

TRANSFORM

4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
TRANSGENDER RIGHTS & THE LAW

SPEAKER BIOS

To be updated



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 is the Founder and Director of Trans Rights Now Collective. Grace writes extensively on the issues concerning the transgender community and has authored a book 'Thoughts of Transwoman Grace Banu'. She is part of several public interest litigations at the Supreme Court and High Court for the advancement of trans rights.



Swati Bidhan Baruah is an advocate practising in the Guwahati High Court. Swati is a transgender rights activist from Assam and is a founder of the All Assam Transgender Association. She is the first transgender person in India to be appointed as a judge to the Lok Adalat in Guwahati. Swati filed one of the first cases in India seeking permission from the court to undergo sex re-assignment surgery. She also filed an intervention application in the Hon'ble Supreme Court against the biased nature of the National Register of Citizens. Moreover, she also filed an intervention application in the matter of setting up a Human Rights Court in the Indian Supreme Court. She has filed several petitions before the Guwahati High Court and also in the Supreme Court seeking implementation of the directions of the Supreme Court in NALSA v. Union of India and for protection of rights of transgender persons in Assam and the NorthEast. She also filed a PIL at Guwahati High Court challenging the Ayushman Bharat for accomodating transgenders under the said scheme.



Sai Bourothu is a Bahujan Transwoman and criminologist. She has been working in the areas of police and prison accountability research with a specific focus on Queer individuals/ communities in deprivation of liberty.



Shubha Chacko is a joyful activist who draws strength, knowledge, and warmth from strong alliances and friendships forged with people from different walks of life. She is the Executive Director of Solidarity Foundation, an NGO that supports grassroots level organisations of gender/sexual minorities (LGBTIAQ+) and sex workers by building collectives, capacities and connections. She has been recognized as a global diversity leader (Times Ascent Award) at World HRD Congress, Mumbai 2017. Shubha is also a researcher and has authored books, reports and articles and has been an invited speaker at many national and international conferences. She has a Master's degree in Social Work from Tata Institute of Social Sciences



Anindya Hazra is a trans feminist, transgender rights and social justice activist based in Calcutta, India whose relationship with transfeminisms has spanned about two decades. In 1998 she co-founded Pratyay Gender Trust, one of the early community led collectives in India that became a support space for gender non-conforming and transgender persons facing harassment, stigma and violence for their gender identity/ expression. Pratyay today focuses on issues surrounding systemic discrimination surrounding Transgender Persons' Right to Work, Economic Justice and Inclusion. She has been deeply involved with sexualities, gender, anti-homophobic/transphobic violence and a significant part of her work is focussed on collectivisation of transgender persons across India, advocating with policy makers and building synergies across other human rights movements.



Santa Khurai is a Manipuri indigenous Nupi Maanbi (trans woman) from Manipur. She is a human rights defender, writer, poet and artist. She works with All Manipur Nupi Maanbi Association (AMANA) and SAATHII.



Jayna Kothari is the Executive Director of the Centre for Law & Policy Research, Bangalore. She is a Senior Advocate and practises in the Karnataka High Court and the Supreme Court. 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, gender and the law, disability rights and equality. She has appeared and argued before the Supreme Court in the constitutional challenge to Section 377 of the IPC on behalf of three transgender activists.



Tara Krishnaswamy is a Software Director at an MNC in Bengaluru. She is co-founder of Shakti, a pan-India, non partisan citizens pressure group working to get more women into State Assemblies & Parliament. Shakti's volunteer campaigns include petitioning political parties to stand more women as election candidates, Call Your MPs to pressure MPs to table the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament and the Election Commission to discipline parties towards gender equitable nominations. Shakti's recent grass roots campaigns in Bihar, include the Covid-safe Selfless Selfie campaign for increased women candidates and promotion of female candidates during the election. She has independently authored on federalism, citizenship, gender and caste issues with First Post, The News Minute, Live Mint, News Laundry, Times of India, Hindustan Times etc.

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Grace Maingi is a thought leader and strategist in the governance & democracy space in Kenya. She holds a master's degree in Law with a specialisation in human rights from the University of London (U.K.). Her heart beats for social justice, to see a world where everyone, regardless of where they are from, has the same opportunities for success. Her major expression in reducing the brokenness in the world is through her work as a human rights lawyer. Over the last 20 years, she has worked in key roles at national, regional and international levels promoting public participation and civic education, human rights, access to justice, women's rights, public interest litigation, and transitional justice issues. Currently, Grace Maingi is the Executive Director of Uraia Trust steering work around constitutional implementation and civil society strengthening.

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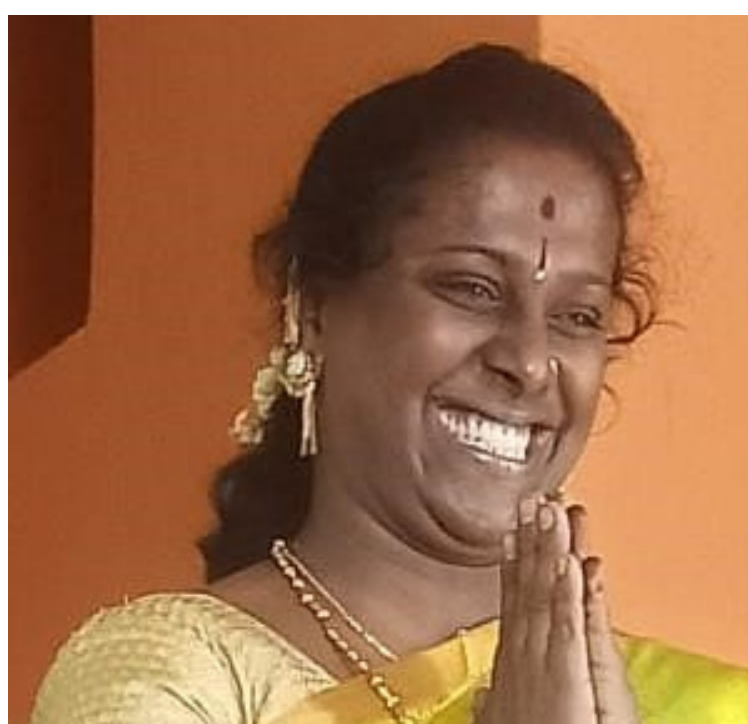
Vyjayanti Vasanta Mogli's preferred name is Vyjayanti and her preferred personal pronouns are she, her and her's. She is a transgender human rights and RTI activist precipitating Public Interest Litigation (PIL) in the High Courts and the Supreme Court & has volunteered probono with law & policy think tanks viz. Alternative Law Forum, Centre for Law & Policy Research, Lawyers Collective inter alia. In April 2020, she filed a PIL in the High Court of Telangana which resulted in the High Court ordering the Telangana government to supply free medicines & under the PMGKY, rations to all transgender persons in Telangana regardless of their possession or otherwise of Aadhaar and ration cards in so far as they have any one government ID proof that doesn't have to be Aadhaar. In June 2020, the High Court issued interim orders on her PIL seeking seperate wards for transgender persons infected by COVID 19 wards as there are exclusive wards for men and women but none for transgender persons. On the orders of the High Court, the Government of Telangana issued a circular too to that effect. In January 2020, she challenged the constitutionality and the structural monstrosities of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2020 in the Supreme Court in Grace Banu & Ors vs. Uol. Vyjayanti is the second petitioner after Grace Banu in it. In February 2018, she got the archaic, draconian & regressive Telangana Eunuchs Acts 1329F stayed and suspended by the Telangana High Court. She has filed RTIs and gathered information on the inclusion of welfare schemes like Aarogyashri to transgender persons. Along with her other transgender friends, she happens to a co-founder of the Telangana Hijra Intersex Transgender Samiti (THITS), Queer Swabhimana Yatra (QSY), Telangana Queer & Transgender Janulu (TQTJ) all of which are yet unfunded and unregistered community and people's collectives of queer & transgender persons.



K.M.V. Monalisa is a transgender rights activist who is based in Telangana. She is the General Secretary of the Telangana Transgender People's Association (TTPA). She is a litigant in several matters, both at the Supreme Court and High Court, fighting for trans rights. She has partnered with the National Institute for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (NIRD & PR) under the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India to mobilize 500 people from the transgender community in various alternative livelihoods and occupations. She has also taken an initiative to partner with the Government in the Open Defecation Free Campaign and Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan. Her work has been featured in the press and media.



Arvind Narrain is a lawyer and activist who was involved with the challenge to Section 377 through its long journey till the culmination in Navtej Singh Johar. He 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”.



Dr. Akkai Padmashali is a transwoman, social activist and political activist for Congress. In 2012, she became the first male to female transgender woman in Karnataka to complete her sex reassignment surgery. In 2014, she 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. Dr. 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. Dr. 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 in the United States 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. The prestigious ‘Changemaker of the Year’ category in the Business Line Changemaker Awards 2019 was conferred by Honourable Former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh in New Delhi to Akkai on March 2019 for her fight against 377 IPC as the petitioner.



Kanmani Ray is a trans woman & a student pursuing law (LL.B.) from Campus Law Centre, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi. She has been a part of multiple sensitisation efforts in student-led spaces in the last two years.



Vikramaditya Sahai is a research associate at CLPR. They have previously worked as faculty at the Gender Studies Department, Ambedkar University, Delhi and as a consultant on a project to study non-normative sexuality and gender housed at the Advanced Centre for Women Studies, TISS, Bombay. They are interested in sex, feeling, and the structure and narrative of living in their relation with forms of sociality, law, and politics. They live and love in Delhi.



Dr. Mrinal Satish is a Professor of Law at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru. He is the former Chairperson of the Delhi Judicial Academy. He has been a faculty member at the National Law University, Delhi and the National Judicial Academy, Bhopal. Mrinal specializes in criminal law. He has worked extensively on issues of sexual violence. His doctoral dissertation was on rape sentencing in India - which is now a book titled "Discretion, Discrimination and the Rule of Law: Reforming Rape Sentencing in India. He was part of the research team that assisted the Justice Verma Committee on Amendments to Criminal Law (2013). Mrinal has also worked on issues relating to prisons. He is currently assisting the Delhi High Court on a matter relating to conditions of the women's prison in Tihar Jail, New Delhi. He was a nominated member of the Delhi High Court Legal Services Committee (2018-2020).



Almas Shaikh is a Research Associate at CLPR and a human rights lawyer working on the intersections of caste, disability and gender, through research and litigation. Previously, she has worked both internationally and nationally. In India, she has worked as a dispute resolution lawyer. Subsequently, she has worked with DCAF – Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance and the United Nations International Law Commission in Geneva.



Disha Pinky Sheikh is a poetess, columnist, LGBT and Dalit rights activist. She is the spokesperson of Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi, Maharashtra. She has been recognised for her contributions through several accolades including Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Puraskar, Ahmednagar; Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj Puraskar, Kolhapur; Jeevan Sangharsh Puraskar Mukhtangan, Pune; Shahid Bhagat Singh Puraskar, Mumbai and the Savitribai Puraskar, Thane among many others.

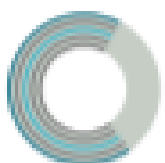


Jamal Siddiqui is a Tedx speaker, YouTuber, writer and Technical enthusiast. Jamal has documented his transition via YouTube. He has also written in online magazines like Feminism In India, Youth Ki Awaz, Tarshi, Gaylaxy and Gay Star. He has worked in customer relation for 3 years in the Corporate sector with Just Dial and Convergys. He has also worked as a Trainer in NIIT. He is passionate about social issues due to which he switched to the NGO sector. Also he is one of Co-Founder and core member of Transmen Collective. Being a Muslim and transman he also worked with and for Muslim transmen.



Uma is the founder of Jeeva, an organisation addressing issues around mental health, livelihood and community media for working class sexual minorities in Karnataka. She is working with transgender communities and has nearly 22 years' experience in grassroots level legal, societal and media advocacy on human rights and social entitlements of sexual and gender minorities based in Bangalore. Uma's work profile includes generating and editing textual and audio-visual content highlighting human interest stories, socio-economic and legal challenges, stigma and discrimination of sexual and gender minorities in Karnataka.

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