



Conference: Caste and Equality Act 2010 Next Steps Programme of events

From 10.30 to 15:30, Saturday, 2nd July 2011
Conference Theatre, Saturn Facilities,
101 Lockhurst Lane, Coventry, CV6 5SF

- 10:30-11:00** **Conference Registration**
- 11:00-11:05** **Welcome** by Davinder Prasad, General Secretary, CasteWatchUK
- 11:05-11:10** **Conference Opening** by Councillor Ram Lakha OBE, Ex Lord Mayor, Coventry
- 11:10-11:15** **Conference Introduction** by Mr Sat Pal Muman, Chair CasteWatchUK and Conference Chairman
- 11:15-11:30** **Caste Discrimination and Human Rights in the UK** by Usha Sood, Human Rights Barrister
- 11:30-11:45** **Caste Discrimination and Employment Law** by Akhlaq Choudhury, Employment Law Barrister
- 11:45-12:00** **Caste Discrimination and Public Services** by Declan O'Dempsey, discrimination and human rights barrister with expertise in EU and international discrimination law.
- 12:00-12:20** **Short Film - "Segregation and Survival: The South Asian Caste System Within The UK"** produced by Saira MacCleod
- 12:20-12:30** **Release of audio composition "Divide"** by Salochna Devi
- 12:30-13:20** **Lunch Break** -Free lunch
- 13:20-13:35** **Caste and its social dimensions** by Mr Sinna Mani, President of British Organisation of People of Indian Origin (BOPIO)
- 13:35-14:35** **Panel discussion: Next Steps**, Satpal Muman Chair, CasteWatch UK , Usha Sood, Akhlaq Choudhury, Declan O'Dempsey, Sinna Mani, Dr Meena Dhanda
- 14:35-14:40** **Adoption of Conference Resolution**, Satpal Muman, Chair, CasteWatch UK
- 14:40-14:45** **Vote of Thanks** by Davinder Prasad, General Secretary, CasteWatchUK
- 14:45-15:30** **Networking**

Address: 2, St Lukes Road, Holbrooks, Coventry, CV6 4JA
Telephones: 07891 058712 / 07751 668926
E-mail: info@castewatchuk.org
www.castewatchuk.org
Registered Charity number 1108009

Speakers & members of Panel discussion

Usha Sood, Barrister

Usha Sood was called to the Bar in 1974 and has been practising since 1990. Usha has always been at the heart of community matters across the Midlands and offers support to numerous charitable and public interest cases. Usha has numerous specialist areas including work on child abduction cases, dowry recovery, human rights, public law cases, and international family and civil law litigation. She has been an expert witness in domestic and international courts and part of the judicial training within the Equal Treatment Committee of the Judicial Studies Board for seven years. Usha has previously had national appointments with the Home Office as well as local public and community appointments – she is presently a member of CARE. She has been a regular presenter for the Centre for Parliamentary Studies, part of the Government's Public Policy Exchange, on their Honour Based Violence Programme at Whitehall from 2009-2010.

Akhlaq Choudhury, Barrister

He has wide experience of all aspects of employment law and regularly acts for and advises individuals, city institutions, law firms, local and health authorities, government departments, corporations, trade unions and police authorities. He has particular experience in lengthy, multi-party litigation and is currently involved in some of the major equal value disputes making their way through Tribunals. Akhlaq has particular experience of vigorously contested, high value discrimination cases and is frequently instructed on behalf of employers and employees in high-profile multi-million pound claims. Recent claims include disability, race, sex and religious belief discrimination claims against Solicitors' firms, banks, religious institutions, foreign embassies and local authorities.

Declan O'Dempsey, Barrister

Declan specialises in sensitive and difficult employment, discrimination, public and regulatory law. His discrimination practice includes advising and representing in goods and services cases, especially the newer areas such as religion and belief. He acts in administrative law cases for individuals and councils, advising on matters affecting councillors, politicians, businesses and public bodies. He has particular expertise in relation to the application of the Equality Duties and is one of a team of 4 drafting the new Public Sector Equality Duty Statutory Code for the EHRC under the Equality Act 2010.

Councillor Ram Lakha, OBE

Councillor Ram Lakha was Lord Mayor of Coventry for 2005-06. He was first elected in May 1989 in Upper Stoke Ward. Then after with one years' absence, he was elected in May 1991 to represent Binley and Willenhall Ward and has happily been serving this ward as Labour Councillor since then. He served on the West Midlands Fire and Civil Defence Authority for one year as representative of the council. He also served as a Non-Executive Director of Whitefriars Housing Group. He was a governor of Coventry Technical College during 1989-90 and served as a school governor of Stoke Park Secondary School for over ten years. He is currently the school governor of Willenhall Community Primary School.

Sinna Mani

Sinna Mani has been an active member of the Labour Party for over 40 years and at one time joined the Green Party. He has stood as a Labour candidate in many elections. He served for a period on Lewisham council, chairing major committees and serving as Mayor of Lewisham 1993-94. Professionally, he is a journalist who has worked on human rights issues for many years. He was actively involved in the Obama Campaign. Recently, he has been on lecture tour in Middle East and USA raising human right concerns. He is the Founder of British Organisation of People of Indian Origin (BOPIO) and its current president.

Dr Meena Dhanda

Reader in Philosophy and Cultural Politics, University of Wolverhampton, she **has received a prestigious fellowship to carry out research into caste prejudice**. Of the 90 Research Fellowships awarded by The Leverhulme Trust across all subjects, Dr Meena Dhanda is one of only four philosophers to have achieved this distinction in 2010. The research focuses on the experience of caste prejudice in personal relations, and Dr Dhanda will study the extent of separation between caste groups in the UK, looking into the conditions for greater mixing. Her comparative research will be conducted within the UK in Wolverhampton, Birmingham, Coventry and Oxford.