

# MHA ASKS STATES, UTS TO PROTECT, REHABILITATE TRANSGENDERS

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Rights & Welfare of Minorities Incl. Linguistic Minorities - Schemes & their performance; Mechanisms, Laws, Institutions & Bodies

**NEW DELHI :** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has written a letter to all chief secretaries of Union Territories and states on protection of rights of transgender persons and also directed them to sensitise police and prison officials in this regard.

The Ministry has also said that all states are required to protect and rehabilitate transgenders.

"The law mandates adequate steps to be taken by the State Governments/Union Territories for not only providing for welfare measures to be taken but steps to be taken for rescue, protection and rehabilitation of a transgender person," read the MHA's letter.

The MHA has said that under section 18 of the Transgenders (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, it is a punishable offence in case anyone compels or entices a transgender person to indulge in the act of forced or bonded labour other than any compulsory service for public purposes imposed by the government.

While giving details of the act, MHA said if someone denies a transgender person the right of passage to a public place or obstructs such person from using or having access to a public place to which other members have access to or a right to use, forces or causes a transgender person to leave the household, village or other place of residence, it also falls under the category of punishable offence.

The MHA highlighted that harming or injuring or endangering the life, safety, health or well-being, whether mental or physical, of a transgender person or tending to do acts including causing physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal and emotional abuse and economic abuse is also a punishable offence.

"Rule 11 provides for adequate measures to be taken to prevent non-discrimination of transgender persons, including setting up of a Transgender Protection Cell under the charge of District Magistrate in each District and a State Level Cell under the Director General of Police, to monitor cases of offences against transgender persons and ensure timely registration, investigation and prosecution of such offences," read the letter.

"You are requested to initiate necessary measures in terms of the Act immediately and undertake necessary sensitization programmes for the police and prison officials," the MHA stated. (ANI)

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