

Bill No. L of 2019

THE CONSTITUTION (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2019

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further to amend the Constitution of India.

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventieth year of the Republic of India as follows:—

1. (1) This Act may be called the Constitution (Amendment) Act, 2019. Short title and commencement.
- (2) It shall come into force on such date as the Central Government may, by notification
5 in the Official Gazette, appoint.
2. In the Constitution of India, after article 44 the following article shall be inserted, Insertion of new Article 44A.
namely—
“44A. The State shall take steps to control population growth by promoting Control of Population.
small family norms and achieve a stable population.”
- 10 3. In article 51A, after clause (k), the following shall be inserted, namely— Amendment of article 51A.
(1) to adopt small family norms and work towards achieving a stable population.

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

India is world's second most populous country after China. Aggressive population control measures have led to a substantial decline in fertility rate in China and, according to a recent United Nations report, India is slated to become the world's most populous nation in the next decade.

India has had a state-sponsored family planning programme since 1951. Of late, the programme has shown some results. The total fertility rate (TFR) has fallen from around 6 at the time of independence, to around 2.3. The results of the programme have, however, been skewed. While the States in the southern part of India and most States in western India have been receptive to the idea of family planning, many States in the northern part of the country, which also account for majority of our population, have not shown encouraging results. The larger States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar still continue to have a high fertility rate nearing 3. So much so that the gains of achievement of other States in population control have largely been neutralised by the rise in population in these States.

The benefits of collective efforts of nation building have been squandered by rise in population which is evident from economic data. India's per capita GDP in 1998 was \$413 and it has grown to about \$2016 in the year 2018. However, during this period our population is estimated to have grown from 1 billion to 1.4 billion. If we had a stable population during this period, the per capita GDP would have been higher by another 40 percent. Certainly, a rising population limits the ability of the State to provide better quality of life to its citizens, since a large chunk of national income is spent on maintaining the existing facilities.

It is, therefore, essential that a more focused approach is adopted, even if it requires a change of strategy. Towards this end, the Bill seeks to insert a new directive principle in Part IV of the Constitution enjoining upon the State to take all steps to control population growth by promoting small family norms and achieve a stable population. The Bill also makes it a fundamental duty for citizens to adopt small family norms and work towards a stable population of the country.

The Bill seeks to achieve the above objectives.

RAM KUMAR VERMA

RAJYA SABHA

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(Shri Ram Kumar Verma, M.P.)