



EDITORIAL: THE HINDU

GENERAL STUDIES 2: SOCIAL JUSTICE
TOPIC: TRANSGENDOR

DATE: 05.04.2025

A people still waiting to move out of the margins

1. Purpose of the Day

- March 31 is celebrated globally as the *International Transgender Day of Visibility*.
- It aims to recognize the resilience, achievements, and struggles of transgender individuals.
- The day serves as a reminder to work towards genuine inclusion, legal rights, and social acceptance.

2. Importance of Transgender Day of Visibility

- Despite the enactment of *The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019*, transgender individuals still face social stigma, discrimination, and economic exclusion.
- Issues persist in key areas such as education, employment, health care, and access to public services.
- Real progress depends on *effective policy implementation, strict anti-discrimination mechanisms, and active societal support*.

3. Legal Framework vs Ground Reality

- The 2019 Act legally recognizes transgender persons and mandates their protection from discrimination.
- However, ground-level implementation is poor, creating roadblocks in accessing benefits and legal recognition.
- *National Transgender Portal Statistics (as of Dec 2023)*:
 - Applications for identity cards: 24,115
 - Certificates issued: Only 15,800
 - Over 3,200 applications pending for more than 30 days, despite the legal time limit.
- *Delhi Case Example*:
 - Transgender population in 2011: ~4,200
 - Identity cards issued by April 2022: Only 23



- The slow and complex certification process fails to address critical issues like *police abuse*, *family rejection*, and *lack of support systems*.

4. Economic Challenges and Employment Barriers

- Transgender persons experience *high unemployment rates* and are often excluded from the formal workforce.
- *2018 NHRC Report Findings:*
 - 92% of transgender individuals are excluded from economic activities.
 - Many are forced into begging or sex work due to lack of job opportunities.
- *2022 Study Findings:*
 - Transgender unemployment rate: 48%
 - National average: 7%–8%
- Major workplace issues:
 - Discrimination during hiring
 - Absence of gender-neutral washrooms
 - Hostile or insensitive work environments
- Though some corporates now have inclusive hiring policies, their reach remains limited.
- *Positive Financial Inclusion Step (2024):*
 - LGBTQ+ persons allowed to open joint bank accounts and name partners as nominees.
 - Yet, financial inclusion remains minimal due to poor awareness and systemic gaps.
- Suggested solutions:
 - Diversity hiring drives
 - Inclusive HR policies
 - Targeted government schemes
 - Special financial instruments and loans for transgender entrepreneurs

5. Barriers in Education and Health Care

- *Education:*



- Vital for empowerment, but transgender students often drop out due to *bullying* and *harassment*.
- Literacy rate (2011 Census): 56.1% among transgender persons, lower than national average of 74.04%.
- In Kerala, 58% of transgender students reported leaving school due to discrimination.
- Some states introduced transgender cells in universities and seat reservations, but national-level policies are inadequate.
- *Health Care:*
 - 27% of transgender persons report being *denied medical treatment* due to their identity.
 - Gender-affirming surgeries cost ₹2–₹5 lakh, with minimal insurance coverage.
 - *Ayushman Bharat TG Plus* card offers ₹5 lakh per year coverage, but delivery is inconsistent.
 - There's a critical shortage of:
 - Trained doctors and surgeons
 - Mental health professionals familiar with gender dysphoria
 - Accessible and sensitive health care facilities

6. Need for Real Inclusion and Social Awareness

- Visibility must go hand-in-hand with *genuine inclusion and empowerment*.
- Mainstream media often portrays transgender persons through *stereotypes* or *mockery*, ignoring their diversity and potential.
- Initiatives needed:
 - Gender sensitisation programmes in schools, colleges, and workplaces
 - Cultural events and pride festivals that normalize and celebrate diversity
 - Media campaigns to humanize transgender lives and dismantle harmful biases
- Legislative measures:
 - Stronger *anti-discrimination laws*
 - *Inclusive hiring quotas* or incentives



- *Financial support schemes* and grants for small businesses led by transgender individuals

7. Conclusion: Toward Dignity, Equality, and Inclusion

- International Transgender Day of Visibility is not just about celebration, but about *demanding accountability*.
- True inclusion needs a multi-layered approach involving:
 - Government initiatives and proper enforcement
 - Corporate inclusion and diversity practices
 - Societal awareness and change in attitudes
- Only through united action can transgender individuals live with *dignity, equality, and opportunity* in society.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/a-people-still-waiting-to-move-out-of-the-margins/article69413771.ece>

