



# MENAKA GURUSWAMY & ARUNDHATI KATJU



**Born:** 27 November 1974, Hyderabad, India  
// 19 August 1982, Allahabad, India

**Menaka Guruswamy** is a Senior Advocate at the Supreme Court of India, and has degrees from the University of Oxford, Harvard Law School and the National Law School of India.

From 2017 to 2019, she was the BR Ambedkar Research Scholar and Lecturer at Columbia Law School, and has also been visiting faculty at Yale Law School, University of Toronto Faculty of Law and New York University School of Law. She is also the first Indian person and only the second woman ever to have her portrait hung in Rhodes House at the University of Oxford.

**Arundhati Katju** is a lawyer in India and New York. She has litigated multiple notable cases at the Supreme Court of India and the Delhi High Court, including one high-profile case where a 19-year-old transgender man was brought to India from New York by his parents.

***“Freedom in its simplest version, is just being allowed to fly, and in its more pragmatic version, in India, it’s about breaking the chains, so that you can fly” - Menaka Guruswamy (India Today, August 2016)***

In 2016, Katju was awarded the Human Rights Fellowship by Columbia University, and in

2019, she was named one of the “trailblazing individuals who actively ensure society remains moving towards equality, acceptance and dignity for all queer people” (*Queerty.com*).

In 2018, Guruswamy and Katju convinced the Supreme Court of India to decriminalise Section 377 of the Penal Code (homosexuality), a landmark judgement for LGBTQ+ rights in India.

In 2019, they announced they were in a romantic relationship, and have been together since.

Later that year, they were both named on the annual Time 100 list of the world’s 100 most influential people by Time Magazine.

***“But these in the public domain only happen because of changes within us - as we learn to let go of fear and hesitation and embrace our ambitions and aspirations for a full life.” - Arundhati Katju (Times of India, September 2019)***

#### Image credit

AK on left; MG on right

Jayshree Bajoria, Senior Researcher, Human Rights Watch - @jayshreebajoria on Twitter (September 2018)

<https://twitter.com/jayshreebajoria/status/1037563024222105600>