

The National Council of Churches in India,

Commission on Justice Peace and Creation

Indian Church and repealing of the Section 377 of IPC: a Study and Public Debate

Recognizing and accepting the People with Different Sexual Orientation (PDSOs) has been hotly debated in India for several years now. In the recent past attempt have been made to review the controversial Sec. 377 of the Indian penal code which is allegedly used to harass people with different sexual orientations. The Delhi High Court has directed the release of all those arrested under the section.

Despite assurance from the Law Minister of the GOI, that people from all walks of life, and particularly the Faith Based Organisations will be consulted before taking action on the controversial section of IPC, the issue is snowballing into a major national debate. Amidst arguments from both sides, representatives from various organisations and religions have started airing their views.

Several questions such as those below provide us with an opportunity to seriously study the issue. We need to address questions such as challenge us are

1. Are PDSOs not created in God's image and re they or are they not Children of God?
2. Is discrimination on any basis Biblical?
3. Can Church re-read and re-look Section 377 of IPC?
4. Does the exclusion of PDSOs challenge the Mission of Ecumenism?

Time is therefore ripe for us to study and review the issue with a Christian commitment. We need to initiate a study and public debate within the Churches. With this Christian commitment in mind, the **NCCI Commission on Justice Peace and Creation calls for a one- day study and reflection in Chennai on the 28th July 2009.**

Objectives

- To review the situation arising out of aggressive expressions of both sides relating to the review of Sec. 377 of IPC.
- To listen to the Churches' Engagement Experiences on this issue of PDSOs.
- To appraise Churches' Mission in Today's India under the context of dignity and inclusiveness.
- To read together the Biblical passages referring to PDSOs.
- To recommend Involvement Avenues and Strategies to the Churches.

Program

1. A study on Section 377 of IPC from Legal, Societal and Theological Perspectives
2. An Appraisal of Churches' Components Engagement in the need of PDSOs.
3. An Appraisal from Missiological, and Just and Inclusive, perspectives
4. Understanding Theological, Ethical and Biblical implications relating to the concern

Expected Outcome

1. Awareness to study the issue of PDSOs different angles including from '*imago dei*' angle, human rights angle, etc.,
2. A preliminary study document for wider ecumenical debate.
3. Involvement of the Church and Christian organisations in the concerns relating to PDSOs.
4. Increased knowledge on violation of Human Right relating to PDSOs.

Participants

- Representatives from NCCI constituents based and present in Chennai.
- Representatives from the Ministry among the Eunuchs
- Representatives from NCCI Commissions and Committees who are from Chennai
- Students and Faculty from Theological Seminaries
- Representatives from People with different Sexual Orientations
- Theologians and Activists who are working on the issue
- Representatives from SCMI, UESI, AICUF and TN Bishops Conference

Date

July 28, 2009 (10.00 a.m to 05.00 p. m)

Venue

Inter Church Service Agency (ICSA),
Pantheon Road,
Opp. Govt. Museum,
EGMORE – Chennai -9

Hospitality

The NCCI will take care of the Food and Refreshment at the programme venue.

Travel of Participants

Solidarity in terms of participants bearing cost of travel is earnestly solicited.

Co-host

Christian Service Agency
Ministry among the Eunuchs of CSI Chennai Diocese,
Student Christian Movement of India

Programme Facilitation:

National Council of Churches in India - Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation

Yours in solidarity,
R. Christopher Rajkumar
Secretary, Commission on Justice, Peace and Creation,
National Council of Churches in India,
Post Box 205, Civil Lines, Nagpur – 440001,
Ph: 0712 - 253 1312 /256 1464/ 0 94 22 29 35 99
Email: christopher@nccindia.in