violence for their gender identity/

expression. Pratyay focuses on issues of Trans Bodies and Labour - 'Right to Work' and 'Economic Justice' being the two main axes. She has been deeply involved with sexualities, gender, anti-homophobic/transphobic violence and HIV/AIDS movements in India. She serves on the board of various South Asia and India level initiatives. A significant part of her work is focussed on collectivization of transgender persons across India, advocating with policy makers and building synergies across other human rights movements.

### **Aparna Banerjee**

Aparna Banerjee is a trans rights activist and Managing Trustee of Amitie Trust. It functions as a welfare organisation for transgender individuals in West Bengal. She works for gender rights issues with special focus on the hijra movement, by empowering them through legal, social and economic means. She is also a member of West Bengal Transgender Development Board.

### **Arvind Narrain**

Arvind Narrain is the co-author of "Breathing Life into the Constitution: Human Rights Lawyering in India" and Co-Editor of "Law like Love: Queer Perspectives on Law" and "Nothing to Fix: Medicalisation of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity". He is currently Director of Research and Practice with Arc International.

### **Audrey Mbugua**

Audrey Mbugua is a Kenyan transgender woman working with Transgender Education and Advocacy (TEA). Her work and passion revolve around legal recognition of transgender people, right to access education for transgender persons and complete emancipation of transgender people.

### **Busisiwe Deyi**

Busisiwe is a gender and social justice activist from South Africa. She was a law researcher to Justice Edwin Cameron and is currently a legal researcher and regional coordinator for Gender DynamiX, a transgender organisation based in Cape Town. She is a cisgender queer feminist/transfeminist.

### **Prof. Carlos J. Zelada**

Prof. Carlos J. Zelada is the Chair of the Academic Department of Law at the *Universidad del Pacífico* where he teaches International and Human Rights Law. Professor Zelada is also a Lecturer at the School of Social Sciences of the *Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú*, a Research Associate at the Center for Studies on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information (CELE) of the *Universidad de Palermo*, and a Visiting Professor at the International Center for Political Studies at the *Universidad Nacional de San Martín*, both located in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Professor Zelada has formerly served as a Human Rights Specialist at the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) (2004-2007 and 2009-2010) in Washington D.C. University Law School. Professor Zelada is the author of numerous articles and has been particularly committed to the study of the legal regulation of hate speech and sexuality, with a special focus on ethnic/race, sexual orientation and gender identity.

### **Grace Banu**

Grace Banu is a Dalit and transrights activist who was also the first transgender person to be admitted to an engineering college in Tamil Nadu. She now works in Delhi as a Future Technologist with project Mukti and is also the Founder and Director of Trans Rights Now Collective. She has recently filed a public interest litigation for the passage of the private member bill viz. "The Rights of Transgender Persons Bill, 2014 (Bill No. XLIX of 2014)" which is currently pending before the Madras High Court.

### **Jayna Kothari**

Jayna Kothari, is an advocate practising in the Karnataka High Court and the Supreme Court of India. She is the Executive Director of the Centre for Law & Policy Research, Bangalore. She received her B.A. LL.B degree from Bangalore University and read the BCL at Oxford University. Jayna has been awarded the Wrangler D.C. Pavate Fellowship in Cambridge University. Jayna's research and practice interests include constitutional law, including the right to education, health and housing, gender, disability rights, environmental law. Her book, "The Future of Disability Law in India" was published in 2012 by Oxford University Press and is one of the first books on disability law in the country. Jayna has appeared in and argued in the petitions challenging Section 36 A before the Karnataka High Court, the challenge to the Telangana Eunuchs Act before the Andhra Pradesh High Court and also the challenge to Aadhaar and Section 377 on behalf of transgender persons before the Supreme Court of India.

### **Justice Manjula Chellur (Retd.)**

Justice Manjula Chellur was the first female advocate to practice law in her hometown of Bellary. She had earned her law degree from Renukacharya Law College in Bengaluru and had received an honorary doctorate from Karnataka State Women's University in 2013. The Supreme Court of India had sent her on a Gender & Law Fellowship to the University of Warwick. She began her career as an advocate in Bellary and was then appointed as a session judge in 1988. In 2000, she became the first female judge of Karnataka High Court. She was then appointed as the Acting Chief Justice of Kerala High Court in 2011 and became the Chief justice of Kerala High Court in September 2012. She also served as the first female chief justice of Calcutta High Court. Justice Chellur recently retired as the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court on December 4, 2017.

### **Prof. Siddharth Swaminathan**

Siddharth Swaminathan teaches courses on Politics in India, Welfare Rights, and Empirical Policy Analysis at the Azim Premji University, Bangalore. He received an MA and Ph.D in Political Science from the Claremont Graduate University. His research focuses on political demography, voter behaviour, citizenship and urban governance in India. Prior to joining Azim Premji University, he held faculty positions at the Institute for Social and Economic Change, La Sierra University and California State University.

### **Dr. Sitharamam Kakarala**

Dr. Kakarala is a Professor at the School of Policy and Governance, Azim Premji University. He did his Masters in Political Philosophy (Madras University), LLM in Human Rights Law (University of Nottingham, UK) and Ph.D in Political Science from the Centre for Social Studies, South Gujarat University, Surat, India. He was the Vice Chancellor of the Glocal University, Uttar Pradesh and prior to that, he was a Professor at the Centre for Culture and Society and at the National Law School of India, Bangalore.

His areas of research are Socio-legal and political theory, law and culture, human rights law, comparative law and comparative constitutionalism.

### **Prof. Stephen Whittle**

In 1975, aged 19, Stephen transitioned to living as himself. In the 1970s and 80s he lost many jobs because of being transgender. In 1985, he decided things would only change if trans people understood the law. He qualified in law in 1990 and in 1992, Stephen became a co-founder of Press For Change, the UK's transgender lobbying group. He has been an advisor to the UK, Irish, Italian, Japanese, Hong Kong and South African governments, the Council of Europe & the European Commission. In 2006, he was a co-author of the Yogyakarta Principles on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Human Rights, and in 2007 Stephen was the first non-doctor and the first Trans person to be elected President of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health. One of his proudest moments (other than marrying his wife in 2005) was when in 2009, the membership voted, unanimously, for Human Rights to be at the heart of the WPATH International Standards of Care for the Health of Transsexual, Transgender, and Gender Nonconforming People. Professor Whittle has received many awards for his academic and voluntary work. In 2014 he received The Stonewall Award from the American Bar Association in recognition of his contribution to “removing barriers and championing diversity for the LGBT community, both within the legal profession and impacting the greater human universe.” In 2016, he received the National Transgender Lifetime Achievement Award.

### **Prof. Sudhir Krishnaswamy**

Sudhir Krishnaswamy is a co-founder and Managing Trustee of the Centre for Law & Policy Research. He is Professor of Law and Director of the School of Policy and Governance at the Azim Premji University. He was also the Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Visiting Professor of Indian Constitutional Law at Columbia Law School. His main areas of interest are constitutional law, legal education, legal theory, intellectual property law and administrative law.

### **Siddharth Narrain**

Siddharth Narrain is a Visiting Faculty at the School of Law, Governance and Citizenship, Ambedkar University Delhi. He has worked previously with the Sarai Programme, CSDS, Delhi; the Alternative Law Forum, Bangalore; and The Hindu group of publications, Delhi.

### **Tripti Tandon**

Tripti Tandon is a practicing lawyer based in New Delhi and Deputy Director with the Lawyers Collective, one of the oldest human rights organisations in India. In her over 17 years of association with the Lawyers Collective, she has spearheaded litigation, advocacy and community engagement on health, law and criminalisation, especially in the areas of LGBT rights, sex workers and drug policy. Some of her key contributions have been in the field of LGBT Rights where she has provided legal representation for transgender clients including research and submissions on the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2016. She was also part of the legal team handling the constitutional challenge to Section 377, IPC, 1860 that criminalises consensual same sex activity. In the area of sex work law reform, she has brought about litigation against

arbitrary detention and forcible transportation of adult sex workers and closure of brothels and eviction of sex workers under the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (“ITPA”). Her campaign successfully resisted proposed amendments to criminalise clients visiting brothels under the ITPA (Amendment) Bill, 2006. Her work with drug policy includes challenging the Constitution on the death penalty for drug offences under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 (“NDPS Act”) and bringing about health-oriented drug policy reforms, which were successfully incorporated in the NDPS (Amendment) Act, 2014.

### **Uma (Umesh P)**

Uma (Umesh P) is a trans rights activist and founder of Jeeva, a non-governmental organisation that works for gender minorities. Uma has over 12 years of experience working on the issues of the sexual minorities’ community. Uma (Umesh P) has worked with different trans rights organisations in Karnataka and was involved with crisis intervention in many important cases. Uma has co-founded Karnataka Sexual Minority Forum, and was one of the founder members of Payana, a sexuality minority organisation, and now working in Jeeva as the Executive Director. She is also a Radio Jockey and has produced a magazine called Ananya in Kannada for gender and sexual minorities in Karnataka. She is a counselor and runs a helpline for trans women and gender non-conforming people.

### **Vihaan Peethambar**

Vihaan Peethambar is a corporate communication professional with over 8 years of work experience across Dubai, India and Sweden. He serves as a board member at Queerala, an LGBTQIA+ organization based in Kerala. He was a part of the district transgender justice board in Ernakulam before moving to Bengaluru to join an MNC as Corporate Communication Manager. He writes regularly on human rights issues faced by queer people, especially transgender people in Kerala for online news platforms like The Wire, Youth Ki Awaaz and The News Minute. Vihaan has a bachelor’s degree in English from Mahatma Gandhi University and a master’s Degree in Communication Management from Manipal University. He also has an Advanced Diploma in Globalization and Human Rights from Stockholm University in Sweden.

### **Vikramaditya Sahai**

Vikramaditya Sahai, who is known as Vqueeram Aditya Sahai on social media, is a writer and queer activist. Currently a Research Consultant studying discrimination against non-normative gender and sexuality at the Advanced Centre for Women’s Studies, TISS Bombay, S/he lives and loves in Delhi.

### **Vyjayanti Vasanta Mogli**

As a transgender person, Vyjayanti has actively been involved in advocacy efforts in the domain of gender to expand the rights of transgender people and women. Along with her other transgender friends, she is one of the founding members of the Telangana Hijra Intersex Transgender Samiti (THITS), an unfunded and an unregistered people's collective and network of hijra and transgender people. Vyjayanti volunteers pro-bono with transgender community, engages with it, the legal fraternity and the state and its agencies to foster a legal framework that decriminalises the existence and livelihoods of the transgender community.