

Compensate sterilisation camp victims: SC to govt

The court order

- An SC Bench asked the government to make sure that the families of women who died after undergoing sterilisation in various camps in Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh were paid the enhanced compensation amount
- Such compensation should be paid to victims in other states also even if the incidents had taken place two-three years ago, the apex court said

Legal Correspondent New Delhi, January 31

The Supreme Court has directed the Centre to ensure that the states properly utilised the funds released for payment of compensation to the victims of medical negligence while undergoing sterilisation.

The Social Justice Bench comprising Justices MB Lokur and UU Lalit also asked the Centre to file a status report within six weeks on the implementation of the apex court's directives, issued in 2009 for dealing with such incidents, by the states.

Taking note of the fact that the Centre had laid down standards for doctors and medical facilities and also issued guidelines, the Bench asked the government to make sure that the families of women who died after undergoing sterilisation in various camps in Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh were paid the enhanced compensation amount.

Such compensation should be paid to victims in other states also even if the incidents had taken place two-three years ago, the apex court said.

The Bench was hearing a PIL petition by Devika Biswas seeking prevention of casualties among women subjected to sterilisation.

Appearing for the petitioner, senior advocate Colin Gonsalves acknowledged that the norms set by the Centre for such operations "are pretty good" but implementation was lacking. For instance, such operations in Bihar were being conducted by medical practitioners, who had inadequate qualification, in school buildings by making the women lie down on the floor and using torch lights

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