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Title: Need to evolve a policy to place social work education under a recognized council.

SHRIMATI BOTCHA JHANSI LAKSHMI (VIZIANAGARAM): We all know that Social Work Education in India was started in 1936 at Mumbai and today there are around three hundred schools/Departments of social work across the country of those around 35 departments are located in my own state i.e. Andhra Pradesh. Social Workers extend their professional services in various sectors such as health care, education, corporate sector, correctional and legal sectors, urban and rural community organization and development sectors, women and child development sectors, youths and disability sectors, aged, socially, emotionally and economically disadvantaged groups.

All over the world, social work is considered as a professional programme of study and has accreditation bodies/councils. Hundreds of our graduates are recruited by agencies from abroad. When our graduates go abroad, they are expected to undergo six months to one year additional training before being employed. The main reason for this is because of the non-recognition of this discipline as a profession in our country.

I understand that the National Association of Professional social workers in India (NAPSWI) had earlier submitted a DRAFT BILL for the establishment of a 'Council for Social Work Education'. The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is currently educating and training over 25,000 students at undergraduate and post graduate levels in social work. Given this status, it may be appropriate for the Government to initiate dialogue with NAPSWI and IGNOU to streamline the profession so that social work is able to have its own identity of a profession.

We all know that AICTE is one of the Councils where social work could be placed for accreditation purpose. Being a profession recognized by world bodies including United Nations, which celebrates World Social Work Day on March 26th every year, I request the Government to evolve a policy to place social work education under one of the existing councils like AICTE which will go a long way in recognizing the profession and facilitating the graduates is getting well paid jobs within and outside the country.