



Azim Premji  
University

## **Colloquium: Criminalising Dissent: PUCL's Struggle against attacks on Human Right Defenders and the Anti-Democratic Laws in India**

Speaker:

Kavita Srivastava, National Secretary, People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) and the PUCL General Secretary, Rajasthan Branch

Date / Time:

May 9, 2013 - 3:45pm - 5:15pm

Venue:

10th Floor, Pixel A, APU

Abstract:

The largest number of innocents arrested in the name of Maoism, Terrorism and sedition are the leaders of the communities who are resisting the attack on their livelihoods. Such struggles are taking place in almost every Tehsil and District of the country. Various sections of the IPC are also used to silence dissenters of Government policy and decision making. The Indian State has armed itself with more than a hundred anti people, anti democratic laws in order to criminalise dissent.

The attacks on the human rights defenders and ordinary people is a very difficult battle today with the Courts often being manipulated at all levels along with the complexities of the judicial process. The PUCL which believes in non-violent and constitutional means of struggle for upholding and defending human rights, often finds itself isolated as a section of the media is also manipulated and the middle class public opinion manufactured by the State propaganda. The threat to life and liberty and democracy is only growing by subversion of our constitutional guarantees and the democratic mechanisms. It is time this challenge went beyond human rights groups into the hands of the ordinary people.

A Note on the Speaker:

Kavita Srivastava is National Secretary of People's Union for Civil Liberties(PUCL) and the PUCL General Secretary, Rajasthan Branch. She is also the convener of the Right to Food campaign's steering group.