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Title: Need for proper rehabilitation of AIDS patients and to bring a Comprehensive Bill for HIV/AIDS victims in the country.

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME (BOLPUR): Madam Speaker, through you, I want to draw the attention of the Government and the whole House to this important issue concerning nearly 2.5 million HIV/AIDS victims in our country.

Madam, earlier they have rightly mentioned about the solemn occasion of World AIDS Day which is being observed throughout the world today. Though our Government has taken up so many comprehensive AIDS control programmes and rehabilitation of the victims in our country, and the trend is declining, we should not be complacent about this Bill. In this respect, I want to point out one important thing. The original draft of the HIV/AIDS Bill, 2009, was placed by the Ministry of Health in August, 2006, but this Bill is yet to come up for discussion and consideration in the House. In the year 2007, the Bill was sent to the Law Ministry for their opinion. Unfortunately, still this Bill has not come up for consideration. It is a very important Bill because the existing law addresses the issues of discrimination, consent for HIV testing and treatment, confidentiality related information and access to HIV treatment very inadequately. There is limited legal redress for discrimination in the private sector. A law which protects the rights of the people, legal redress of the people infected and affected with HIV/AIDS and aims to control the spread of the epidemic is the need of the hour.

The Indian Government cannot afford to delay the tabling of this Bill any further. The HIV/AIDS Bill, 2009 is comprehensive and represents the aspirations and needs of the people living with HIV/AIDS, as it was drafted in consultation with stakeholders, including communities vulnerable to the epidemic, doctors, lawyers, women's groups and children's groups. It also promotes prevention awareness, support and treatment programmes to control the spread of the epidemic.

These days, Madam, the unfortunate victims, especially children, are helpless. Sometimes, their children's admission in the schools has been denied; sometimes, their treatment is not being done both in public sector and private sector hospitals. In the society, various types of discrimination and humiliation are going on.

In this backdrop, I urge upon the Government to urgently and immediately bring this comprehensive Bill for HIV/AIDS victims in our country.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (CUTTACK): I would like to associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.

MADAM SPEAKER: Please send your slip. Whoever wants to associate themselves, kindly send the slips to the Table.

Shri Jagdambika Pal,

Shri P.K. Biju,

Shri B. Mahtab,

Shri Arjun Charan Sethi,

Shri M.B. Rajesh,

Dr. Anup Kumar Saha,

Shri Pulin Bihari Baske,

Sk. Saidul Haque,

Shri P. Karunakaran,

Shri Khagen Das,

Dr. Manda Jagannath, and

Shri Uday Singh are allowed to associate themselves with what the hon. Member has said.