

## RAJYA SABHA

### \*SYNOPSIS OF DEBATE

(Proceedings other than Questions and Answers)

Friday, December 05, 2025/ Agrahayana 14, 1947 (Saka)

#### MATTERS RAISED WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CHAIR

##### 1. Demand for dedicated Darshan access for permanent residents of Puri

**SHRI SUBHASISH KHUNTIA:** I draw the attention of the House towards an important demand to provide facility of special darshan access for local people of Puri. Puri is not just a city. It is our international tourist and pilgrimate hub under living presence of Mahaprabhu Shri Jagannath. The Jagannath Temple Heritage Corridor was built only because the local residents of Puri made immense sacrifices losing land, homes. But, ironically, the same people, who protected, preserved and served the temple for generations, can no longer access their own lord without struggling through overwhelming congestion because of heavy rush of tourists. Repeated appeals have been made but the Government of Odisha has not bothered to create a special darshan system for permanent residents . It is important to recall that the previous Government ensured dedicated entry arrangement for local residents through the western gate upon showing the identity proof . The tourists come and go but the people of Puri live with Jagannath, serve Jagannath and breathe Jagannath every day. Their demand is neither political nor preferential. Therefore, I urge the Central Government to intervene and ensure a hassle free darshana mechanism exclusively for permanent residents of Puri.

##### 2. Demand for Discontinuation of the Use of Title 'Lord' for British Viceroys and Governor Generals in NCERT Books, Other Textbooks & Official Documents

**SHRI SUJEET KUMAR:** I request the Government to discontinue the use of the title 'Lord' for British Viceroys and Governors-General in our school textbooks, NCERT books, Government documents and official websites. The NCERT history textbook of class VIII and XII, in numerous chapters, has dozens of references. Similar is the case with the official websites of several Government Departments. During the British rule, the British colonial rulers used and abused the power to give titles for their imperialistic designs and to promote this false narrative of racial superiority. Sir, why should we continue to place them on a demigod-like pedestal by calling them 'Lord', particularly when many of them committed such horrendous and barbaric crimes against us. It is rather sad and unfortunate that after 75 years of independence, we continue to do so, when our own freedom fighters are not referred to with such reverence. Sir, a vibrant democracy like ours, which is also the largest and the oldest democracy on earth, should not continue this practice as this perpetuates a colonial mindset. When our Prime Minister renamed Rajpath, the ceremonial boulevard in New Delhi, as Kartavya Path, it was not just a symbolic move. This change reflects a shift from the colonial attitude to a more duty-oriented name It reflects a shift away from the colonial symbols towards civic responsibility. Along with this, we must free ourselves from the mindset of slavery.

##### 3. Concern over delays in the Beerpada Rail Overbridge Project

**SHRI PRAKASH CHIK BARAIK:** I want to talk about starting the process of constructing a railway overbridge at Beerpada-Dalgaon Railway Station in Madarihat Assembly of Alipurduar district and at Kamakhyaguri Railway Station in Kumargram Assembly of Alipurduar district. So far, work has not yet started there. This work is extremely necessary because after the railway crossing,

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

there are hospitals, colleges, schools, and markets, and there are also significant traffic problems. Many incidents have occurred there where patients have died because they could not cross the railway gate. This affects several surrounding areas as well. The district administration has also issued an NOC to the Railways through the Chief Minister, but due to the work not being completed, various problems are being faced. Through you, I urge the Ministry of Railways to fulfill this demand and ensure that the work is started as soon as possible.

#### **4. Demand for enhancing MSP for sugar and support for sugarcane farmers**

**\*SHRI IRANNA KADADI:** I want to bring to the attention of this House the serious challenges faced by millions involved in sugarcane cultivation and the sugar production industry, which is a major agro-based sector in our country. It directly and indirectly provides employment to millions of farmers, workers, traders, and entrepreneurs. Karnataka alone has 81 operational sugar factories and contributes 61% of the total sugar production in India. Around 7.5 lakh hectares of land in Karnataka is dedicated to sugarcane cultivation. The Central Government has committed to farmer welfare and announced support amounting to about ₹23,000 crore to ensure fair income for hardworking farmers. However, on behalf of the sugarcane farmers of Karnataka, I want to place three urgent requests before the Central Government. First, the recovery rate for sugarcane should be revised from 9.5% to 10.25%. Second, it is unscientific and unfair to include harvesting and transportation charges when calculating the Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP). Third, since 2019, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for sugar has remained at ₹31 per kg, which is insufficient for the growers. Additionally, Karnataka produces 2,700 crore litres of ethanol and should be granted more opportunities and a greater share in the ethanol market. I urge the Government to prioritize this matter for the welfare of the millions whose livelihoods depend on this sector.

#### **5. Need to address issues of quality in Higher Education in the country**

**SHRI RYAGA KRISHNAIH:** Education, especially higher education provides skilled manpower and cutting-edge technologies. But the quality of higher education is declining and is a matter of concern for all the stakeholders and the whole nation. Another serious issue is the gap between demand and supply, implying that the youths are not eligible for job market. This leads to widespread unemployment among the higher educated graduates. To improve the quality of higher education in India, we must maintain parameters of quality education. India has one of the largest education systems of the world. Therefore, different stakeholders must work on these parameters at their respective levels to maintain and improve the quality of higher education in India. The Indian higher education has expanded in quantity but lacking behind in terms of quality. In all, there is a need to enlarge the adaptive capacity and quality of the higher education system so that it is more responsive to the changing world of work and meets the diversified needs of economy. For that purpose, diversification of the Indian higher education and training system has to be pursued as a goal. In view of this, it needs urgent attention and review of the main aspects related to quality concern in higher education.

#### **6. Concern over Conditions of Gig Workers in India**

**SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA:** I want to draw attention to the invisible yet essential workforce behind quick commerce and delivery services like Zomato, Swiggy, Ola, and Uber. I have seen how these workers face harsh conditions such as dangerous pressures from strict delivery times, customer harassment, long working hours, lack of protective gear, no job security, and no insurance or benefits. I urge lawmakers to protect these workers and end the unrealistic expectation of 10-minute deliveries. I believe humane working conditions and proper recognition for gig workers are urgently needed since they are real people with families.

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\*Spoke in Kannada.

## **7. Need for Regulating Commercial Use of Children on Social Media**

**SHRIMATI SUDHA MURTY:** Children are our future and we should develop our children with good value systems, education, sports and many other activities. I am worried about today's scenario. The social media has many advantages but it has other side effects. Many parents, in order to earn money and get followers, use their innocent children on social media. While parents get money, the child lose innocence and it will affect the child in long run too. It will affect the children's psychology. They will be deprived of social activity or sports and even good education. Many countries regulate the presence of children on social media. They cannot be exposed in different costumes, taking bath or in other state, because sometimes people with bad mindset may use those photos for something else. We are causing blockage in their future. I consider that social media is like a knife. You can cut a fruit or you can kill a person. Use social media for betterment but not by using your children. There are children influencers, mother influencers and so many other influencers on social media without any regulation. I request the Government of India to make a provision to regulate the social media as has been done to regulate children advertisements, children working or acting in films. Strict laws have been implemented in that field and that need to be done for social media also.

## **8. Need for Protection, Archaeological Clarification and Restoration Measures at Adinath Temple Site in Malda, West Bengal**

**SHRI SAMIK BHATTACHARYA:** In Pandua, Malda district, Jitu Santhal sacrificed his life facing British bullets for the restoration of the Adinath temple. This is recorded in history. J.D. Beglar, a renowned orientalist, and J.H. Ravenshaw, the Collector of Malda from 1865 to 1867, have documented various pieces of evidence supporting its claim of being a Hindu temple. We cannot abandon our heritage. We cannot erase our cultural legacy. That is not a mosque; it is the Adinath temple. There is historical evidence for this. There is an ASI document. We request the government to protect it.

## **9. Need for Establishing Quality Stroke Care Centres Across the Country**

**DR. ANIL SUKHDEORAO BONDE:** In India, stroke causes a lot of morbidity, disability, and mortality. There are many heart care centers, but there is a need to establish good quality stroke care centers in every district. Under Ayushman Bharat and the Ayushman Yojana, all elderly people receive free health facilities, but for stroke, prevention is through Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). If blood pressure and diabetes are controlled, and certain habits like smoking and tobacco consumption are controlled, then stroke prevention is possible. However, for a stroke caused by a blockage (thrombotic stroke), if the patient receives immediate and proper treatment, and is transported within 6 hours, then thrombolysis and thrombectomy to dissolve the clot can be performed effectively everywhere. This can prevent disability. Increasing the number of stroke-ready hospitals and establishing dedicated stroke units at the district level is very important. Public-private partnerships and telemedicine initiatives can also be included. The sooner the patient reaches the hospital, the better the treatment they can receive. Raising public awareness about this is also very important. The rate of stroke in India is increasing, which also increases disability and dependency in old age. To control this, good stroke care centers should be established.

## **10. Concern over Metro Rail Delays, Urban Traffic Congestion, and it Sector Slowdown in Telangana**

**SHRI RAVI CHANDRA VADDIRAJU:** I want to bring to the notice of this House two urgent issues that are affecting the daily lives of the people in Hyderabad and Telangana. The first issue is regarding Metro rail and urban transport delays. The Hyderabad Metro phase-II project is still not approved by the Central Government. Without this project, the airport corridor, IT corridor and fast-growing suburbs cannot be connected properly. Also, MMTS Phase-II has been pending for many years and is still incomplete. Because of these delays, traffic congestion in Hyderabad is getting worse every day. People are spending hours in traffic, losing time, money and productivity.

The second issue is regarding the slowdown in IT sector in Hyderabad. Many IT companies have reduced hiring and some are laying off employees. New investments in the city are also slower

compared to previous years. This is creating serious job insecurity among young engineers and fresh graduates who are waiting for opportunities. Therefore I request the Union Government to approve Hyderabad Metro phase-II immediately, fast-track and complete MMTS phase-II, and announce support for the IT sector and encourage new investments and job creation.

#### **11. Concern over Rising Human-Wildlife Conflict in Uttarakhand and Need for Effective Mitigation Measures**

**SHRI MAHENDRA BHATT:** I would like to draw the government's attention to the human casualties caused by increasing attacks by wild animals, particularly leopards, tigers, and bears in Uttarakhand. This year, the number of attacks by wild animals in Uttarakhand has been continuously rising. According to the data available so far, 24 people have died this year due to attacks by wild animals, especially leopards, tigers, and bears. Since the formation of the state of Uttarakhand, the number of such attacks has exceeded 1,264, resulting in deaths, and more than 6,519 people have been injured. These incidents have created an atmosphere of extreme fear throughout Uttarakhand. I request the government to formulate a special action plan for the protection of people from wild animals, to provide compensation from both the state and central governments to the families of those killed in these attacks, and to establish a policy for free treatment of the injured by the central government.

#### **12. Need for Introduction of Stoppage for Superfast Train 12171/12172 at Narmadapuram and Demand for Introduction of Direct Narmadapuram Kolkata Train**

**SHRIMATI MAYA NAROLIYA:** I would like to draw your attention to two extremely important and essential railway-related issues concerning the people of Narmadapuram and Narsinghpur districts. My first demand is to ensure a stop at Narmadapuram railway station for train number 12171/12172, the LTT-Haridwar Superfast Express. This train is extremely important for passengers travelling to North India. A large number of devotees, students, traders and government employees travel daily from Narmadapuram and the surrounding areas. At present, the absence of a halt for this superfast train causes great inconvenience to thousands of passengers in the region. If the Railways could provide even a 2-minute commercial halt here, it would be a major relief for the people. The second demand is for a direct train from Narmadapuram to Kolkata. Despite Narmadapuram being significant from religious, commercial and cultural perspectives, there is no direct rail service available to Kolkata. As a result, people are compelled to travel via Itarsi or other distant stations. This is not merely a matter of convenience, but a genuine necessity. Therefore, the rightful and essential demand of the people of Narmadapuram and Narsinghpur should be approved at the earliest.

#### **13. Need for Enhancing Skill Development for India's Blue-Collar Workforce**

**SHRI MOHAMMED NADIMUL HAQUE:** Blue collar workers are people who work in manufacturing, construction, maintenance sectors and more. India's economic ambitions rest on a labour force of more than 50 crore people, most of whom work in blue collar and low wage occupations. For all the Government's big talk about skill development among youth, only 4 per cent of youth have received formal vocational or technical training. Another 17 per cent have received informal training. This means, four out of five young entrants are not skilled to work in industry. Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana started in 2015 has trained just 1.6 crore people. The National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme launched nine years ago with a target of 46 lakhs has failed well below the target. Modi Government only talks about skilling but when it comes to target, the achievements are poor. My request is that government should give more attention to skilling the youths of the nation.

#### **14. Concern over Increasing Cases of Suicides Among Youths in Country**

**SHRI A. D. SINGH:** India, despite being the youngest nation in terms of population, is facing serious crisis with an increasing number of suicides among its youth aged 15 to 29 years which constitutes about 40 per cent of the population. According to the National Crime Records Bureau 2022 data, over 1.70 lakh suicides were recorded in the country, of which more than 56,000 were in the 15-29 age group, accounting for nearly one-third of all such deaths. Alarming, the suicide rate

among Indian youth is reportedly around ten times higher than that of China. This trend undermines the demographic dividend that India hopes to benefit from and raises grave concerns about the mental and social well-being of its younger population. There are multiple reasons contributing to this phenomenon. Academic pressure continues to be one of the leading causes. Unemployment and financial insecurity are also major stressors, with youth unemployment hovering around 16 per cent leading to frustration and a sense of hopelessness. Mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety are increasingly prevalent, yet the country lacks adequate infrastructure and professionals to address these problems. Social stigma further deters many from seeking help. Relationship issues, family disputes, pressure from social media and social isolation contribute significantly to the rising suicide rates. The country needs a coordinated national suicide prevention strategy that includes increased mental health funding, widespread school and college-based counseling services, sensitization campaigns to reduce stigma, and proactive family and peer support systems. India's demographic dividend does not turn into a demographic burden. The Government should take concrete and an immediate action in this regard.

### **15. Concern over Crop Destruction in Gujarat Due to Unseasonal Heavy Rains**

**SHRI SHAKTISINH GOHIL:** In Gujarat, all the monsoon crops are ready by the time Diwali arrives. Unfortunately, this time the entire crop was ready, and it rained continuously for several days starting two days after Diwali. The farmers' entire ready crop was completely destroyed. They had invested all their money and resources into it. In the situation that has arisen in Gujarat, farmers are committing suicide. The compensation currently being given in Gujarat is absolutely ridiculous; the farmers are not receiving the full amount. My demand is that the Government of India should intervene and the Government of India should provide the full compensation to the farmers.

### **16. Demand for The Preservation and Modernization of India's Classical Knowledge and The Sanskrit Language**

**SHRI NARESH BANSAL:** Sanskrit is the foundation of the Indian knowledge tradition. The development of human civilizations has been possible only on the basis of Sanskrit. We all know that the roots of most of the world's languages are connected to Sanskrit in some form or another. If we look at the history of Sanatan culture and the Vedic period, all the Vedas, Puranas, and Upanishads were composed in Sanskrit, which contain the highest level of knowledge about the universe. The Sanskrit language is eternal and infinite. Knowledge of yoga, mathematics, grammar, time calculation, environment, etc., is inherent in Sanskrit. At the global level, there is continuous deliberation and discussion on the Sanskrit language and the Indian knowledge tradition. NASA has also recognized Sanskrit as a scientific and computer-friendly language, but here in India itself, a narrative has been created to isolate it, even though India's culture is preserved by Sanskrit.

*(Dr. Sasmit Patra associated.)*

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### **PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS**

Following Bills were introduced:

1. The National Committee for Protection of Media Persons Bill, 2024
2. The Surrogacy Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024
3. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Amendment Bill, 2024
4. The Urban Areas (Development and Regulation) Bill, 2024
5. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (Amendment of the Preamble);
6. The Legislative Impact Assessment Bill, 2024
7. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2024

8. The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Amendment Bill, 2024
9. The Right to Information (Amendment) Bill, 2025
10. The Records of Court Proceedings Bill, 2025
11. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (amendment of articles 124 and 217)
12. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill, 2025
13. The Information Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2025
14. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Amendment) Bill, 2025
15. The Right to Health Care Services Bill, 2025
16. The Stray and Wild Animal Attacks (Prevention and Welfare) Bill, 2025
17. The National Commission for Men Bill, 2025
18. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (amendment of article 19)
19. The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2025
20. The Right to Read Bill, 2025
21. The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2025
22. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill
23. The Central Protection of Healthcare Workers and Medical Establishments from Violence Bill, 2025
24. The National Urban Employment Guarantee Bill, 2025
25. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Bill, 2025
26. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (Amendment of Article 107).
27. The Information Technology (Amendment) Bill, 2025.
28. The National Blood Transfusion Bill, 2025
29. The Astrology (Regulation and Promotion) Bill, 2025
30. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (amendment of article 282).
31. The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2025
32. The Digital Personal Data Protection (Amendment) Bill, 2025.
33. The Water Bodies (Protection, Revival and Sustainable Development) Bill, 2025
34. The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2025. Shri
35. The Constitution (Amendment) Bill, 2025 (insertion of new article 21B)
36. The Machine Created Intellectual Asset Bill, 2025.
37. The Classified Information and Espionage Control Bill, 2025.
38. The Ecocide (Prevention and Accountability) Bill, 2025.
39. The National Environment Management and Regulatory Authority Bill, 2025
40. The National Commission for the Promotion of Scientific Temper Bill, 2025
41. The Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2025
42. The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (Amendment) Bill, 2025
43. The Food Safety and Standards (Amendment) Bill, 2025

44. The Protection of All Religions and Promotion of Mutual Respect for Faiths Bill, 2025
45. The Solid Waste Management Bill, 2025
46. The Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Amendment Bill, 2025
47. The Breast Cancer (Awareness, Early Detection and Diagnosis) Bill, 2025
48. The Mandatory Population Control Bill, 2025
49. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (Amendment) Bill, 2025
50. The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2025
51. The Compulsory Sports Education and Basic Infrastructure Development for Sports in Schools Bill, 2025
52. The Historical Heritage Conservation Bill, 2025
53. The Destitute Senior Citizens, Widows and Orphans (Housing Facility) Bill, 2025
54. The National Commission for Welfare of Sugarcane Farmers and Workers Bill, 2024
55. The National Food Security (Amendment) Bill, 2024
56. The Child And Adolescent Labour (Prohibition And Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2024
57. The Criminal Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024
58. The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2024
59. The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2024

**THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) BILL,  
2024 – (Contd.)**

**DR. JOHN BRITTAS:** I would say that the POCSO Act of 2012 was path-breaking but needs updates due to the changing realities—children now face harassment in new forms, amplified by social media, encrypted messaging apps, and data-driven exploitation. I fully support Fauzaiji’s suggestion for amendments in tune with the times. While fast-track courts were introduced, 1,37,000 cases are still pending due to procedural delays, lack of coordination, and insufficient trained personnel. I emphasized the need for victim-centric reforms, citing the global impact of the Epstein files, which show minors being trafficked and abused by powerful men. I also praised Kerala for launching the Nirbhaya policy and using 100% of allocated funds for rehabilitating POCSO survivors. I urged Naddaji to release Rs. 1.4 crore pending for Kerala, which would support victims. I acknowledged cross-party sensitivity to these issues, citing Jebi Matherji’s Bill on sexual harassment, and pointed out political challenges in Kerala that affect the implementation of such reforms. I mentioned key issues regarding the POCSO Act and adolescent consent. Courts, including the Supreme Court and Madhya Pradesh High Court, have noted that teenage boys in consensual relationships are often unfairly implicated. The High Court even suggested reducing the age of consent to 16 to address this injustice. Former CJI Chandrachud also emphasized that the current age of 18 raises complex questions for judges, and the Legislature should consider this. I stressed the critical issue of the silence of abused children—70-80% of harassment cases go unreported due to fear, family pressure, or societal taboo. Many abuses occur at home, often by relatives, and procedural issues further discourage reporting. I recommended raising awareness among children, parents, teachers, and social leaders, including through school curricula, so that children can recognize abuse early. Protecting children from abuse is essential, as it safeguards our future citizens and prevents loss of talent and potential due to trauma. Experts point out that 70-80% of such cases go unreported, making it essential to sensitise both the police and judiciary, and to involve specially trained activists. Ordinary police stations are often not equipped to handle these issues, so a dedicated, trained workforce—similar to teachers trained for differently-abled children—is necessary. Rehabilitation and

therapy systems must also be strengthened. Many existing provisions have become outdated, and therefore, I request the Government to consider the comprehensive and balanced Bill, incorporate its useful elements, and support its passage. Since the Bill is neutral and non-political, the House should unite to pass it collectively.

**DR. AJEET MADHAVRAO GOPCHADE:** The POCSO Act, 2012, is a special law protecting children from sexual offenses—sexual abuse, assault, and pornography. The Government takes this sensitive issue very seriously. A member has proposed amendments to sections 19, 21, 25, 33, and 43, and the addition of a new chapter on compensation and financial assistance, which the Ministry is considering with sensitivity. Under the law, the Juvenile Police Unit or local police must report a child's case to the Child Welfare Committee within 24 hours without delay, and the Special Court takes prompt action. Detailed procedures are established for the protection, care, and evaluation of the child. The police, judiciary, the Ministry of Women and Child Development, and the Ministry of Health are working in coordination to ensure the holistic protection of children.

Through this, I want to emphasize that it is crucial to provide children with care and protection, as well as guidance and a safe environment. The government, courts, and police are fully committed to child safety, verification, investigation of crimes, delivery of justice, and compensation. Section 19 mentions the word "apprehension," so Section 21 deliberately omitted a penalty for this, so that innocent people are not subjected to unfair action based solely on apprehension due to false or fabricated complaints. This could weaken a child's testimony, hinder prosecution, and disrupt the judicial process. Our primary duty is to ensure justice for children and that the perpetrators are punished severely, while maintaining a child-friendly approach. Compensation and financial assistance provisions already exist in the Act—Section 33(8), CWC recommendations, and interim compensation under Rule 9A. The Special Court can also determine the final compensation. The CWC and DCPO ensure that the fine amount is immediately disbursed to the victim child. After a child is presented, the district-level Child Welfare Committee—comprised of pediatricians, social organizations, and NGOs—makes a decision based on the child's mental state and future interests. These children are our nation's assets, so the Government has made necessary amendments to the relevant provisions. The Kerala High Court has also stated that innocent individuals can face serious consequences, including imprisonment, mental anguish, and reputational damage in cases of false accusations; therefore, the law must be implemented with utmost caution.

Recent decisions by various High Courts and the Supreme Court make it clear that concrete evidence is essential before legal action can be taken to prevent abuse under sensitive laws like POCSO. The Delhi, Kerala, and Kolkata High Courts have taken a strong stance against false or fabricated allegations and directed impartial investigations into such cases. The Supreme Court has also stated that the penal provisions of POCSO should be invoked only when reasonable suspicion or material facts exist, to prevent unnecessary action against innocent individuals. Given the increasing abuse in family disputes, the judiciary has indicated that punishing children based solely on suspicion is contrary to legal principles. The government, judiciary, police, Ministry of Women and Child Development, and Ministry of Health are jointly handling this issue with utmost sensitivity. Child Welfare Committees play a crucial role in the care of children—mental, physical, and emotional—where trained experts, especially pediatricians and counselors, provide protection, compassion, and rehabilitation. Continuous training and awareness programmes are being conducted at the Central and State levels for officials, police, heads of institutions, staff and teachers to protect the interests of children and ensure proper and sensitive use of the law.

I view this issue not just as a legal matter, but as a mass movement. Our government in Maharashtra has raised awareness among police, administrative, and court officials, because punishment alone doesn't reduce crime—the public, society, and we, as public representatives, have an equal responsibility. I have installed social awareness signs in my district, and doctor organizations—like the IMA and especially our IAP (Pediatric Association)—have also done a great job raising awareness. Just as sonography centers display PCPNDT posters, we pediatricians have posted information about the rules and penalties of POCSO in our outpatient departments. I have taken this entire issue with a very sensitive and firm approach, as effective implementation of the 2012 Sexual Offences Act requires a firm and clear approach.

**SHRI SANDOSH KUMAR P:** I support strengthening the POCSO Act, but I must also highlight its misuse, as pointed out by the Delhi and Kerala High Courts. In many divorce cases, parents use children to win “matrimonial wars,” which is deeply concerning. I believe the Act needs further amendments to address this issue. I also feel that anyone in high public positions—political leaders, teachers, religious figures—should face immediate disciplinary action once the court takes cognizance of such cases, and all political parties must ensure this. I am here to support her cause and I should not skip this occasion. That was my sole intention. The point is that there must be a guideline or it must be incorporated in the constitution of each and every political party that those who are accused of these kinds of crimes must be expelled or dismissed or suspended without dilly-dallying or without offering lame excuses. This is the only thing. It is a question of children’s future and a question of the morality of society. I support the noble cause behind this particular Bill.

**DR. V. SIVADASAN:** It is our responsibility to protect children from all forms of assault. The question is how to protect them from sexual harassment. This requires not only strict laws and punitive action, but also strong social security measures. Lack of food, shelter, and basic necessities makes children vulnerable to exploitation, so the government must prioritize their basic needs. Today, the condition of children in the country is extremely pathetic. In the capital, Delhi, children are forced to sleep on the streets without woolen clothes and shoes in the harsh winter and beg. Thousands of mothers are crying in hospitals because they cannot afford treatment. This situation shows that despite healthcare being a fundamental right, most children in India die due to lack of treatment, and most mothers die during childbirth. Although we have child protection laws and the right to education, these laws are not enough to change the tragic lives of children. The health budget is steadily declining—from 0.31% in 2014–15 to 0.27% in 2026, while allocations worth thousands of crores of rupees remain unspent. Our health spending is extremely low compared to major countries, which is affecting the plight of children. If the government truly wants to protect children's interests, it must invest substantially in the health sector. A clear and sensitive vision is essential for the safety of children. The situation of our children is alarming—hospitals lack doctors and medicines, and hospitals for both children and mothers face severe staff shortages. Playgrounds and quality Anganwadi services are essential for children, but the government is not paying adequate attention to them. Budgets for Anganwadi, nutrition, and midday meal schemes have been slashed. Children in schools are deprived of proper food and health facilities, while midday meal cooks are paid very low wages. This situation seriously compromises children's rights and their future. As poet Madhusudhanan Nair said, "It is our moral responsibility to listen to the cry of every child." Therefore, I humbly urge the central government to strengthen social security measures, strengthen Anganwadi and nutrition schemes, devote more resources to health and education, and ensure strict action against perpetrators of sexual harassment. Only through this approach can we protect our children and the future of our country.

**DR. ANIL SUKHDEORAO BONDE:** All the provisions of this bill are already present in the POCSO Act, which is proposed to be amended. Provisions such as registering FIRs based on mere suspicion could weaken it. Therefore, I do not support this bill. However, I consider this discussion to be useful. Crimes against children are neither political nor ideological—they are issues of human safety and the dignity of children. According to NCRB, 1.77 lakh crimes are committed against children in the country, and despite the POCSO Act, more than 70,000 sexual offences have been registered. These are not just numbers but shattered childhoods and ruined futures. What concerns me the most is that in 95% of cases, the offenders are people known to the child—family members, neighbors, teachers, drivers, school staff, and even religious preachers or coaches. Children cannot speak out against such influential individuals and silently endure the abuse. Many painful incidents have occurred across states—some involving luring a child with chocolate and then killing her, others involving continuous abuse and threats by someone known to the family. These crimes are not just physical assaults but also cause deep psychological wounds that last a lifetime. That is why it is crucial to address child safety openly, sensitively, and with utmost seriousness. Cases of child abuse are emerging in many places—whether in private learning centres, shelter homes, or other institutions. Many children are unable to speak up due to threats and emotional blackmail. In some instances, certain individuals involved in religious teaching misuse religion and history to mislead children, which is extremely concerning. It must be clearly emphasized that no religion supports the sexual

exploitation of children; Islamic scholars worldwide also reject such misuse. Therefore, strong measures and clear social and religious messaging are essential for ensuring the safety of children. India's stance under POCSO is clear: no culture, tradition, or religious argument can justify harm to children. Sexual exploitation of children is a crime under POCSO, the Indian Penal Code, and violates constitutional dignity under Article 21. Its psychological and social impact is severe. Abused children often develop mistrust, depression, anxiety, and may even attempt self-harm. In females, it can affect future relationships and family life. Factors like drug abuse, pornography, and hormonal supplementation further exacerbate the issue. Legal measures alone are not enough; societal and family structure reforms are crucial. Children need love, empathy, and support, as instability in family and society is often the root cause of their exploitation. Family structures must improve, and practical yet strong policies are needed to ensure child safety. Every school should have a safe childhood curriculum that teaches age-appropriate lessons on safety, boundaries, and the concept of good touch and bad touch. POCSO cases should be resolved within one year, with fast-track courts and strict time limits. I feel there must be training for police, teachers, and community leaders to communicate effectively with children and understand their legal duties. Children often do not report crimes, so every police station should have trained communicators. Institutions like hostels, madrasas, ashrams, gurukuls, and shelter homes should undergo monthly audits, and every district hospital should have a mandatory child psychologist. A national database of repeat offenders is also essential. I want to stress that no religious belief, cultural tradition, or historical example can justify sexual acts against minors. Children carry only innocence and trust; they have no religion, caste, or politics. My duty is not just to punish offenders but to prevent any child from ever feeling unsafe. India must stand firmly and forever with the children.

**SHRI BRIJ LAL:** We already have several laws for the safety and rights of children, such as the Children Act, 1960; the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015; and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. In my view, the most important aspect of any Act is its compliance. Enforcement agencies must be sensitive, and there must be prompt action and justice against offenders. Today, children have easy access to mobile phones, which is affecting their habits. It is the responsibility of parents to protect children from wrong influences and ensure their proper upbringing. I also want to highlight that earlier, in South India, there was an institutionalized practice called the Devadasi system, where Dalit and Adivasi girls were exploited. Our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, abolished this practice by making it a criminal offence (Act No. 1 of 2016). Furthermore, the new Criminal Justice System has been implemented from 1 July 2024, which gives serious attention to crimes against women and children. Earlier laws were mainly focused on property and offenders, not on crimes against women and children. Therefore, through this new system, sensitivity and justice are being ensured. It is the responsibility of society to keep a constant watch on children's behavior and activities. To prevent abuse in children's homes, proper supervision, care, and imparting good values to children are extremely necessary. In conclusion, I submit that sufficient provisions already exist, so there is no need for a new law. The existing laws should be implemented effectively. The biggest role is that of society, which is most important.

**DR. BHIM SINGH:** The current government is sensitive towards children, women, and all sections of society, and is working extensively for their physical, mental, and cultural development. I also want to mention that the earlier UPA government enacted the POCSO Act in 2012, which our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's government revised and strengthened in 2019 based on practical experience, making it more stringent and effective. Therefore, in my opinion, there is no need for a new bill. We have worked to strengthen and update all laws related to sexual harassment and juvenile justice, including the Juvenile Justice Act, 2016, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. In 2018, our Government brought the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, which included provisions for children. We have also included harassment via social media and pornography under these laws. I have personally visited One Stop Centres and children's shelter homes in Bihar to see the implementation firsthand. The Government believes children are the future, and we are committed to preventing child marriage and sexual exploitation while running sensitization campaigns. When a child studying in a madrasa was

subjected to abuse, I made an effort to address their problem. I ensured that the Government clarified the responsibilities of schools, hostels, and other institutions, imposed penalties for failing to report, and made it mandatory for victimized children to be presented before the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) within 24 hours. Children's statements are recorded in a sensitive environment, and their cases are processed quickly through fast-track courts. The responsibilities of institutional heads have been increased, and victims are provided immediate medical and psychological assistance, along with regular training for staff. I believe that it is essential to effectively implement existing laws.

**MS. SWATI MALIWAL:** I believe this Bill proposes several important criminal reforms, and many of its provisions are progressive and necessary. Despite the POCSO Act being in force for 13 years, crimes against children continue to rise. I still remember the case in 2018 in Delhi where an eight-month-old baby girl was sexually assaulted. When I reached the ICU to meet her, she was lying there in a bloodied condition, and I will never forget her screams. We conducted three operations, and only then was her life saved. I am grateful to the Government for accepting my demands on the tenth day and for bringing in an ordinance that mandates the death penalty for those who rape young children.

*(Speech unfinished)*

*Discussion not Concluded.*

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## SPECIAL MENTIONS

### 1. Demand for Protection of Amla Industry of Pratapgarh

**SHRI AMAR PAL MAURYA:** I am working to establish Pratapgarh's identity as the "Amla Capital." About 70–80 thousand farmer families here depend on amla, but due to the lack of organized processing industries, farmers do not get a fair price, and nearly 20–25 percent of the produce is wasted. I request the Government to develop an amla processing industry cluster in Pratapgarh, which will ensure stable prices for farmers, create employment opportunities for local youth, and give new momentum to the regional economy.

### 2. Demand for Operation of Trains from Mhow Cantonment

**DR. KAVITA PATIDAR:** I would like to draw the Government's attention to an important issue concerning Mhow. Currently, several long-distance trains reach Mhow but are operated from Indore, causing inconvenience to local residents and military families. I request the Government to make Mhow the originating station for these trains, introduce a new train service from Mhow to Rajasthan, restart the Mhow –Nagda Express, which was suspended during the COVID period, from Mahu, and also commence the Indore–Jabalpur Overnight Express from Mhow, so that travel becomes more convenient and the local population benefits directly.

### 3. Concern over Dilapidation of Poonch-Budha Amarnath Road

**SHRI SAT PAUL SHARMA:** I would like to highlight the unsafe condition of the Poonch–Budha Amarnath Shrine Road in Jammu and Kashmir. This road is vital for thousands of pilgrims and local residents, but it is badly damaged, full of potholes, and often waterlogged, endangering lives and causing accidents. I urge the Government to undertake immediate repairs and implement long-term strengthening measures to ensure public safety, preserve religious sanctity, and maintain regional connectivity.

*(Dr. Medha Vishram Kulkarni, Shrimati Rekha Sharma, Shri Amar Pal Maurya and Shri Gulam Ali associated.)*

### 4. Demand for Audit of Canteens Serving Foods

**SHRI ASHOK SINGH:** I want to highlight the November 2025 VIT Bhopal tragedy as a serious warning about deteriorating food safety standards in educational institutions. Most campus

canteens continue with almost no monitoring after initial licensing, and student complaints are often suppressed. Similar food-poisoning incidents have occurred in Telangana, Karnataka and Rajasthan. Therefore, I urge that strict, surprise third-party audits be made mandatory, including checks on water quality, microbial testing, supply-chain hygiene and staff health and sanitation practices. Institutions that charge exorbitant fees cannot compromise on the basic necessities of life. Transparent audit reports accessible to students are the only way to prevent such tragedies in the future.

*(Shri Sandosh Kumar P, Dr. John Brittas, Dr. V. Sivadasan and Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham associated.)*

#### **5. Demand for GST Exemption for Cooperative Sector Products**

**DR. V. SIVADASAN:** The cooperative sector has always played a key role in promoting economic equality and supporting livelihoods, especially in Kerala. Most cooperatives operate with minimal profits, focusing on sustaining members rather than making large gains. Imposing GST on their products increases costs, reduces competitiveness, and harms vulnerable communities like farmers, artisans, and women's self-help groups. I believe exempting cooperative products from GST will strengthen local economies, support fair returns, promote employment, and ensure community-based enterprises continue to thrive against corporate competition.

*(Dr. John Brittas , Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham , Shri R. Girirajan and Dr. Fauzia Khan associated.)*

#### **6. Demand for Granting Additional Forest Land for Sabarimala Development Projects**

**SHRI SANDOSH KUMAR P:** Sabarimala receives a massive influx of devotees every year, especially during the Mandala–Makaravilakku season. I find that the existing infrastructure and land are insufficient to ensure the safety and comfort of millions of pilgrims. I request approval from the Government to allocate additional forest land adjacent to the pilgrimage area. This land will be used for essential facilities like queue complexes, sanitation, medical centres, emergency pathways, and waste management, while strictly adhering to environmental safeguards, impact assessments, and compensatory afforestation plans. The State Government remains committed to protecting the Periyar Tiger Reserve and the surrounding Western Ghats.

*(Shri R. Girirajan , Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham , Dr. John Brittas and Dr. V. Sivadasan associated.)*

#### **7. Concern over Fire Safety Measures in High Rise Buildings**

**DR. AJEET MADHAVRAO GOPCHADE:** The fire in a 24-storey building in Mumbai in 2025 and the recent incident in Hong Kong have served as a warning that fire control in high-rise buildings depends not only on equipment but also on immediate action and regular monitoring. I urge the Government to implement a National High-Rise Fire Safety Protocol, establish specialized fire response units in every metropolitan city, launch a mission to retrofit old buildings with modern fire safety measures and equipment, and ensure full digitization and strict monitoring of fire safety certificates. I urge that an annual structural audit system be made mandatory for all high-rise buildings, so that the strength of the structures and the condition of emergency evacuation routes can be inspected every year. The incidents in Mumbai and Hong Kong remind us that any delay in ensuring the safety of high-rise buildings comes at the cost of human lives.

*(Dr. Bhim Singh , Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao Mahadik , Shri R. Girirajan and Shri Sujeet Kumar associated.)*

#### **8. Demand for Conferring Bharat Ratna on Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitri Bai Phule**

**SHRI ANIL KUMAR YADAV MANDADI:** I wish to highlight the immense contribution of Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitri Bai Phule, who championed equality and education in the 19th century. I believe their work—such as founding the Satyashodhak Samaj, promoting compulsory education, and pioneering girls' schooling in Pune—transformed the lives of weaker sections and empowered women. Their efforts led to major social reforms like widow remarriage and women's

upliftment, inspiring leaders like Dr. Ambedkar. In recognition of their extraordinary service to the nation, I urge the Government to confer the Bharat Ratna on Mahatma Jyotiba Phule and Savitri Bai Phule.

*(Shri R. Girirajan, Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham, Dr. V. Sivadasan and Shri Sandosh Kumar P associated.)*

#### **9. Request for Doubling of Kolhapur-Miraj Section and Early Implementation of Kolhapur-Vaibhavwadi Railway Project**

**SHRI DHANANJAY BHIMRAO MAHADIK:** I want to draw the Government's attention to the urgent need for doubling the 50 km Kolhapur–Miraj railway section, which still operates as a single line and restricts the introduction of new trains. This long-pending project is essential for the region's economic, industrial, and tourism growth. I also highlight the importance of the Kolhapur–Vaibhavwadi railway project, approved with ₹350 crore, which will connect western Maharashtra to Konkan and link the eastern and western coasts. I urge the Government to approve the doubling work quickly and prioritize the implementation of the Kolhapur–Vaibhavwadi line.

*(Shri R. Girirajan and Dr. Ajeet Madhavrao Gopchade associated.)*

#### **10. Demand for Special Package for Huge Losses Caused by Floods in Punjab**

**DR. ASHOK KUMAR MITTAL:** I want to draw the Government's attention to the severe floods in Punjab, which have claimed 55 lives, left thousands of families homeless, and destroyed 2.97 lakh acres of crops. Additionally, 30,000 houses, 7,213 schools, and over 4,657 kilometers of roads have been damaged. I urge the Government to immediately release a special financial assistance package for the reconstruction of Punjab and to support the farmers so that they can rebuild their livelihoods and secure their future.

*(Shri R. Girirajan and Dr. Kanimozhi NVN Somu associated.)*

**P. C. MODY,**  
*Secretary-General.*

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