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Title: Need to look into the service conditions of nurses and fees charged from patients in Batra Hospital and Medical Research Centre, Tughlakabad, Delhi.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMATHITTA): Sir, I would like to raise an issue of urgent public importance and request the Government to take urgent measures to stop nurses' strike in Batra Hospital and Medical Research Centre, Tughlakabad, Delhi.

I strongly condemn the hospital management's aversion to the genuine causes of the nurses. Their legitimate demand for a revision of salary and service benefits should be met immediately and the pathetic plight of patients should be ceased.

First of all, I would like to bring to the attention of the House the present ratio of nurses to patients in Delhi. It should be noted that the expected ratio is 1:5, but the present ratio in Batra Hospital is 1:12. In some hospitals, this ratio is 1:20. This causes heavy workload and intense mental strain on the nurses. The greed for exorbitant profits bridles the hospital authorities from appointing the requisite number of nurses. They even force the nurses to bear the burden of double duty due to shortage of nurses, consequently creating deep distress in the family life of the nurses.

The medical or sickness benefits available to nurses are marginal and in some cases absolutely nil. Their lives seem to be in peril due to the negligence of hospital administration in providing adequate precautionary measures *vis-à-vis* treatment of highly chronic and infectious diseases.

If any nurse, out of agony, decides to stop her service to a particular hospital, again she will be in deep trouble as her certificates will not be returned, thereby, she is placed under perpetual serfdom and servitude. This practice of withholding certificates due to premature termination of contract between employer and nurses should be stopped.

I would like to end with a quote of our late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi :

"A nurse is not merely an aid and assistant to a doctor, she has an independent part to play in many areas where doctors need not necessarily be present."

I would request that the Government should immediately constitute a committee consisting of parliamentarians to study the working of hospitals, fees charged by them from the patients and the service conditions of nurses in Delhi.

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM): Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a very serious problem and requires the Government to intervene.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Jose K. Mani, if you want to associate, you can send your name.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.T. THOMAS (IDUKKI): Sir, I also associate. ...(Interruptions) It is a very serious matter. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI KODIKKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): Sir, I would also like to associate. ...(Interruptions) Hon. Minister is sitting here. ...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Shri Jose K. Mani,

Shri P.T. Thomas and

Shri Kodikkunnil Suresh are associating with this matter.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can send your names.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Dr. Anup Kumar Saha and

Shri Charles Dias are also associated with this matter.