

DIN IN RS OVER PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL

Relevant for: Indian Polity | Topic: Parliament - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these

Raising objection: Opposition members protesting in the Rajya Sabha on Thursday. PTI-

Opposition members protested against the introduction of a private member's Bill on the repeal of The Places of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991, in the Rajya Sabha on Friday. The Bill moved by BJP member Harnath Singh Yadav could not be introduced as the member was absent.

The 1991 law was enacted to freeze the status of all places of worship in the country as on August 15, 1947 but an exception was made to keep the Babri Masjid-Ramjanmabhoomi dispute out of its ambit. Its relevance was brought to the fore recently in the Gyanvapi mosque litigation. As soon as the Bill was mentioned, there was protest from the Opposition members.

"This Bill should not be admitted, it will be a contradiction as the matter is sub-judice in Supreme Court," Pramod Tiwari, Congress member said. Deputy Chairman Harivansh Narayan Singh said that the member had no right to speak on the Bill for it was not the property of the House as it was not introduced.

Another Bill – the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in India Bill — submitted by BJP member Kirodi Lal Meena for the constitution of the National Inspection and Investigation Committee for preparation of the UCC and its implementation throughout India was mentioned by Deputy Chairman Harivansh but it was also not submitted as the member was not present in the House.

CPI member P. Sandosh Kumar moved The National Commission for the Welfare of Home-based Workers Bill, 2022. The Bill said that although home-based workers belong to the most vulnerable category of workers, there are no official policies, programmes and schemes that protect their rights and welfare. "The term home-based worker is not legally recognised. Hence, they remain as an exploited and invisible class of workers living under the mercy of global brands for whom they do the hard work. It is critical for the government to recognise and identify the problems of these large majority of workers and safeguard their legitimate rights and welfare through legislative and administrative actions," the Bill moved by Mr. Kumar said.

Right to Health Bill

The Upper House discussed the Right to Health Bill, 2021 moved by Rashtriya Janata Dal's Manoj Kumar Jha in one of the previous sessions.

The Bill aims to provide for health as a fundamental right to all citizens and to ensure equitable access and maintenance of a standard of physical and mental health. Mr. Jha said medical poverty was increasing in the country which showed the failure to provide affordable and accessible health facilities to the common man.

Rajani Patil of the Congress drew the attention of the House to the poor conditions of government hospitals and said a few days ago she was left unattended for four hours at the emergency wing of Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital in Delhi. "I suffered from food poisoning but when I reached there I saw multiple patients on one bed. There was no space, it was crowded, the doctors were on a tea-break," Ms. Patil recalled.

Amar Patnaik of the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) said that out-of-pocket expenditure on health was a matter of concern. K. Keshava Rao of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) said health and education were the prime concern of the people of the country. He urged the government to give more focus to these issues. Participating in the discussion, John Brittas of the CPI(M) demanded more allocation for the health sector.

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