



CENTRE FOR ASIAN AND  
TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES  
SOUTH ASIA  
INSTITUTE



UNIVERSITÄT  
HEIDELBERG  
ZUKUNFT  
SEIT 1386

## Lecture Series on Governance and Politics in South Asia

Department of Political Science

# Working on Human Rights in an Authoritarian Context *Some Case Studies*

**Dr. Avinash Kumar**

*Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi.*

In this lecture, Dr. Avinash Kumar, a leading human rights defender and activist from India, will talk about strategies that human rights groups have had to deploy in authoritarian settings, and their context-specific relevance. He will also talk about a set of varying case studies across national and international organizations, and the respective challenges they face. The case studies will also look at some of the human rights defenders who are currently serving their time inside prison as political prisoners, and their work. The case studies include: People's Union of Civil Liberties (across India) on the legal route to human rights; Amnesty International, and its many versions in India, on campaign route; ANHAD (pan India with specific locations in Gujarat, Kashmir etc.) on mass awareness on human rights; and a few individuals like Anand Teltumbde and Gautam Navlakha, on public critique of state violence (intellectual activists associated with various movements) on showing solidarities with the minority groups, especially Muslims. While a lot of their work is overlapping, Dr. Kumar will attempt to show how they have also developed their specific niches and evolved historically



Dr. Avinash Kumar is a Ph.D. from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He was also a Charles Wallace Postdoctoral Fellow at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London University. Among his many roles over twenty years, he has taught at Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi University, was a research editor at the SARAI Programme of Centre for Study of Developing Societies (CSDS). Over the last 16 years, he has worked in various capacities at a range of organizations including Oxfam GB, Oxfam India, WaterAid India, and as the Executive Director at Amnesty International India. Currently, he is Distinguished Fellow at the Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi

**Date:** Monday, 5th June, 2023

**Time:** 14:00 – 15:45, CET

**Venue:** CATS, Great Lecture Hall (room 010.01.05, building 4130)