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Title : Constitution Amendment Bill, 2005 (Insertion of new article 47 A)

17.48 hrs.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT BILL, 2004

(Insertion of new article 47A)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the House shall take up Item No. 31, Shri Sudhakar Reddy.

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY (NALGONDA): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Constitution of India, be taken into consideration. "

Sir, I introduced this Bill last time. I thank you for giving me this opportunity to explain as to why I moved this Bill.

I propose that the Constitution of India be further amended by inserting a new article after article 47. This may be called article 47A. The amendment is: 'That the State shall set up one primary health centre in every village with all medical facilities'.

Sir, the purpose of this Bill is this. Unfortunately, even after 58 years of Independence, the State has not fulfilled its commitment of 'health for all'. It is becoming more and more difficult for the people, especially for those living in urban slums, rural areas and tribal regions, to have access to primary health services. The condition of the Government hospitals is worsening day by day. Nowadays, in most of the Government hospitals, there is inadequate staff, supply of medicine is insufficient and infrastructure is also inadequate to provide health care services to the largest population. At the village level too, the situation is much worse as there is no resident health-care provider to attend the patients or to implement preventive measures. Due to lack of availability of the Government health care services, private hospitals are charging exorbitantly. So, they are beyond the reach of the poor people. This often leaves common people in rural areas with no other option but to resort to treatment from quacks. Thus, the common man is being deprived of the basic rights to the health care, which is essential for healthy living[\[pkp62\]](#).

Article 47 of the Constitution makes it the responsibility of the Government of India to regard improvement of public health as its duty. Yet, the successive Governments are backtracking from fulfilling this responsibility. This is obvious from the fact that allocation of expenditure on public health service has been declining over the successive years.

It is therefore necessary to make an amendment to the Constitution with a view to making it the duty of the State to set up primary health centres in every village, with all necessary medical facilities, including necessary infrastructure, staff, medicines, etc. to provide basic health care to the people.

Right now, according to the statistics available, we are spending less than 0.9 per cent of the GDP for health care. Unfortunately, we are the fifth poorest in the world and only four countries are behind us. They are: Cambodia, Congo, Georgia and Sierra Leone, of which Congo and Sierra Leone are in Africa.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Reddy, you may continue next time.

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY : Okay, thank you, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, there is presentation of Report of BAC.