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Cabinet: Transgenders to get family pension like unmarried daughters in Odisha

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BHUBANESWAR: The state cabinet on Monday decided that transgender persons will get family pension like unmarried daughters in case of death of parents who are government employees.

The cabinet meeting, chaired by chief minister Naveen Patnaik, decided that transgender child of a government servant/pensioner who died on or after January 10, 2020, shall be treated as an unmarried daughter and will be eligible for pension in case there is no other elder unmarried daughter. The Odisha Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 1992, will be amended for the same.

Chief secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra said the Supreme Court and Orissa high court have in many cases directed payment of pension to transgender persons, considering them similar to daughters. The word 'transgender' was earlier not included in the definition of child in pension rules.

The high court in May last year had directed the state to pay family pension to a transgender after death of the pensioner mother. Mira Parida, a transgender and social activist, welcomed the government decision and said it was a much-needed step. "Many transgenders were suffering because of lack of rules for compensation. This will go a long way to ensure social justice for them," Parida said.

The cabinet also gave its nod to pay compensation to the next of kin of a prisoner in case he or she dies in jail. Currently there is no provision for payment of compensation under the existing rules. But the state does pay compensation to the kin on recommendations of NHRC or OHRC.

The chief secretary said the rules will bring clarity and consistency in extending ex gratia relief to kin of prisoners dying in jails.