

## **Queer Azaadi March – Mumbai Pride**

The Queer Azaadi Mumbai (QAM) is a Collective of Organisations and Individuals that organizes the annual Mumbai Pride March and the Mumbai Pride Week. The event is also known as the Queer Azaadi March. QAM works on a self organizing principle and every year goes through a process of setting up volunteer committees that take charge of various activities such as Permissions, Event Organizing, March Planning and Resource Mobilising. The Humsafar Trust is one of the elements of this collective and provides its administrative and physical infrastructure.

The first Queer Azaadi Mumbai march was initiated on August 16, 2008 with freedom from IPC section 377 as its main agenda. Apart from the Annual Pride Week and Pride March , QAM is mobilized to engage with any incidence of discrimination , homophobia or hate speech that occurs in real or virtual spaces.

Some of the main demands drafted by the Queer Azaadi Movement are :

- 1) The Supreme Court issue its verdict in the case case against IPC Section 377, our demand for this law to be read down continues.
- 2) The Constitution must include provisions to deal with all discrimination on the grounds of sexuality or gender.
- 3) Those amongst us who are transgender and intersex are not recognized by society. Equal citizenship rights and opportunities should be extended to all who do not fit into either of the two categories of male and female.
- 4) The medical establishment must be made aware of the reality of our lives and our needs, and cease all insensitive and cruel attempts to ‘cure’ us.
- 5) Every individual is under tremendous pressure to marry a person of the opposite sex, as marriage is seen as a must in our society. This is a major cause of many hate crimes and violence against consenting adults who want to live their life with the same gender partners they love. We must join forces in a campaign against all such forced marriages.
- 6) We call for an end to homophobia and transphobia in thoughts, words and action
- 7) We want freedom from violence and hate within families, in educational institutions, at places of work and in public spaces.
- 8) We especially demand that fundamentalist forces stop abusing us and poisoning people’s minds against us.

The Mumbai Pride March is held on the first weekend after the the Republic day of the country i.e 26<sup>th</sup> January every year. Prior to the march the month is dotted with several activities around Pride that include Film festivals, fairs , stand up shows, and Treasure hunts among other activities that help mobilize communities and bring them together to express their pride in themselves.

<http://queerazaadi.wordpress.com/about/>