

Title: Regarding the demands raised by the Anganwadi workers and helpers with reference to their service conditions and status, etc.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have already called Prof. Premajam.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (BADAGARA): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that today thousands of *Anganwadi* workers and helpers from all parts of India...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I have called her. This is not fair.

...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM : I was the first to give the notice. I may be permitted to speak...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (BOLPUR): You have called the hon. Member to speak and everybody is interrupting her....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Will you please sit down? Will you please resume your seat? I am on my legs.

About 28 Members have given notices to speak. All of them will be getting a chance provided we have a peaceful atmosphere in the House. I have called Prof. Premajam. Let us hear her. I request the hon. Member to make a mention in brief.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, Prof. Premajam would speak.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM : Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the Parliament March which is being staged by thousands of *Anganwadi* workers and helpers from all over the country. Sir, the ICDS scheme was started in 1975. This scheme is meant for the welfare of women and children of this country. It has become 25 years old now. The workers and helpers of these *Anganwadis* had been persistently putting forward certain minimum demands before the successive Governments which fell on deaf ears. Their demand is that they should be recognised as Government servants and that there should be uniform law for governing their service – service conditions, increment, etc. – in different States of India. They also want that the proposal which is coming from the Government to privatise this area should be given up.

They are giving a pittance of Rs.460 per month to the workers and just Rs.260 per month to the helpers. The Government of Kerala has enhanced their allowance, but at the national level nothing has been done. While the prices of all essential commodities are rising, this should be taken up by the Government and given a sympathetic consideration. This is my request through you to the Government.