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THIRD GENDER - ISSUES TO BE TACKLED

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CHIEF EDITORS

J. BENET RAJADURAI

&

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Chapter - 1

Third Gender- Issues to be Tackled

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ABSTRACT

The discrimination against the third gender is embedded in our consciousness and is aggravated by ignorance and insensitivity. Even well-meaning persons are uncomfortable if they face someone who does not fit in the Procrustean beds of “the normal”. One might well ask, why a person who has a man's body, can't mark (M) in application forms, or queue up in the men's restroom and be done with it. I will give you two answers. The first comes from a member of the community, “In public places, we are treated differently. If I am out and visit the women's wash room, they won't like it and if I go to men's washroom ... you know it would be a different story. Where should I go?” The next answer is from Justice Albie Sachs's *The Strange Alchemy of Law and Life*: “There was an abysmal decision by our top court, the appeal Court, in the 1930s, when people of Indian origin objected to being excluded from post office counters where white people would queue. Three out of four judges could not see the problem; the applicants could be served just as well in the one queue as in the other. Only one judge, Gardiner said, ‘It touches on the dignity of people to be excluded, it's not simply a question of functionality’.” The brown man will get the same postcards in the other counter. So why complain? No, it is about dignity, real dignity to all barring none. Justice Sachs speaks of the equality of the vineyard (grading up) or the equality of the