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Title: Need to launch campaign for prevention of AIDS among women.

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA (BOBBILI): Never before has humanity faced a disaster on such a scale as HIV/AIDS. The disease has killed around 30 million people. If the pandemic continues unchecked, there will be 45 million new infections by 2010 and nearly 70 million deaths by 2020. Prevention of infection and care for the infected are the key elements of today's massive fight against HIV.

Women in developing countries are disproportionately affected by HIV and AIDS because they face systemic and persistence discrimination. Nearly 40 percent of those now contracting the HIV virus are women, including housewives. As per one report of UN, in rural India, less than half of women have not heard of AIDS, let alone how to protect them from HIV infection.

Culturally, women face significant barriers in getting support if HIV positive, while the burden they bear as care providers often leaves them in poverty.

Too little money is spent on the development of female-centered prevention methods such as microbicides and female condoms. Research shows that 2.5 million HIV infections might be prevented if just 20 percent of women in poorer countries could regularly use a microbicides.

Keeping these facts in view, in our country, now it is high time to launch campaigns to focus more on women in prevention of AIDS. HIV/AIDS test should be made mandatory before marriage for both men and women.

Effective economic rehabilitation of these HIV infected women will go a long way in dreaming world without AIDS.