

Title: Need to reform and update Christian Personal Law.

DR. (SHRIMATI) BEATRIX D'SOUZA (NOMINATED): Sir, there is an urgent need to reform and update the Christian personal law. The Christian people of India after reaching a consensus have made proposals to the Government to reform and update the Christian Personal Law, pertaining to few specific Bills, that is, the Christian Marriage Bill, 1997, the Christian Divorce Bill, 1997, the Christian Succession (Amendment) Bill, 1994 and the Christian Adoption and Maintenance Bill, 1997.

Some of the provisions of the century old Christian Marriage Act, 1872 and the Indian Divorce Act, 1869 have been struck down by the Supreme Court and various High Courts as being discriminatory, particularly, against women. The said Acts do not meet the requirements of the social realities that exist today. The provisions of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 seem to be largely discriminatory against the Christian community, particularly, against women. Since, the climate for the enactment of Uniform Civil Code may never be favourable, the Government should welcome the initiative of a minority community to update their personal law. I have raised this issue in the 12th Lok Sabha also. I request the Government to introduce these Bills to grant justice to the minority Christian community.