

Need for a comprehensive policy to address the problems being faced by working women experiencing menopause ? Laid

DR. D. RAVI KUMAR (VILUPPURAM): I rise today to draw attention to the absence of a comprehensive policy for women experiencing menopause. This physiological transition, which will be affecting approximately 401 million Indian women by 2026 according to the Office of the Registrar General, has been stigmatized for decades, leading to significant professional and economic consequences. Research by Simply Health indicates 23% of working women aged 40-60 contemplate resignation due to menopausal symptoms, while 14% are actively planning to leave their positions. In the US alone, the Mayo Clinic estimates productivity losses at \$1.8 billion annually. In India, where 49% of women aged 45-54 are in the labour force, the impact is expected to be more severe. While overall menopause affects 15% of Indian women, early-onset menopause shows a 5% prevalence in rural areas compared to 3% in urban regions. This healthcare crisis is exacerbated by the fact that hysterectomy procedures account for 84% of the disparity in menopause rates between women of different educational backgrounds, necessitating interventions to structurally address the plight of women undergoing menopause. Therefore, I urge the Ministry of Labour and Employment to implement a comprehensive national workplace policy framework that includes flexible working arrangements, menopause awareness programs, and occupational health support.