

[Dr. Vasant Niwrucci Pawar]

14.22 hrs.

are passing this legislation unless and until there is public awareness, nothing can be done. The society's preference is for a son, which has to be tackled properly. The society must be taught the importance, the dignity of a women or of a girl child. Then only this Bill will be of some use. Otherwise, the people are going to find out a number of lacunae and they will use Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques for determination of the sex and it will continue for the female foeticide.

So, I request the hon. Minister for Health to devise a review and the monitoring system where every two years we review as to what is happening to this Bill and whether the records of the Genetic Counselling Centres, Genetic Laboratory or Genetic Clinic are being properly maintained and if there is any need for amendments, the hon. Minister should not hesitate to come forward to Parliament again. This is a very important Bill. We are all thinking in terms of maintaining the dignity and the status of women in our country and this Bill definitely curtail the female foeticide in our country. There are regular advertisements that within Rs. 100/- one can get amniocentesis. The amniotic Fluid is tested and the sex is being told and if it is a female sex, foeticide is being done. That will be prevented because of this Bill. So, I welcome this Bill and I support all the measures which have been suggested in this Bill.

Once again, I congratulate the Government for brining forward this Bill.

ANNOUNCEMENT RE:  
ADJOURNMENT MOTION ON  
ALARMING SITUATION IN  
ASSAM – *Contd.*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: In the morning it has come to our notice that the names of the Members who gave notices of Adjournment Motion are being balloted. I shall just read the result and then we proceed to the same subject.

I have to inform the House that the hon. Speaker has received four notices of Adjournment Motion to discuss the alarming situation in Assam and the failure of the Central Government to intervene timely from the following Members:—

1. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee
2. Shri Chandrajeet Yadav
3. Shri Mohan Singh
4. Shri Sharad Yadav

Hon. Speaker has given his consent to Shri Chandrajeet Yadav who has secured first place in the ballot to seek leave of the House.

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV (Azamgarh): I seek leave of the House for moving the Adjournment Motion to discuss the alarming situation in Assam and the failure of the Central Government to intervene timely.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the leave opposed?

Nobody is opposing it. Then the leave is granted.

Under Rule 62, not less than 2-1/2 hours are allotted for its discussion. The motion will be taken up at 16.30 hours.

14.23 hrs.

**PRE-NATAL DIAGNOSTIC  
TECHNIQUES (REGULATION AND  
PREVENTION OF MISUSE) BILL**

**As reported by Joint Committee**

*Contd.*

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA (Jadavpur): Sir, I rise to speak on Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Bill. The reason why I rise to speak is that I was one of the Member of the Joint Select Committee which deliberated on the Bill and I was one of the Members who gave a note of dissent regarding the recommendations of the Bill on some specific issues. It is not as if I want to oppose the Bill or prevent it from being passed. I think, something is better than nothing and this Bill has long been waited for and as such I am not opposing the Bill. But I want to point out some serious loopholes in the Bill which I believe may detract from its effectiveness.

Some people who have opposed the bringing of legislation in this respect have said that just as by passing the Anti-dowry Act it has not been possible for us to contain the evils of the dowry system, similarly it is no use bringing this legislation because the incidence of female foeticide, following foetal sexual diagnosis, is something which arises out

of our social prejudice and, therefore, it cannot be done away with simply by making a legislation. I do not agree with this. However, I do agree that the incidence of female foeticide which is the way in which these prenatal diagnostic tests are misused, is a symptom of the real disease. The disease is, infact, the social devaluation of women, and this social devaluation of women is being enhanced today, is being aggravated today because our Government has followed a model of development which is bound to enhance the marginalisation of weaker social groups, like Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women and other weaker sections of society. So, it is this marginalisation of women and social devaluation of women which is the disease; the misuse of pre-natal diagnostic tests for female foeticide is merely the symptom.

In fact, we do find that in certain cases where there is a traditional society, when that traditional society breaks up and when this traditional society becomes a part of social change and so-called economic development, then new evils are introduced. We find that dowry system which had not existed before in that society because women were workers in that society, is now introduced. Dowry becomes a newly introduced evil in these societies and then female foeticide also comes in the wake of that. But while I admit all this, I would think that not having the legislation would mean that society sanctions such barbarism and, therefore, I think that it is important to have the legislation. The Central Committee which discussed this problem of sex determination also in 1989, recommended that there should be such legislation, and I agree with it.

Banning of these tests is not possible because these tests are only