

**A Report
On
release of Ondede's report of
"Domestic and Sexual
Violence, Claiming Voice,
Rights and Dignity.**

Mangalore

Organised by



Swatantra

Introduction

Swatantra and Ondede organised A Report Release program on "Domestic and Sexual Violence; Claiming Voice, Rights and Dignity" A GENDER NON CONFORMING, TRANSGENDER AND SEXUAL MINORITIES LENS ON LOVE, LIFE AND LAWS perspective followed by inter movement dialogue to understand, build support and solidarity with Women's rights groups, Dalit rights groups, Sexual minorities rights groups, Human rights groups, Child rights groups and Civil society movement for a convergence

The same report was released in Bangalore held on 21st April 2018 and in Delhi on 6th July 2018 which has given us hopes to extend our dialogue about the issues which concerns for the larger change in society and the law, through campaigns, social discourse, media, awareness, political activism and so on.

Including you

Ms, Sapna

President of Parivarthana Organisation and Transgender community Activist

Mr, Sasikanth Senthil S,

IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Dakshina Kannada District

Rev.Fr.Dr Praveen Martis

Principal of St Aloysius College (Autonomous) Mangalore and PG Department of Social Work (MSW)

Dr, Akkai Padmashali, Social Activist and Founder member Ondede

Ms, Merlin Francis, Women Activist

Moderator: Ms, Vidhya Dinker, Human Rights Activist

Date: 13th July 2018 Friday, Timings: 11:00pm to 1:00pm

Venue: St Aloysius College (Autonomous) Mangalore

Ondede's report on "Domestic and Sexual Violence, Claiming Voice, Rights and Dignity" was released by the District Commissioner of Mangalore, in an event organised by Ondede and Swatantra at St. Aloysius College, along with a discussion on love, life and laws through the lens of gender

non-conforming, transgender and sexual minorities. The event was a series of testimonials and insights on the problems of the transgender community.



Sana Shree, a student of journalism in St. Joseph's, and the programme manager at Ondede was the opening speaker for the day. She spoke on the stigma that is associated with discrimination against Trans women and Trans men. Discrimination, harassment and violence begin from the place that should be the safest, i.e. "home." Society gives them no better treatment; they are sexually abused, sexually harassed and raped as well. These crimes are not taken account in the law. Ondede conducted field research among the Karnataka community of transgender women, to find out what they primarily wanted, and it was noted that this is their desire to be accepted by the family and society. Significantly, all the research team members were from the transgender community. The book is believed to serve as a map for the transgender community, to learn more about their socio-economic status, and how they can assert their rights.

Following Sana, the principal of St. Aloysius College shared his views. He insisted on the importance of togetherness. The whole community should be seen, addressed as one human community, without any exclusion. He

recollected an incident where two students' views changed about transgender after attending a program where transgender spoke, who were initially narrow minded and were keen on not accepting them. He reiterated that changes happen through awareness and acceptance. He ended on the note that everyone is a gift of God, and so we should which we should not discriminate based on normative views on gender and sexuality.

Recalling an incident at St Joseph's College Bengaluru, Dr Praveen Martis said, "When I was the principal, I had invited Akai Padmashali for a programme. Two Catholic students came to me and said that I should not invite transgenders to the campus and if I do so, they 8/2/2018 DC Releases Book on 'Domestic and Sexual Violence, Claiming Voice, Rights and Dignity' would leave the college and join another one. I was shocked to hear what they had said. I asked them to attend the programme before taking any decision. After attending the programme, they changed their minds. Everyone who is born into this world is a gift of God and should be treated equally. We need to respect everyone so that we can create a civilized society. I am very happy that there is a lot of research going on to bring awareness among the people about transgender. They are part of our community and students who study here should learn to respect them. We are all human beings and we all belong to only one community that is the human community.

She was speaking as a chief guest at a function organised by 'Ondede' at the Eric Mathias Auditorium of St Aloysius College to release the report "Domestic and Sexual Violence : Voices, Rights and Fight for Dignity" on July 13, Friday.

"The situation at present is such that even the sexual minorities are not accepted by their families. The atrocities on our community are continuing. Treating our community with respect and dignity is the need of the hour," she stated.

Transgender should be accepted as they are by the society, she said adding no religion is against sexual minorities.

The Union Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is silent with regard to the demand to decriminalize homosexuality under Section 377 of the IPC. The government needs to make clear its stand, she added.

Releasing the report, Deputy Commissioner Sasikanth Senthil said a district level policy would be framed in order to ensure a life of dignity for transgender.

For three years, we were trying for the medical certificate without success. One day when we met Violet Pereira, we shared our grievances.

She immediately took us to Dr Rajeshwari discussed the issue and we were able to get the medical certificates. most marginalized and the most untouchable people. The issue of sex, gender, sexuality is unspoken in the society we are living in and we need to feel ashamed of it in the 21st century. As a sexual minority, I am proud to stand before you and talk about the concern of sexual minorities. Why, as a community, have we been neglected?

Who is responsible? Who decides who is what? We need to discuss four particular areas –domestic violence, sexual violence, rights of sexuality and transgenders."Said, "Nirbhaya was brutally raped and murdered in Delhi which is a shameful act. Sexual violence still exists in our country. Kokila, a sex worker, was also raped. Why are people killing innocents? What is sexuality and violence? Rulers cannot dictate about my sexuality and gender identity. What I say, the state should listen. That is the moral responsibility of the state. Transgenders are also the citizens of India and they have the right to lead their lives. Families do not accept us. We are facing domestic violence from our parents, spouses and our own community. Why is the some of government silent on issues of sexuality agenda? The government should clarify its stand on IPC section 377. Why is the domestic violence act so rigid? We are also humans and we have sexual feelings. We have the right to lead a respectful life which has been given by our constitution. The Supreme Court should do justice to our fight and we hope to get justice."

DC Releases Book on 'Domestic and Sexual Violence, Claiming Voice, Rights and Dignity' speaking on the occasion, DC Sasikanth Senthil said, "Mangaluru is known as an intellectuals' city. Today we are discussing the problems faced by transgender in the society. We should understand their problems. In our country, there is no strict law for domestic violence. We have meetings of domestic violence but only a few cases are booked. When someone is physically abused, we go for a compromise. Our thoughts are to save the family but we do not try to understand the pain of the victim. Gender is a social concept. There is a male and female within each human being. I hope things will change soon and people will respect transgender." Later, there was a face to face discussion during which Akai Padmashali and DC Sasikanth Senthil responded to various

questions.

My support is always there for the transgender." Sharing her experience, Secretary of Parivarthan Charitable Trust Sanjana said, "I came to Mangaluru 10 years ago and faced discrimination from my own community. My Guru was demanding Rs 6000 per month from me and used to get me thrashed if I failed to meet her demands. But after Parivarthan Charitable Trust was started, we got some relief Sanajana, from Parivarthan, a trans-sexual, who has undergone surgery, shared her experience next, and the hardships she faced. She is from Karwal district, and has been living in Mangalore for ten years now. Harassment came her way in Mangalore. She felt pressurized with the question that was frequently asked as to whether she would want to do sex work or beg. It felt more like a compulsion to stick to either one of the options and this shattered her.

She questioned why she couldn't do other jobs. Today, she is a beautician. Dr Akkai Padmashali was the next guest to voice her opinions and the anger within. She said we all should feel shameful about the scenario, that in the 21st century talking openly about sex, gender and sexuality is still a taboo and the silence continues. The power of patriarchy against minorities is expressed because of this silence. She posed a few questions - who is the reason for the transgender community to be neglected and hated for decades? Who took the authority to decide one's gender? And she questions the larger society through the organization Ondede. Ondede aims to focus on four major areas: sexual violence, domestic violence, rights of sexuality and increasing job opportunities for transgender. She made a strong case for the importance of consent in sex; sex without the person's consent is rape, irrespective of whether it is a sex worker or transgender she spoke of an incident where a sex worker was harassed and raped by the police when she was arrested. Rape here wasn't just about sex, but a way to assert the power of the police.

The government, who should help targeted communities and empower them, largely fails to do so. The policies and provisions are insufficient, and not supportive. For example, the outcome of discussion on Section 377 of IPC, by a SC bench, turned out to be unfavorable to the community. The Transgender Protection Bill has a large gap, as it only talks about entitlements to be provided and not about their right to privacy, at cost to the dignity of the community. The anti- domestic

violence act is very rigid because it does not address the issue of the domestic institution (home) being non supportive to the LBGT community. She thus sought the support of everyone to understand, stand by the community and raise their voice for equality.



The Deputy Commissioner was the last speaker for the day, before time was given for questions and discussions. He expressed the happiness he felt in seeing change that today Mangalore has opened for discussions on sensitive issues, and how this was not the case in earlier years. He believed that these events and discussions are the beginning for the establishment of rights of people. He spoke of the importance of gender sensitization, and how powerful voices in society themselves lack understanding and knowledge on the issues of gender. This is why Ondede is so important, because it creates awareness on those inadequately understood issues. A session was held where questions were the invited. The discussion led to a better understanding of the whole issue of harassment and sexual violence, and also gender issues. The D.C of Mangalore took a step forward and assured to introduce a committee under his chairmanship to look into the implementation of the state policy. The event was successful and hopes to contribute to bring change and equality.

Atrocities on transgenders should be brought under the purview of the Domestic Violence Act, said social activist Dr Akkai Padmashali.





Some of the Media outcome coverage's of the program above

- Transgender activist Akkai Padmashali calls Centre's stand on Section 377 shameful

(To view article click here) timesofindia.indiatimes.com

- DC releases Book on Domestic, Sexual violence, Transgender Rights and Sexuality Rights.

(To view article click here) [Mangaloream.com](https://www.mangaloream.com)

- Centre's decision on IPC 377 is 'direct escapism': Akkai Padmashali

(To view article click here) [newskarnataka.com](https://www.newskarnataka.com)

- Centre should spell out stand on Section 377, says Akkai

(To view article click here) [thehindu.com](https://www.thehindu.com)

- Atrocities on transgenders must be brought under ambit of Domestic Violence Act : Akkai Padmashali

(To view article click here) [mangaloretoday.com](https://www.mangaloretoday.com)

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