

## Media Note

Thursday, 11 December 2014  
FICCI Auditorium, New Delhi  
9:00am – 4:00pm  
Media Interaction: 1pm-3pm



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### No Going Back: It's time to give LGBT Indians their rights back

*India HIV/AIDS Alliance holds a public hearing on violence and discrimination cases against sexual minorities since Section 377 verdict in 2013*

The Supreme Court of India re-criminalised same-sex sexual behaviour on 11 December 2013. The consequences of this judgement have been multiple and far-reaching. Over the past year, this ruling has increased the vulnerability of gender and sexual minorities to violence, stigma and discrimination and has adversely affected the uptake of HIV services. We must not return to the days when too many vulnerable men who have sex with men (MSM), transgenders and hijras were driven further underground for fear of exposure, extortion and physical harm.

To mark the anniversary of the Section 377 judgement, India HIV/AIDS Alliance (Alliance India) is organising a public hearing to discuss the consequences of the ruling and review cases of violence and discrimination that have taken place since the Supreme Court decision. A selection of documented incidents will be presented at the public hearing before a panel of key stakeholders who will facilitate a discussion to highlight the judgment's significant impact on health access and human rights. The public hearing will also seek opinions and discuss strategies to address this crisis.

The public hearing will affirm the principle that MSM, transgenders and hijras are lawful citizens and their fundamental human rights – including civil, political, social, economic and cultural – need to be protected and guaranteed. The hearing will contribute to the national conversation on Section 377 and influence general attitudes and public policies to ensure the protection and dignity of all Indians.

This hearing is part of Alliance India's campaign against Section 377 under the Pehchan programme. Pehchan is a five-year programme that strengthens and builds the capacity of 200 community-based organizations in 17 states to advance HIV prevention. Pehchan collaborates with India's National AIDS Control Programme and will reach more than 450,000 MSM, transgenders and hijras by 2015. The programme is Global Fund's largest single-country grant to date focused on the HIV response for vulnerable sexual minorities.

The campaign brings together the organisations implementing Pehchan on a common platform to undertake advocacy against the judgment at district, state and national levels. The campaign reaches out to various stakeholders including political parties, religious leaders, media, police and educational institutions to increase their understanding of the challenges facing LGBT communities. The initiative raises awareness to influence the ongoing legal process to ensure rights, protection and dignity for all LGBT Indians.

In light of your commitment to these issues, your presence at this event will add a vital perspective toward creating enabling environment for health access and ensuring that the spotlight remains on this urgent matter. The details of the event are as follows below:

**Date:** Thursday, 11 December 2014

**Time:** 11am-5:30pm

**Venue:** FICCI Auditorium, 1 Federation House, Tansen Marg, New Delhi - 110001