

RAJYA SABHA

*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Friday, August 5, 2022/ Sravana 14, 1944 (Saka)

OBSERVATION BY CHAIR

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I want to clarify one thing that there is a wrong notion among the Members that they have a privilege from action by agencies while the Session is on. I have given it a serious thought. I examined all the precedents and I remember my own ruling given earlier. Under Article 105 of the Constitution, Members of Parliament enjoy certain privileges so that they can perform their parliamentary duties without let or hindrance. One of the privileges is that a Member of Parliament cannot be arrested in a civil case, 40 days before the commencement of the Session or Committee meeting and 40 days thereafter. This privilege is already incorporated under Section 135A of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908. However, in criminal matters, Members of Parliament are not on a different footing than a common citizen. It means that a Member of Parliament does not enjoy any immunity from being arrested in a criminal case during the Session or otherwise. There have been a number of rulings by Presiding Officers. I would like to draw the attention of the House to one ruling given in 1966 by Dr. Zakir Hussain. It was said, "Members of Parliament do enjoy

*This Synopsis is not an authoritative record of the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha.

certain privileges so that they can perform their duties. One such privilege is freedom from arrest when the Parliament is in Session. This privilege of freedom from arrest is limited only to civil cases and has not been allowed to interfere in the administration of criminal proceedings." Members may also recall that I made an observation earlier, and, in the observation, I said, "No Member should avoid appearing before any investigating agency, when she or he is called upon to do so, by citing reason of House duty. As law-makers, it is our bounden duty to respect the law and legal procedures. It applies to all, in all cases, because you can only inform that the House is in Session, seeking further date but you cannot avoid the enforcement agencies or the law enforcing agencies' summons or notices. This has to be taken note by all." In a landmark case, the K. Anandan Nambiar and Another, the Supreme Court of India held that the true constitutional position is that so far as valid order of detention is concerned, a Member of Parliament can claim no special status higher than that of an ordinary citizen and is as much liable to be arrested, detained or questioned even during the Session. The Supreme Court in a recent case, State of Kerala Vs K. Ajith and Others, observed that "privileges and immunities are not gateways to claim exemptions from the general law of the land, particularly as in this case, the criminal law which governs the action of every citizen." There are so many rulings like that. So, let there be clarity in the minds of hon. Members. That is why I reiterated this.

MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION OF CHAIR

1. Delay in Implementation of Infrastructure Projects in the Country

SHRI MD. NADIMUL HAQUE: Zero Hour mention is on delay and cost overrun in infrastructure projects. A lot of Central infrastructure projects, from smart cities to roads, to railways and petroleum projects are currently in operation. However, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's data shows that out of 1514 projects, as many as 713 projects were delayed as of June, 2022. The total cost overrun for them was 22 per cent higher than their original cost. It further showed that the gestation period has not been reported. The project agencies are not reporting revised

cost estimates and commissioning schedules for many projects, which suggests that time or cost overrun figures are under-reported. The average time or cost overrun for these delayed projects is 42 months. In West Bengal alone, there are 11 projects delayed by five years and above. The reasons for time overrun, as reported by various agencies, include covid-19 disruption, labour shortage, inflation, delay in release of funds by the Government, lack of infrastructure support and linkages, delay in tendering, ordering and equipment supply and law and order problems. The Government should hasten the implementation of these projects, and this can be possible only if there is faster release of funds from the Centre as well as availability of abundant labour is ensured. Hence, I urge upon the Government to look into this important matter and take necessary action.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL), responding to the matter, said: There is absolutely no shortage of funds for any infrastructure project in the country. We are, in fact, on the contrary, urging the hon. Members to approach their States and get us the land. Most projects are getting delayed because land is not being provided by the States.

2. Loss of Lives Due to Fire Accidents in Various Establishments

SHRIMATI SUMITRA BALMIK: On 1st of August a fire broke out in a private hospital in Madhya Pradesh, killing eight innocent children and injuring several others. In the past also such incidents have been happening in other places like coaching institutes, schools, cinema halls, malls etc. People lost their life as they did not come out on time due to the fire. We have to know the reason why such incidents happen despite all the safety parameters. We have to re-think whether there is any loophole in our provisions or rules. I would like to urge that steps should be taken to prevent such accidents. I would like that this kind of incident should not happen again and I would like to urge that whatever the parameters of the building are, they must be taken care of.

(Dr. Fauzia Khan, Dr. Sasmit Patra, Dr. John Brittas, Shri Kanakmedla Ravindra Kumar associated.)

3. Need to Provide Relief and Financial Assistance for Flood-affected Areas in Andhra Pradesh

SHRI KANAKAMEDALA RAVINDRA KUMAR: The people of Andhra Pradesh suffered because of floods in the Godavari region. There was loss of crop and properties were damaged in the districts of East Godavari, West Godavari, Eluru, Alluri Sitharama Raju, Konaseema and Anakapalli as a result of incessant rains from 11 July till date. People staying in these regions suffered a lot due to lack of food, water, shelter and electricity supply. Even infants suffered as there was no supply of milk from the dairies. Though the meteorological department issued a warning of floods, people were unable to take precautionary measures due to lack of proper information. In the Konaseema district, 67 villages across 20 mandals got submerged because of Godavari floods. About one lakh people have suffered. Godavari river water had flowed about 18 to 25 feet high in 45 villages in the Godavari catchment areas. Many villages have submerged because of Polavaram Dam Project. People are suffering as crops were damaged and they are yet to receive compensation from the State Government. As my State is having a deficit budget, it is not in a position to extend help to its people. Hence, I request the Central Government to help the people of Andhra Pradesh. I also request that a Central Team be sent to assess the damage that occurred due to floods.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

4. Need for Structural Changes in Post-Harvest Management Agriculture

DR. AMAR PATNAIK: As we know, in the CPI basket, the food inflation contribution is to the extent of 39 per cent. Out of that, the contribution of vegetables is to the extent of 33 per cent. Against this background, the extent of post-harvest losses are to the extent of 40 per cent and, in monetary terms, it is to the extent of Rs.90,000 crore. If the post-harvest losses had been minimised, the supply side constraints, which has actually attributed to the food inflation, would actually have been arrested. First, there is need for post-harvest management infrastructure, which could actually come from the Agri Infrastructure Fund where only an amount of Rs.8,000 crore has been spent out of an allocation of Rs.1,00,000

crore in five years. I think we should augment that in order to have a cold-chain infrastructure from the farm gate level to the market and also to have climate resilient agriculture infrastructure put in place to address the issue of seasonality.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

5. Need for Adequate Infrastructure and Improved Academic Environment in the Central Universities

SHRI ABDUL WAHAB: I am talking about the poor academic and infrastructural conditions in our nationally important Central Universities. With inadequate infrastructure and no research funding, the Centrally recognized universities and research institutes are in a major crisis. Furthermore, it is of grave concern that these universities have not achieved full academic functioning after Covid. For students and faculty, there are no funds for major or minor research. Research students in JRF, MANF and non-NET categories are not receiving UGC scholarships on time. Hostels are on the verge of collapse with no funds for maintenance. Libraries do not have more new books and subscriptions to international journals. We need to invest more in our students who are the future of this country. I urge the Government to look into the concerns of students, teachers and university administration in order to improve the academic environment.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

6. Need to Decongest Thiruvananthapuram Central Railway Station

DR. JOHN BRITTAS: In order to decongest Trivandrum Central Station, Nemom Terminal was announced one decade back in the Railway Budget and, in 2019, the then hon. Railway Minister, Mr. Piyush Goyal, laid the foundation stone of this terminal on the eve of elections. I have been personally chasing the progress of this Nemom Terminal. As the Minister did not give satisfactory answer to this, I sought the help of the hon. Chairman. Hon. Chairman was kind enough to forward my request to the hon. Minister. As a reply to the request which I put forward through the hon. Chairman, the Railway Minister sent an Office Memorandum saying that they are scrapping the project, which was announced in the Budget and the foundation stone for

which was laid, because there is another terminal which is coming up. I would request the hon. Minister to categorically respond on this project.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

7. Need to Provide Central Assistance for Relief and Rehabilitation of People who Suffered Extensive Damage Due to Recent Rains and Floods in Kerala

DR. JOSE K. MANI: Kerala has been again hit by floods due to heavy rains accompanied by monsoon winds. Within a couple of days, 22 people have lost their lives. About 6,811 people have been shifted to relief camps. The Government has opened up 300 camps. Adding to this, hundreds of people have lost their houses and also thousands of hectares of agricultural land have been destroyed. Huge damage has been caused to infrastructure. In addition, there is a prediction that there will be a low pressure in the Bay of Bengal by this Sunday. So, this would intensify the rain again. During the last 2018 floods, about Rs.26,000 crores of loss had been recorded and the request was sent for money. The Central assistance was to the tune of Rs.2,800 crores only. And for 2019 floods, not a single pie was given. All the reservoirs and dams are overflowing; especially so, Idukki and the catchment area of Mullaperiyar dam. Mullaperiyar dam is 127 years old, and as of water level today morning, it is 136.5 feet it is very, very alarming. I would request the Government of India to depute a special team to see the ground reality.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

8. Drought Situation in Jharkhand due to Deficient Rainfall

SHRI ADITYA PRASAD: The state of Jharkhand is famous not only in the country but also in the world in the name of factories, industries and trade, but today 76 percent of its population resides in villages. There are also 33 percent mountains and forests. The state receives 600 to 1,200 milliliters of rainfall and on average only 1,000 milliliters. But today the state of Jharkhand has received 51 percent rainfall, due to which agriculture dependent 76 percent of the people living in the villages are facing a lot of trouble. Only 12 percent paddy has been sown in the fields, due to which dry conditions have arisen there. The Government has nothing to do with the people. In view of the way the water level is not increasing there, it is feared

that in future the public will not get drinking water and there will be problem of drinking water and fodder for the animals too.

(Dr. Fauzia Khan, Dr. Sasmit Patra, Dr. John Brittas and Dr. Santanu Sen associated.)

SHRI DEEPAK PRAKASH: I associate myself. There is a serious situation, so a special team should be sent there in this regard.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE CHAIR

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, as you all are aware, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, hon. Chairman, Rajya Sabha, will be demitting office on 10th of August, 2022. The House will be bidding farewell to him on Monday, the 8th of August, 2022. Accordingly, there will be no Zero Hour on that day to enable the leaders of parties and others to make the farewell speeches.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

The following Bills were introduced:

1. The Epidemic Diseases (Prevention, Preparedness and Management) Bill, 2021.
2. The Information Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2022.
3. The Reserve Bank of India (Amendment) Bill, 2022.
4. The National Employment Guarantee Bill, 2022.
5. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2022 (insertion of new article 3A).
6. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2022.
7. The Press Council (Amendment) Bill, 2022.
8. The Protection of the State Resources Bill, 2022.

9. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2022. (Amendment of Articles 102, 191 etc.)
10. The Minimum Support Price Guarantee Bill, 2022
11. The All-India Services (Amendment) Bill, 2022.
12. The Indian Institute of Nuclear Medicine Bill, 2022.
13. The Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Bill, 2022.
14. The Sal Leaves Collectors and Traders' Welfare Bill, 2022.
15. The Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2022.
16. The State Reorganization Commission Bill, 2022.
17. The Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) (Amendment) Bill, 2022.
18. The Bhagat Singh National Urban Employment Guarantee Bill, 2022

The Right to Health Bill, 2021- Contd.

SHRI SANDOSH KUMAR P: I do support the Bill seeking health to make one of the fundamental rights. The World Health Organisation in the year 1946 had highlighted the importance of making health a fundamental right. It is a reality that 55 million Indians have been pushed into poverty due to medical expenses. If 100 rupees required to be spent for medical expenditure, Rs.63 is spent out of own pocket. Our medical expenditure is very high. The remedy is to make health a fundamental right, and we have to spend more on health care. Ayushman Bharat is just a mechanical copying of the Obama Care Project. We need a revisit of our health policies. We have to spend at least six or seven per cent of the GDP on healthcare. There is a nexus among the pharma companies, testing labs and big corporate hospitals. This nexus should be exposed, which actually prevents the public health system from developing. There are certain health-related superstitions in the country. These superstitions must be controlled. We need to revisit our health

policy and health must be given a top priority and it must be one of the fundamental rights in the Constitution of India.

DR. ANIL AGRAWAL: Even if we make the subject of health as a right, and the necessary infrastructure does not exist for it, then that right becomes redundant. For that, a positive environment has to be created first, so that people can get the necessary facilities without giving them any right. Earlier, medicines were very expensive in our country; medical equipments etc. were very expensive. Medical facilities were far from reach of the poor man. But under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister, an unprecedented initiative has been taken in this direction by making the generic medicines easily available, which has brought down the prices of medicines. All MPs and MLAs have been asked to adopt Primary Health Centres so that the infrastructure can be improved. In 2014, there were 387 medical colleges across the country, in which 51,348 seats were available. Now, there are 612 medical colleges in our country and the number of seats has increased to 91,927. In 2014 there were 30 medical colleges in Uttar Pradesh, but today there are 67 medical colleges. Work is underway to open a medical college in every district headquarter. If the infrastructure is improved and mass awareness is created about prevention of diseases, then there will be no need for the right to health and people will remain healthy without it.

SHRI JAWHAR SIRCAR: I fully support the Bill moved by Prof. Manoj Jha. India has a lot of firsts among many countries. I have enough faith in a nation that could eradicate polio, helped the world in eradicating smallpox and has now gone in for a massive venture to give free vaccines. Let us take a national view of the whole thing. I submit to the Government to not just pass the Bill, but also make a plan of action for the next five years with the cooperation from all sides of the House and looking at the track record of India as a whole, I am sure, we would be able to tackle this menace and provide a healthy life to every Indian.

DR. RADHA MOHAN DAS AGARWAL: Hon'ble Shri Manoj Kumar Jha has brought this Bill with best intentions and I appreciate him for that. 'Ideal' is a good thing. But when we try to put that ideal into practice, then we have to look at our economic limitations. I will give you examples of some countries of the world. America's per capita income is 53 lakh rupees. Similarly, Israel's per capita income is 38 lakh rupees and Germany's per

capita income is 35 lakh rupees. And India's per capita income is merely 1.5 lakh rupees. There is not a single country among these countries which has accepted health as a fundamental right. Insurance remains the mainstay of healthcare around the world. All the countries that are able to provide some healthcare today, are providing it only through health insurance. America made the Affordable Care Act but does not give that facility to its citizens free of cost. They provide it only through insurance for which a hefty sum is charged annually. In comparison, India does not charge a rupee for that medical insurance. Who are the beneficiaries of Ayushman Bharat scheme ? It is the rag pickers, beggars, domestic servants, street vendors, cobblers, hawkers, street service providers, construction workers, plumbers, masons, laborers, painters, welders, security guards, coolies, sweepers, cleaning workers, gardeners, transport workers, drivers, conductors, drivers and conductor's helpers, wheelbarrow pullers, rickshaw pullers, workers at shops, peons of small establishments, helpers, delivery assistants, waiters, electricians, mechanics, assemblers, repair men, washermen and chowkidars and so on. This year 2 crore 26 lakh families took the benefit of 'Ayushman Bharat' scheme. We have curbed many severe diseases in the country without the right to health. The income level of the Americans is very high. And despite having the facility of the best of healthcare, 318 people died out of one lakh due to corona there. In contrast, the death toll due to corona in India was 37 per one lakh. It is - Modi Economics. These figures are not ours, but of the whole world.

In medicine field, the expressions like infant death, infant death under five years of age, maternal death are frequently used. These are three words that describe the health system of the entire country. Today, 95 percent of women in this country receive pre-maternity care. The 59 percent get themselves tested at least four times. Of these 95 percent women, 85 percent have access to medical facilities with appropriate speciality. Almost everyone is weighed, blood pressure tests, other blood tests and urine tests are done. According to the report of the Family Health Survey, 94 percent of the delivery cases in this country are taking place in an institutional way. An amount of Rs 1,500 is being given to the women of the villages and Rs 1,000 to the women of the city under the '*Janani Suraksha Yojana*'. When this country got independence, out of our 1,000 children under the age of 1 year, 190 children died, but now it is only 28 children. In our children under 5

years of age, 250 out of 1,000 died, but today the number is only 39. When our mothers got pregnant, the 70 women died during pregnancy, but today the number of such tragic deaths has come down to 103. Earlier, 28 out of 1,000 people died, which we call the crude death rate. Today, this rate has come down to 7.5. The citizen of the country lived for an average of 34 years. Today's citizen lives an average age of 70 years. This is an achievement in India's health services. It happened only because we have ensured it. I would also like to specifically mention the achievements of Kerala. Amartya Sen once wrote that a child born in Kerala is 6 times more likely to survive than in Uttar Pradesh. This is a fact of Kerala state. The ratio of females to 1000 males in Kerala was 1047. Kerala has achieved this historic success with the improvement of its health services. For this, we need to transfer one full rupee to the bottom, which we are doing under the leadership of Modi ji.

DR. ASHOK BAJPAI: Ever since the formation of the Bharatiya Janata Party government under the leadership of Modi ji, the Government of the country has been concerned about health services. The Government has taken the guarantee of the security of health services and the general public is getting good health facilities. With the advent of Modi ji's Government, we have resolved to open medical colleges in every district. Today, new medical colleges are being established in most of the districts of the country. Our doctors come out of these medical colleges as graduates. Their services will be available to our common people. Today, by launching a campaign to prepare new doctors all over the country, we are moving towards filling that gap. I am sure that in the coming 5 years this shortage will be addressed. We will have as many doctors as we need on the basis of population. Along with health facilities and medicines, our Government wants to create such an environment that everyone in the country has good health. For this our Government has started a cleanliness mission. When the society is healthy, then diseases will automatically go away. A big work has been accomplished in the direction of health services to the people by constructing more than 10 crore new clean toilets in this country. You all know that there has been a qualitative improvement in health due to the construction of hygienic toilets. Through '*Khelo India*' we want to make the new generation healthy. This will increase the interest of our youth in sports. Similarly, by running the program of '*Fit India*', a work was undertaken to create such a social environment.

We set up AIIMS at various places. Earlier, all the patients of the country used to depend on AIIMS in Delhi. Now, we have established AIIMS in every state. Three AIIMS are being established in a big state like Uttar Pradesh. We have taken a pledge to provide water from tap to every household. The pure water is also a big reason for our good health. We have increased the medical budget. We have worked to focus on all those dimensions which are necessary for good health. When the environment is good, it will definitely have a favourable effect on health. We have started the Green Revolution on a large scale, so that by planting trees on a large scale, we can work to improve the environment of the country. This will bring a big qualitative change in the health of the people. To keep the children healthy through various schemes, we started the program of '*Poshan Yojana*' for pregnant women. Under '*Poshan Yojana*' the pregnant women get nutritious food. Due to this, the health of their unborn child also remains good. The medical care before, during and after delivery has also improved the health of our pregnant mothers and children. Earlier, the common man could not buy expensive medicines. Now cheap medicines are available through Generic Medicines. Under the '*Ayushman Yojana*', the cards of about 18 crore people have been made so far. Even if we keep the average of five people in a family, then 80-90 crore people have joined '*Ayushman Yojana*'. Now the poor will not have to take a loan for the treatment of their serious illness. Every member of the family can get free treatment up to Rs 5 lakh in case of serious illness. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has instilled the belief in every poor person by making a card of *Ayushman Yojana* that he too can avail good treatment. Now, a large number of people are taking advantage of the *Ayushman Yojana*. The budget of the health department has also been increased every year. Although health is a state subject, the Government of India has consistently paid serious attention to health services. In a pandemic like COVID, our Prime Minister did the work of providing free treatment to 130 crore population of the country. On the other hand, he also did the work of providing free food to 80 crore families. This program has been going on continuously for two years. By connecting everyone with this scheme, he worked to provide free ration. Today 200 crore doses of anti-covid vaccine have been administered in India. Similarly, our Government is working to take all necessary steps to make the country free from TB by the year 2025. We want to provide every young man with

all the facilities for good health. This work is being done continuously in our country through *Khelo India, Fit India and Yoga*. Today, the whole world has embraced *India's Yoga Day*. Through yoga, we can also keep our body healthy and live long. The Prime Minister of the country has done a commendable job in the direction of restoring the yoga tradition started by our sages. The work has also been done to advance Indian systems of medicine like *Siddha, Ayurveda, Homeopathy*. These methods are being extensively researched today. There are such miraculous herbs in our forests and mountains, out of which one herb was also used to liberate *Lakshman ji* from unconsciousness. Our government is looking for such herbs, which will be useful in the treatment of serious diseases. For this, we have established three such universities and research centres. There will be a large scale research on our AYUSH medicines. The Government's concern is not limited to speeches only. We are making that a reality as well. The Government led by Hon'ble Modi ji cares about the health of 140 crore people of this country and makes every effort to keep them healthy. I would like to tell Dr. Manoj Jha ji that there is no need for this Bill, as our Government is fulfilling your expectations. Therefore, there is no need to press this Bill any further.

SHRI AJAY PRATAP SINGH: The motion moved here by the Hon'ble Member of this House, Shri Manoj Jha ji, sounds very appealing, but does not seem very timely in practical terms. The healthy body has always been given a priority in our culture and spirituality. That is why it has been said - '*Sharimadyam Khalu Dharma Sadhanam*' means the body is the medium of religious practice. It is also said that God resides only in a healthy body. I have read in an episode that a teenager expresses a desire to know and learn spirituality from Swami Vivekananda. Swamiji while giving a lesson to that young man said that your body is not fit to know and learn spirituality right now. So, being healthy is more important than being spiritual. However, in view of the present situation of the country, I do not see much need for the topic of The Right to Health. Our friend Manoj ji imagined the creation of a socialist society through this proposal and that ideology has already failed. In childhood, we used to hear the slogan of our socialist friends that *money and land will get distributed, and there will be no hungry people any longer*. But his socialism remained confined their families. I also heard my friend Anil ji. He has also said very practical thing

that our India is a developing country and has a very large population. If we discuss these two situations, then we have some limitations. It is not just about giving rights. If we make laws, we should also implement them. What will be the credibility of the Government if the law is not implemented? Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate it on a practical level. I would like to draw the attention of my colleagues to the fact that today the Modi Ji's Government has created a network of ASHA workers across the country. There are two, three or four ASHA workers in every village. She keeps an account of each pregnant sister, each pregnant mother in the village. They provide them medicines from time to time. There are many cases of anaemia. They provide them with blood increasing medicines, iron tablets, folic acid tablets etc. For this, ASHA workers serve from pre-natal to post-delivery stage. Only then, our ASHA worker sister gets her remuneration.

Due to this, there has been a huge drop in maternal mortality during pregnancy and delivery. In earlier circumstances, mothers used to give birth to their children in some dark corner of the house. Even a skilled midwife was not available in the village and due to lack of care, sometimes the infant would die, and sometimes the mother would die. Therefore, provision of ambulance number 108 was also made along with ASHA workers to increase the institutional delivery. Mothers are taken to the hospital in ambulances and there she delivers her baby under the supervision of skilled doctors and nurses. Due to this, there has been a huge drop in maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate. Earlier, mothers used to go to work on the third day itself after giving birth to the child. The nutritious food that they needed after delivery, today it has been arranged by the government. Now those working mothers do not need to work, there is a provision to give them one month leave. All this has been done without the law of Right to Health. Before the arrival of Modi government, there used to be an outcry everywhere about the price of medicines. Now it has been resolved through generic medicines. Surgical instruments have also become cheaper. Ayushman card has revolutionized the health sector. Earlier, minor diseases used to be treated in some way, but if any member of the family got a disease like cancer, then not only that member was doomed to death, but also the life of the family members he left behind was ruined. The lives of many families have changed due to 'Ayushman Card'. Before the arrival of Modi ji, we could not provide good services because of the earlier health services infrastructure. How will

there be treatment when there are no doctors? That's why he opened many medical colleges. It is the goal of Modi ji that every parliamentary constituency should have at least one medical college. As a result, in the coming days, we will prepare more than one lakh new doctors every year. Modi ji has brought improvement in each and every area. Infrastructure has been increased, training institutes have increased, study centres have increased. Now, there are 22 AIIMS which are not only giving quality treatment to the countrymen, but are also giving affordable and good treatment of diseases. We focused on infrastructure and also focused on human resources. I would like to draw the attention of this House to Preventive Measures as to why a disease occurs! In rural areas, it was natural to have 10-10, 15-15 deaths due to diseases like cholera. But nobody considered that if water causes deaths on such a large scale, first the water should be purified. If people's lives can be saved by clean water, then why anyone did not take care of this earlier! That is why Modi ji has implemented the system of 'Har Ghar Ko Nal Se Jal'. Within two-four years, every household in India will have access to tap water and we will be able to prevent diseases caused by dirty water in a big way. Earlier, due to lack of roads, the patient was taken to the hospital in a doli. But today, through 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana', due to roads and getting ambulance on number 108, patient can be taken to hospital for successful treatment of diseases. Electricity has been provided to every house under the 'Saubhagya Yojana'. Universal access to electricity has resulted in treatment becoming convenient and people's life has also become easier. There is a reduction in diseases. Health has also become better by providing good food, good standard of living, good facilities to the people. The government is doing a great job without this bill and also without conferring this right.

**THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE;
AND THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (DR.
MANSUKH MANDAVIYA), intervening in the debate, said:** People should get good healthcare so that there is no person among the last sections who do not have access to treatment. He should get affordable medicine, he should get healthcare close to where he lives, he should get better secondary care and tertiary care. Modi ji has seen health with a holistic approach as how to make health accessible and affordable from an all-encompassing point of view. For years, in this country, health has been seen only as a treatment.

Health has never been linked with development. Modi ji has linked health with development. If the citizens of the country are healthy, the society will be healthy. If the society is healthy, then the country will be healthy and only a healthy society can build a prosperous nation. Modi ji has said that every poor family should have all the basic facilities to live their life. We will take the health budget to 2.5% of GDP in the coming days. But while talking from the perspective of the world, we should not ignore the strength and potential of our country. In our country, health was not a trade, it is a service first. The world was going through COVID crisis. The world did not have medicine. At that time, Modi ji had instructed us that there should be no shortage of medicine in our country. But we follow the spirit of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. The culture of India is that we want our own welfare as well as that of others. We had provided medicine to 150 countries at that time. Under the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Center, a huge action plan has been made to convert all the primary health centers in the country into health and wellness centers. Therein, 13 types of screening will be done. There will be a health and wellness center for a population of 7-8 thousand. An 'e Sanjeevani' platform has been created through which tele-medicine, tele-consultation will be done.

In Haryana, Primary Health Centres are linked to PGI Chandigarh through e-Sanjeevani platform. Because of this, poor patients are also able to get expert doctor's advice..Number of Medical colleges and seats have almost doubled in the country in the last 8 years. According to the World Health Organization, there should be one doctor for every 1000 persons, but in India, if AYUSH doctors and MBBS doctors are combined, then there is one doctor for 800 persons. During covid crisis, The doctors and para-medical staff of the country served the countrymen without caring for their lives. The second pillar of our holistic approach to medicine is Ayushman Bharat and Jan Arogya Yojana. Through this, ten crore families are getting the benefit of health security and its implementation is no small matter. With 'Ayushman Bharat' people are getting universal health care and I have met its beneficiaries. Many states have gone even further and implemented more schemes on their behalf. I appreciate them too. There is immense potential in our country. This country has the best doctors and scientists. At the time of Covid crisis, we trusted our scientists and they developed the corona vaccine. When manufacturing of vaccines started in the

world, manufacturing started in India too. The immunization program started in India on 16th January, 2021 and with 100 crore doses in 9 months and 200 crore doses in 18 months, we have also distributed it all over the world. But managing all this is also very important. To run 1.5 lakh vaccination centres in a day it is necessary to provide complete and on-time arrangements for vaccines, needles and staff etc. India's COVID management was appreciated all over the world. India's vaccination campaign was very successful and it saved the country from the third wave of corona. The effect of the third wave of corona in the world was the same as the second wave, but at that time 85 percent of the Indians were vaccinated, so we had to face very few deaths in Omicron wave. In this way we were able to win the battle with the COVID crisis very successfully. But I believe that we should learn from every situation. We did a detailed study of the gaps found in our health infrastructure during the COVID crisis. Based on this study, it was decided to spend 64 thousand crore rupees, i.e. an average Rs 100 crore in a district in next five years on the third pillar of Ayushman Bharat i.e. Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission, Members of Parliament should pay attention to the use of this money in their areas. They should enquire from health officials about the ways to utilize this amount. They should ensure that government laboratories are established at the block level. If any epidemic or any other disease is spreading, then it should be continuously monitored. An Intensive Care Unit of 100 beds should be set up in each district. If a pandemic-like situation ever arises in the future, there should be additional health infrastructure to deal with such a situation. A secondary level laboratory will be set up at the district level, in which more than 130 tests can be done. Monitoring of the types of patients, coming to the hospitals of the district should be done. Arrangement for their genome sequencing will be made there, so that the outbreak of a new disease, if any, is known. And if any new disease is noticed, then a detailed study is done by assessing the conditions responsible for it. Apart from this, there should be a strong system of monitoring at the state level and regional level also. By doing this, we will take the health infrastructure to new heights in the next five years. We should not avoid it by saying that health is a state subject. Health infrastructure should be strengthened. For this the Centre and the state have to work together. Schemes brought by Centre are implemented by states only. The fourth pillar is 'Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission'. This is a

facility, in which everyone's Ayushman Bharat digital account will be opened and the complete medical history of the person will be available in it, which can be viewed at any time through digital health account number and OTP. Laboratories are also associated with this mission, hospitals are also associated, and doctors are also involved.

The file of your health records will be stored in a software under the Digital Mission and the privacy of all the data will be ensured. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and the scheme of pure drinking water are also associated with a holistic approach. We made efforts for cheap medicines in the country. We ensured availability of cheap and quality generic medicines at Jan Aushadhi Kendra. Where earlier the market share of generic drugs was only 2 to 3 percent, today it has increased to more than 20 percent. I agree with hon'able member Manoj Jha ji that everyone should have access to health care. He has raised a very good subject. There has been a very important debate on this subject. Suggestions from hon'able members in this regard are welcome. They will help us to make health accessible and affordable with more enthusiasm. We are working according to the sentiments so I request him to take his bill back. We will always be vigilant and try our best to fulfill your wishes.

We have not barred any state government or private entities from manufacturing vaccines. We have encouraged and given financial assistance to the states and private institutions for this. Currently an EOI has been circulated for the development of Monkeypox vaccine. Any state government can participate in the research for the monkeypox vaccine.

PROF. MANOJ KUMAR JHA: Hon'ble Health Minister has requested me to withdraw the Bill. I would only like to say that when the right to education was discussed, the same thing happened in the House. Building a school , running a campaign is a different matter, but it is very important to give a legal framework to the right to education. *(Speech unfinished)*

Discussion not concluded.

SPECIAL MENTIONS

1. Need to Provide Job Security and Healthcare Facility to ASHA Workers

DR. V. SIVADASAN: There are 10.4 lakh ASHA workers in the country. The World Health Organization has appreciated them as global health leaders. But, their allowances and incentives are very minimal. Even these minimal allowances are not disbursed on time. They are assisting the poor and needy people in their most difficult times by giving health care. But these workers are not getting any assistance from the Union Government to care for their own health. Even a minimal insurance package is not arranged for them. They are not given even minimum wages. . Because they are the social security volunteers, the Government is not treating it as a job. The Union Government should provide the social security to the social security workers. They should be given job security and health facility.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

2. Need for Steps to Deal with Malnutrition Among Women and Children

DR. LAXMIKANT BAJPAYEE: More than 33 lakh children are malnourished in India due to malnutrition. Malnourished children are more likely to die from infection due to a lack of direct immunity. Maharishi Kashyap had mentioned the Swarn Prashan sanskar in 'Kashyap Samhita'. In the year 1975, its trial was started on rats and humans, which yielded better results in terms of increasing immunity. In Bhadsar village of Gorakhpur district in Uttar Pradesh, which was the most malnourished area, 800 children were treated with Swarna Prashan sanskar method and 40 percent reduction in infection of such children was found. Like the vaccine, Suvarnaprashan Sanskar is also an immunity booster. It can be used on malnourished women and patients of all age groups with low immunity. It has proved effective especially on children during the Corona period. The proposal for financial arrangement in this regard is pending in the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences from February 27, 2022. I request that by according it

immediate approval, further inquiry into *Suvarnaprashan Sanskar* may be conducted.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

3. Need to Address Issue of Coastal Erosion in West Bengal

SHRI SUBHASISH CHAKRABORTY: A Ministry of Earth Sciences report shows that between 1900 and 2018, 34% of India's coastline suffered erosion. Of this, on the Eastern coast, Bengal suffered 60.5% erosion, and on the West coast Kerala suffered 46.4% erosion. With the emergence of the threat of global warming and rise in sea levels due to melting of polar ice caps, a new threat has emerged of submergence of coastal areas. In Bengal, there are more than 32 lakh people including fishermen who are directly engaged in fishing and people indirectly dependent on the fishing industry for livelihood. I request the Government to ensure that the fragile ecosystems of coastal regions, people of the coastal areas, and their livelihoods are protected from erosion.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

4. Need to Increase EPF Pension and Extend ESIC Facility to E.S.I.C. Pensioners

SHRI M. SHANMUGAM: Nearly 70 lakhs of senior citizens and their family members are getting meagre pension through Employees Pension Scheme, 1995. A minimum pension of Rs.1000 per month is being paid to a retired pensioner's family. A High Power Monitoring Committee was formed in January 2018 But its recommendations are not implemented so far. The hon. Supreme Court and various High Courts in their judgments have also given favourable orders for EPS pensioners but they are not being implemented. I would, therefore, urge upon the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Minister of Labour to initiate urgent measures to increase minimum EPF pension to Rs.9,000 per month with DA, and provide medical facilities.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

5. Need to Settle the Pay and Wage Revision of Employees of BSNL

SHRI ELAMARAM KAREEM: The employees of BSNL are concerned due to the non-settlement of Pay Revision of the Executives and Wage Revision of the non-executives. At present, BSNL is a loss-making company. But it is not due to the fault of the employees and workers. The employees are making their fullest contributions for the revival of BSNL. The Government should ensure that the 3rd Pay/Wage Revision of the Executives and Non-Executives is settled at the earliest.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

6. Need for Reservation for Women in Parliament and Legislative Assemblies

DR. SASMIT PATRA: All the parliamentarians and political parties of India show their determination for women empowerment, but even after 75 years of India's independence, women's reservation bill providing for 33 percent reservation is not being passed in the Parliament. I make a humble request not only to the government, but to every MP and their parties to unite and pass the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament. In November, 2018, the Legislative Assembly of Odisha, headed by Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik, unanimously passed a resolution that 33% reservation for women in India should be implemented in Parliament and all Legislative Assemblies. He sent 22 delegations of Biju Janata Dal to 22 national and regional political parties and sought their support for passing the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament. If we all MPs do not pass this Bill pending for many years in this Parliament, then history and especially the women of this country will never forgive us. The Women's Reservation Bill should be passed in the Parliament at the earliest. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to pass the legislation reserving 33 per cent seats for women in Parliament and State assemblies.

DR. AMAR PATNAIK: I just would like to mention that Odisha was not only one of the few States to announce 30 per cent reservation for women in all Government jobs in 1991, but we are also the first State to announce 33 per cent reservation, further increased to 50 per cent in Panchayati-raj institutions. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to pass

the legislation reserving 33 per cent seats for women in Parliament and State assemblies.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

7. Need for Proton Cancer Treatment at Affordable Cost

SHRI K. R. N. RAJESHKUMAR: Globally, cancer cases increased 21 per cent and deaths 26 per cent since the last ten years and India's cancer burden has also increased. Approximately, 14 lakh Indians had cancer in 2020. According to the IHME study, Covid-19) pandemic has slowed down the progress of treatment of these patients which could lead to 1,20,000 patients requiring advanced cancer surgeries over the next two years. Proton therapy is an advanced and highly precise radiation treatment for tumors. But this treatment at the private hospital is provided at the cost of Rs. 25 lakhs which is not affordable by most of the Indian citizens. I request the hon. Minister of Health and Family Welfare to take necessary action to establish Proton Treatment facilities at State HQ hospitals.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

8. Extreme Difficulties faced by Indian immigrants while Returning from Yemen and Libya at International Airports in India

SHRI M. MOHAMED ABDULLA: The Indian immigrants from Yemen and Libya face extreme difficulties from the immigration officials in India due to the travel advisory issued by the Government of India after the humanitarian crisis arose there. The immigration officials here in India at some of the airports have resorted to impounding passports and arresting the Indian personnel returning from those countries which is improper. Hence, I kindly request the hon. Union Minister of External Affairs to immediately look into this issue with utmost priority and take necessary steps for the removal of those restrictions.

(Several hon'ble Members associated.)

P. C. MODY,
Secretary-General.

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