

Press Release: Chennai's Eighth Rainbow Pride Month

June 1, Chennai The Eighth Rainbow Pride Month was announced at a Press Conference today. Events this month celebrate the visibility of alternate sexualities and gender identities and affirm the notion of self-respect as a key goal of the LGBT movement. Pride events for the year will commence in June and continue through July and will include cultural performances, sensitization programmes on sexuality and gender-identity, support meetings for parents, film screenings and poster making sessions. The Chennai Rainbow Pride march will be held on Sunday, 26 June 2016.

Events of the Rainbow Pride Month are organized by The Tamil Nadu Rainbow Coalition (TNRC). The coalition is an umbrella body comprising individuals, collectives and organizations working toward gender and sexual equality in all parts of the state. Addressing the media, members of the TNRC put forth the following demands for this Pride month:

- Supreme Court of India, in its hearing of the curative petition, to reverse the Koushal judgement of 11 December 2013, and the Tamil Nadu government to amend Section 377 so it does not apply to consenting adults.
- Central and State governments to implement in entirety the five central schemes announced by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment under the NALSA judgment of 15 April 2014. Tamil Nadu to reactivate *TN Aravani Welfare Board* and rename and restructure it as *TN Transgender Welfare Board* based on the more inclusive definition of transgender as set out by the ruling.
- All private and public sector organizations and educational institutions to ensure workplace equality, restroom access to individuals in the gender of their choice, and include sexual orientation and gender identity awareness in diversity training for staff, students, and management.
- Strict action to be taken against social and cultural forces that violate the rights of those who do not conform to dominant gender identities, or force individuals into marriage against their wishes. Attempts to forcefully change sexual orientation, whether it is through medication, shock therapy, or other means must be condemned.
- To develop zero tolerance to hatred perpetrated against those who transgress the boundaries of caste, class, and religion, thereby calling an end to violence of all kinds, including honour killings.

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