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Title: Contractual staff in Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): I wish to draw the attention of the Government towards the plight of the contractual employees of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) in Thiruvananthapuram. VSSC, a centre of ISRO, is a body that has rightly received unparalleled level of recognition for its stupendous achievements in outer space. As their MP, I am proud of them. VSSC's triumphs in projects such as Chandrayaan and Mangalyaan would not have been possible without the contributions of these contractual staff.

The contractual workers, mainly technicians and other backroom staff, have been subjected to unfair treatment by the management at VSSC. Under the newly introduced system, workers employed by both the current contract system as well as the piece-rate system stand at the risk of losing their jobs. VSSC has refused to take up the position of 'principal employer' effectively striking a terminal blow to their security of tenure. Any scope of career development for these individuals stands annulled and their wage structure fails to recognize their importance within the organization.

I urge the Government to provide a system that provides "Equal Pay for Equal Work" a universally accepted doctrine of the workplace. A system in which experience, capability and qualification is recognized through promotions to permanent positions and an annual pay rise. A system that recognizes that it is only human to expect paid leave when necessary. And finally, a system that establishes measures for the concerns of these men and women to be raised within the organization.

This is a matter of grave public importance as the livelihood of many people hangs in the balance. I urge the Government to address the concerns of the contractual staff of the VSSC immediately.