

**TRANS
FORM**

11-12 DEC 2021

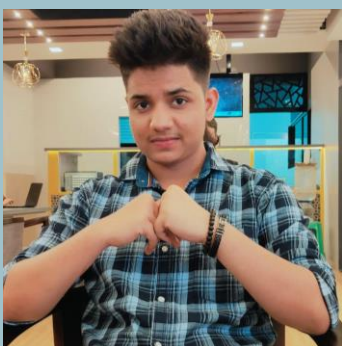
5TH NATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
**TRANSGENDER
RIGHTS & THE LAW**



SPEAKER BIOS



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 pro bono 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 separate 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. UoI. 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.



Kishu Bhati is a trans man from Greater Noida, U.P. He moved to Bengaluru in April 2021 due to a lack of support from his family due to his gender and his relationship. He is now a technical engineer at a tech company and is pursuing his LLB degree which he had to discontinue earlier while leaving home. Kishu intends to become a lawyer and has a passion for human rights law.



Umi is the founder of Jeeva, an organisation addressing issues around mental health, livelihood and community media for working class sexual minorities in Karnataka. They are 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. Umi'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.



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".



Christy Nag, an Adivasi of Munda Tribe whose work lies in the intersections of Adivasi, transgender and child rights and mental health. Since 2016 she has been working along with the Adivasi youth from tea gardens in Dooars and is a member of Prayatn - Striving for Equality. Christy is pursuing integrated MPhil-PhD at TISS, Mumbai and is a member of the Queer Collective - TISS, Adivasi Students' Forum - TISS and the Blue Dawn. She has been writing on Adivasi concerns from Adivasi perspective and has bylines in Youth ki Awaaz and First Post.



Kanmani Ray is a trans woman and lawyer from Delhi. She is a Research Associate at the Centre for Justice, Law and Society, Jindal Global Law School, Sonapat. Her pronouns are she/her. She is interested in working around issues of health, access to education, public transport & housing in context of gender & sexual minorities.



Randhoni Lairikyebangam is a social work professional working with the non-governmental organization SAATHII in Manipur, India, for the past 12 years. She has overall 16 years of experience in the development sector, and has been leading programs in North-East India that promote universal access to health, education, legal and social services for populations marginalized on account of HIV, gender and sexuality in India. She recently led a project that aimed to reduce stigma and discrimination and promote access to justice for LGBTIQ communities in three states in the domains of law-policy, healthcare and education. Previously she was engaged with a program that promoted

access to public schemes for PLHIV and other marginalised communities like Injecting Drug Users, Female Sex workers and gender and sexual minorities in four North-East states. She has been part of monitoring teams of Common Review Mission in Jharkhand as part of NHM, and has facilitated review of Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan (PMSMA) in Assam.

She is currently engaged in promoting inclusive services, violence reduction and advocacy for LGBTIQ+ equality in multiple domains. She has actively contributed in advocacy efforts for implementation of the Supreme Court's ruling on transgender rights at a state level in Manipur and other North-Eastern states, in partnership with community groups such as AMANA, ETA, ATMA, SHAMAKAMI and Sympyllieng. She has significantly contributed to formation of transmen-inclusive Transgender Welfare Board in Manipur, capacity building of community groups, and has represented SAATHII at national and international forums.



Mansi Singh has studied Political Science at Jawaharlal Nehru University and Social Policy from the London School of Economics. She has previously worked with the Government of India on RSBY (now the National Health Protection Scheme). She has worked for 5 years on voter awareness campaigns and with community healthcare groups in Bihar. Most recently, she worked as a Researcher at the LSE South Asia Centre. Her areas of interest are sexuality, gender rights with a focus on transgender rights, and sociality of exclusion.



Kris Chudawala (they/he) is a Mumbai based Artist. They find comfort in the use of multi(ple) media and collaboration in their artwork exploring gender, queerness, identity, and resistance. As a Trans Rights Activist, he primarily works with queer youth for awareness, community organization, mental health support, and mutual aid.



Pushpesh Kumar teaches sociology at the University of Hyderabad. He has edited the book, *Sexuality, Abjection and Queer Existence in Contemporary India* from Routledge and serves on the international advisory Board of the *Community Development Journal* published from OUP, UK, and Ireland. He was a British Academy Visiting Fellow in the Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science, London, in 2009. He received M.N. Srinivas Memorial Prize for Young Sociologist from the Indian Sociological Society in 2007. As a pro-feminist thinker, he wrote in the *Economic and Political Weekly*'s special volume on Men and Feminism in

India in 2015. In 2017, he was invited by the South Asia Centre, Syracuse University, Syracuse, to share his research on Queering Indian Sociology. His areas of interest include gender, sexuality, globalization and social changes, caste and kinship, and pedagogical practices in sociology and social sciences. He has written on kothis, a transfeminine identity in India and South Asia, Transgender movement in Hyderabad, Gay Marriage Debate, Queer Ecology, Queer Marxism, Negotiating Sexual Self and Religious Self, and Queer Intimacies in contemporary India. He recently carried out a major research project 'Development and Evaluation of an E-Health Intervention to Promote HIV Prevention Behaviours & Mental Health of Transgender Women in India' in Collaboration with the 'Centre for Sexuality and Health Research and Policy', Chennai. The study was supported by the IMPRESS-ICSSR, Delhi.



Sayan Bhattacharya is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies, University of Minnesota and a queer activist from West Bengal. Their research explores the multilinear roles memory plays in the way transgender and queer rights are articulated in India. Sayan's essays can be found in *Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *Radical History Review*, *Global Public Health*, *Samaj* (South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal), *QED: Journal in GLBTQ Worldmaking*, among others. Sayan volunteers with several trans and disability rights groups in West Bengal.



Kunal Ambasta is an Assistant Professor at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru. His research areas include the criminal justice system, the law of evidence and proof, and the interface between law, sexuality, and gender identity. He also teaches a course on Queerness and the Law. His articles have been published in the *Journal of Comparative Law* and the *NLS Journal* among other publications. He has also extensively written opinion pieces for the *Indian Express*, particularly on criminal justice reform.



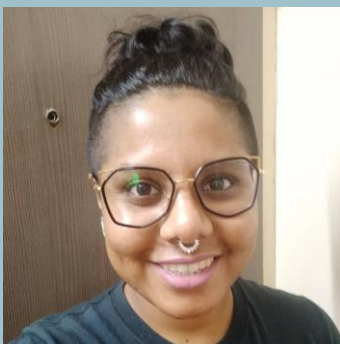
Vikramaditya Sahai was a research associate at CLPR. They have previously worked as faculty at the Gender Studies Department, Ambedkar University, Delhi and as a consultant on a project to study non-normative sexuality and gender housed at the Advanced Centre for Women Studies, TISS, Bombay. They are 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. Aqsa Shaikh is a medical doctor and Community Medicine Specialist. She is an Associate Professor of Community Medicine at HIMSR, Jamia Hamdard, Delhi. She is India's first and only Transgender woman to head a Covid Vaccination center and be an investigator in Covid Vaccine Clinical trials of Sputnik Vaccine. She has also been a part of WHO Research on Epidemiology of Covid19 Transmission amongst healthcare workers. She is working with Sangath, on TransCare Covid19 Project to study the access to healthcare by Transgender Community in Pandemic. She is also a part of University of Chicago funded project on reforming Medical Education to make it Trans-affirmative. Dr. Shaikh is an investigator in VaccinEquity Project by Sabin Vaccine Institute to study the access to Covid19 Vaccination by the Transgender Community. Born and brought up in Mumbai, she completed her education from Seth GS Medical College. She is a Proud Transgender Woman and works on LGBTQIA+ rights, Rights of Persons with Disability, and Mental Health. She has a keen interest in Medical Ethics, Medical Humanities, and Medical Education Technology and is a Fellow of Advanced Course in Medical Education. Aqsa successfully petitioned Delhi Commission for protection of child rights to pass orders on banning unnecessary sex normalizing surgeries on intersex children. She also serves as Section Editor of PLOS Global Public Health and is a reviewer with Research in Humanities in Medical Education.



Vihaan Peethambar is a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion professional based in Bengaluru. He is also an expert member in India's first National Council for Transgender persons. Vihaan was recently recognized in the global 2021 OUTstanding LGBT+ Role Models List by INvolve. Vihaan was awarded the 2020 Diversity & Inclusion Champion of Change Award by Community Business recognizing his commitment in advancing D&I in the workplace and beyond in India. He sits on the boards of community based organizations like Queerala, an LGBTQIA+ organization and Dhwayah Transgender Arts and Charitable Society in Kerala. Vihaan is an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) fellow and earned a Master of Science degree in Communication and an advanced diploma in Globalization and Human Rights from Stockholm University.



Sujitha (he/they) is a Dalit queer activist committed to intersectionality in their politics. His dedication to correct various forms of social inequities led him to volunteer for several causes since 2015. He publicly came out as pansexual in 2018 and as non-binary transgender in 2019, and has been counselling other LGBT+ youngsters ever since. He dreams of a future where individuals wouldn't be subjected to any trauma and is actively working towards building systems to protect, empower, and uplift people from oppressed minorities.



Aparna Chandra is an Associate Professor at the National Law School of India University, Bengaluru. She researches and writes on constitutional law, human rights, gender and the law, and judicial process reform. Aparna has worked extensively on reproductive justice in India. Most recently, in collaboration with the Centre for Reproductive Rights, New York, she has undertaken a study on legal barriers to accessing safe abortion services in India. She is also a national co-convenor of the Indian Feminist Judgments Project.



Jayna Kothari is a co-founder of CLPR. She is a Senior Advocate and practices in the Supreme Court of India. She graduated from University Law College with a B.A. LL.B degree and read the BCL at Oxford University. Jayna was awarded the Wrangler D.C. Pavate Fellowship in Cambridge University.

Jayna's research and practice interests include constitutional law, gender and sexuality law, disability rights and discrimination law. She had argued in the Supreme Court in the recent constitutional challenges to Section 377 and adultery which were both decriminalized. She also argued the *Independent Thought* case in which the Supreme Court recognized child marital rape as a criminal offence. Her book, "The Future of Disability Law in India" was published in 2012 by Oxford University Press.



Anindya Hajra is a transgender rights and social justice activist based in Calcutta, India whose relationship with transfeminisms [yes, that's in the plural] 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



Born in Mumbai, **Zainab Patel** is a transgender person and is one of the petitioners in the *National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India* case on transgender rights. She has recently joined KPMG and is Director – Diversity and Inclusion. She holds an MBA in HR and was the National Manager Health and Human Rights at UNDP country office in India and was the regional policy analyst on human rights in Asia. Her areas of interest are health and social development issues and comes with over 20 years of national and international work experience.

She currently serves as western India representative in the National Council for Transgender Persons and is Kamal Nayan Bajaj Aspen global fellow.



Anubhuti Banerjee is Manager Co-ordination and Improvement at Tata Steel and works as Executive officer to the Chief Information Officer. She is a former DAAD (German Academic Exchange) Fellow and a Mingle Young LGBT+ leader. She founded and leads the LGBT+ ERG at Tata Steel and was the catalyst behind an industry-leading LGBTQ+ Policy, one of the first in the Tata group and the first in an Indian manufacturing company, and has grown to be the face of LGBTQ+ championing in the Tata Group. She has also worked with various organizations and publications to try and make Corporate India and the society a more welcoming place for LGBTQ+

Employees.

She is someone who has transitioned the society around her into seeing her in her true gender, and is learning every day through her “Anubhuti(experience)” of what it means to be a self-made “Woman of Steel” in today's workplaces and society.



Adam Harry is recognized as the country's first transgender to secure a private pilot license, received the license in 2017 after undergoing training in Johannesburg. He is a Member of National Gay pilot association, Florida and also a well known transgender activist in Kerala.



Grace Banu is a Dalit and trans activist. India's first trans engineer, she is also a central member of the mobilisation and advocacy around the amendment of the Transgender Protection of Rights Bill. Her daughter, Tharika Banu, has been the first transgender person to have completed her secondary education in Tamil Nadu. Denied admission first, it was her mother, Ms. Banu, who fought for her rights by filing a case in Madras High Court. Grace Banu vehemently argues for the need to have a paid leave during transition surgery, just like paid maternity leave. She speaks on various safeguards that must be initiated at workplaces and educational

institutions to make them safe and welcoming for transgender persons and stresses on the importance of reservations (as part of affirmative action) for transgender people. As the founder and director of Trans Rights Now Collective (a DBA-centred collective of trans folx working towards greater trans visibility and opportunity in education, the workplace and politics), she has been at the forefront of India's trans rights movement.
