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## Supreme Court recognises transgenders as 'third gender'

Directs Centre, states to treat transgenders as socially and economically backward community for the purpose of social welfare schemes

# DTE

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By Kundan Pandey (<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/author/kundan-pandey-2083>)  
Last Updated: Monday 17 August 2015

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Transgender people will no longer have to compulsorily term themselves as male or female for getting government benefit. In a landmark ruling on Tuesday, the Supreme Court of India created the

"third gender"

(<http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/content/judgement-supreme-court-india-regarding-transgender-community-15042014>) status for them.

Not only this, the court also directed the central and state governments to treat transgenders as socially and economically backward. In its ruling on a petition filed by the National Legal Service Authority (NALSA), the court said that transgenders should be treated as backward in social welfare schemes.

NALSA had filed the petition in Supreme Court in 2012, requesting equal rights for the group, highlighting the discrimination they face even in hospitals.

As per the court order, absence of any law which recognises transgenders as third gender could not be the ground of any



discrimination in education or employment.



(<https://api.whatsapp.com/send?text=Supreme Court recognises transgenders as 'third gender'>) <https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/supreme-court-recognises-transgenders-as-third-gender-44052> The apex court ordered government at the Centre and state level to chalk out social welfare schemes for transgender community and also to run



campaign to improve awareness in the society. This awareness will be aimed to erase the discrimination against transgender community.

In its order, the court directed that state governments must construct special facilities like public toilets, departments and look into the special needs issues for the transgender community. The decision is likely to prompt authorities to set up special facilities for transgender in hospitals also. It had highlighted the plight of transgender in hospitals who often patients feel uncomfortable when they are admitted in the ward. The transgenders, on the other hand, face harassment and other problems when they get admitted in the male ward.

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Counsel for National Legal Service Authority (NALSA), Rajeev Yadav, said that almost all prayers made in the petition have been granted by the court.

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Expressing her happiness, Simron Sheikh, who comes from same community said that the new order has also legalised gender change if a persons wants to change his/her sex through surgery, and that such a person will not face any discrimination on this ground.

For obtaining identity card like driving licence, voter id, people are required to check boxes against male or female category. They will get a separate option, Sheikh said.

Former Election Commissioner S Y Quraishi tweeted, "When EC recognised transgender as the 'other' gender besides M & F, one million of them got empowered. SC has endorsed it."

Supreme Court Judgement: Judgement of the Supreme Court of India on transgender community, 15/04/2014  
(<http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/content/judgement-supreme-court-india-regarding-transgender-community-15042014>)

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## Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad win 2018 Nobel peace prize

The duo were awarded for their efforts to curb sexual violence as a weapon of war and for seeking justice for victims



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By Meenakshi Sushma (https://www.downtoearth.org.in/author/meenakshi-sushma-112909)

Last Updated: Friday 05 October 2018



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The 2018 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad for their work in ending sexual violence as weapons of war", said the Norwegian Nobel Committee.

Mukwege is a Congolese gynaecologist spent large parts of his adult life helping the victims of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Mukwege and his staff have treated thousands of patients who have fallen victim to such assaults at the Panzi Hospital, Bukavu.

Nadia Murad was a victim of sexual violence when the Islamic State militants attacked villages of Sinjar district in 2014 to erase Yazidi population. Murad is among 3,000 Yazidi girls and women who were victims of rape and other abuses by the militants.

After three months in captivity, she escaped and has since been creating awareness about how sexual violence is used as a strategy against Yazidis and other religious minorities. In 2016, the 23-year-old Murad was named the United Nation's first Goodwill Ambassador for the Dignity of Survivors of Human Trafficking.

The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1820 (2008) this year determined that the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict constitutes both a war crime and a threat to international peace and security.

Berit Reiss-Andersen, Chair of the Norwegian Nobel Committee paid tribute to both saying the pair "put their personal security at risk by courageously combating war crime and seeking justice for victims."

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