



## **Colloquium: Unequal is Unhealthy: How Growing Inequality Impacts on Health and Education**

Speaker:  
P Sainath

Date / Time:  
March 27, 2014 - 4:00pm - 5:30pm

Venue:  
10th Floor, Pixel A, Azim Premji University

### Abstract:

India boasts of being one of the hot destinations in ‘medical tourism.’ Yet, the number of Indians who have stopped seeking medical attention, simply because they cannot afford it, has doubled in 20 years. With health expenditures soaring, your ‘wellness’ has a lot to do with how much you can spend. Quite a few Indians fall below the poverty line each year, driven down there by their medical costs. These past 15-20 years, the fastest growing sector in India is neither software nor IT. It is Inequality, which has grown faster in the past 15 years than at any time in the preceding 50. The gaps between rich and poor show up, and should be seen, across many spheres; in overall consumption expenditures, in health facilities and outcomes or simply in where you live. The huge gaps between what the top 5 per cent and bottom 5 per cent of Indians spend each day of their lives, also show up in their impact on the health and education sectors. Is it possible to deepen inequality - and at the same time greatly improve the health and education levels of hundreds of millions of poor people? It’s worth discussing.

### A Note on the Speaker:

In a 33-year career as a journalist, Sainath – the Rural Editor of *the Hindu* - has won over 40 global and national awards for his reporting (though he has turned down several, including the Padma Bhushan, because, in his view, journalists should not be receiving awards from governments they cover and critique). He is the winner of the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2007, for Journalism Literature and Creative Communications Arts. He was also the first reporter in the world to win Amnesty International’s *Global Human Rights Journalism Prize* in its inaugural year in 2000. His other awards include: the United Nation’s Food & Agriculture Organisation’s (FAO) Boerma Prize in 2000; the *Harry Chapin Media Award* in New York, 2006; and the *Inspiration Award* at the Global Visions Film Festival in Edmonton, Canada in 2002. He was also the first Indian reporter to win the *European Commission’s Lorenzo Natali Prize* for journalism in 1995.

His latest project, about to launch, is an online archive - the **People's Archive of Rural India**. It aims at capturing the labour, languages, livelihoods, arts, crafts and many other aspects of rural India. This will be a platform that combines video, audio, still photography and print. Public access to the archive will be free. Sainath's current work involves a series on the devastation of Indian agriculture by anti-farmer policies this past decade, consisting of detailed reports from the households of landless labourers and marginal farmers across the country. In this, as in all his previous work, Sainath sets the agenda for investigative rural reporting.