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Title: Need to address the problems faced by nurses in the country.

SHRI A. SAMPATH (ATTINGAL): I would like to raise a very important issue. This is about the sad plight of the nurses working in various private hospitals across the country. The Government is acting just like a mere spectator.

I would like to make a request to the Government of India through you. As you know, March 8th was the International Women's Day. But, a lot of problems are being faced by nurses, a majority of them are women, especially of younger age. In many hospitals, on the very day when they enter the premises to join duty, the administration of hospital takes away their certificates and documents. They are treated just like bonded labourers. Even the resignation letter is being taken and kept in the file. The Minimum wages are not at all there; the Maternity Benefit Act is also not applicable; the Payment of Bonus Act is not at all applicable; Provident Fund is not given and no pension benefits are given. For how many years, have they to work there like that? Many of them are working in various hospitals for five to eight years, but there is no job security. They are cruelly exploited. It is an inhuman treatment.

In many hospitals they have started their struggles, their agitations. They have been denied the right to assemble. They have a right to assemble; they have a right to form unions and associations. But, what the managements are doing is that in many parts of the country, they are utilizing the "services" of anti-social elements to curtail their activities or to prevent these associations from the bargain. So, it is my humble request that our Government has to take up the initiative. The Government of India should engage in consultation with the various State Governments and there should be very serious attempts on the part of the Government of India to ensure that all the labour laws are implemented in hospitals.

Sir, it is a very important matter and, I hope, all my learned friends from all the States would participate in it. Sir, we all seek your help in this regard.(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Those who want to associate themselves may send their slips.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: S/Shri Prasanta Kumar Majumdar, P.R. Natarajan, Anto Antony, P.T. Thomas, P. Karunakaran and S.S. Ramasubbu are allowed to associate with the matter raised by Shri A. Sampath.