



## Editorial

### Status of LGBTQIA+ in India

Around the world the LGBTQIA+ community is subjected to abuse or attacks. They are targeted for not their mistakes. LGBTQIA+ is an initialism that denotes Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual with '+' standing for all the other identities not involved in the short acronym. Though there are many countries which have brought laws to protect these gender and sexual minorities, still they are excluded and socially stigmatized. They are the victims of discrimination in every walk of life. Even at workplace, they are differentiated in hiring, promotions as well as pay. Among the heterosexual employees at the workplace, the LGBTQIA+ workers are constantly bullied and victimized.

The first protest from the community started almost 3 decades back for their rights. The first LGBT pride walk was held in India in 1999. Since then, the community people have gathered as and when required to protest for their rights and to show the impact of their contribution to the world's history. June is recognized as 'Pride month' to honor their impact.

There are LGBTQIA+ friendly places around the world which accept the community people irrespective of their sex preferences. Amsterdam is most gay friendly place in the world whereas Goa is such a place in India. In these gay friendly places, there are gay- friendly hotels, clubs, and laid-back beaches to support this community.

The LGBTQIA+ have right to express themselves the way they want to be. The Article 15 of the Indian constitution, guarantees equality and protection against discrimination on various grounds, including sex. But still this community is not free from discrimination and is devoid of legal rights in many aspects. The marriage among this community members, civil or any other form of unions are not recognized in India. However, some limited legal recognition is provided for live-in relationships of the members of the community. The Supreme Court unanimously decriminalized same-sex relations between consenting adults. But at the same time, it has refused to grant legal recognition to the same sex marriages in October 2023 and has asked the Parliament and State governments to decide if non-heterosexual unions can be legally recognized. The LGBTQIA+ individuals though single are eligible to adopt children in India regardless of their sexual orientation.

Though there are legal recognitions supporting the LGBTQIA+ community, the social stigma attached towards them needs to be addressed by all of us. It is up to us to understand the mental agony this community has and accepting them as they are which gives them courage to freely express themselves in the society.

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