

First job portal for transgenders in country to go live tomorrow

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BENGALURU: Leading the way in bringing transgenders into the mainstream, a Bengaluru-based organisation is all set to launch a national portal to provide employment opportunities to sexual minorities.

The unique feature of this online portal is its inclusive approach: It's not an exclusive platform for transgenders but open for all. It treats transgenders as a part of society. The portal, www.1008jobs.com, will be launched on Friday. K Prashanth, CEO and Board Member of Value Wings Enter-

prises Private Limited, the organisation behind the initiative, said that they were doing their bit to contribute to a cultural change. "A transgender in Maharashtra was issued a passport recently. We wanted to do our bit for bringing about a change. We want to be an interface between the transgender community and the job providers," he told *Deccan Herald*.

The portal won't stop at listing job opportunities. Its staff would also appoint transgender agents in each city to help job seekers from the community. In fact, the organisation is in talks with the transgender community to chart out an ac-

tion plan for the same. With most transgenders seeking alms or doing sex work for a living, the portal could throw open a wide range of employment opportunities for them, opined transgender activist and founder member of Ondede, Akkai Padmashali. According to her, there is no other such portal that lists job opportunities for transgenders.

But it won't be easy for transgenders to make use of the portal, what with many of them not having access to the Internet. "Many of them drop out of school. Reaching out to them is important," Padmashali felt. On Monday, she met the '1008

jobs' team to help them strengthen their efforts.

Prashanth emphasised that the portal is open for everyone seeking employment.

It also gives importance to part-time job seekers and students looking for earning while studying. Even here, agents would be appointed in semi-urban and rural areas to assist those who do not have access to the Internet. 'E-Employment Exchanges' (HR kiosks) would be installed at prominent locations across the country to reach out to all sections of employment seekers, he added.

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