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**INDIAN HIJRA (THIRD GENDER)
AND THE LEGAL PROVISIONS FOR THE
PROTECTION OF THEIR RIGHTS**

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Abstract

In India there is no formal definition of the third gender. In our society people who identify themselves neither as man nor as woman are commonly referred to as Hijra or third gender or transgender. Hijras are neither male for female but many of them have the elements of both. In India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and in almost all the countries of Indian sub-continent hijras are officially recognized as third gender. In the western countries the term hijra is not used, instead of hijra they use the term "transgender". Most hijras consider themselves to be the third gender. The central government and the state governments have taken many legal steps to protect the rights of the hijras or the third genders. Besides legal steps the central and the state governments of India have launched different schemes for developing the

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