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Title: Need to upgrade district hospitals in the country as medical colleges to provide better health care services to the patients.

SHRI M.K. RAGHAVAN (KOZHIKODE): Today India has about 265 Medical Colleges producing about 35,000 medical graduates (MBBS) every year. The population of India today is about 1.2 billion. This indicates a medical coverage ratio of 1: 3500 while the WHO standard is 1: 1000, which is quite abysmal.

India has about 600 Districts across the country and each District has one Govt. District Hospital which caters to large number of outpatients and inpatients in the region. Most of the hospitals have 200 or more beds, the basic criteria for a 50 student intake for setting up of Medical Colleges.

To achieve the WHO standards, we need at least 1, 22,200 medical graduates which today is beyond the capacity. Therefore, it is suggested that all the District Hospitals with at least 200 beds or more should be elevated to that of Medical College. While this will extend medical and research facilities at the district level, more medical colleges can be introduced at lesser cost and increase the number of medical graduates substantially.

This year NRHM has been assigned Rs.20,822 Crore with a portion being earmarked for developing Medical Colleges at district levels from this fund. By making such dispensation, the Mission to improve the availability of and access to quality health care by people, especially for those residing in rural areas, the poor, women and children can be achieved without any hassle.