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Title: Need to implement the order of Supreme Court on salary of nurses working in private hospitals.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMTHITTA): Hon. Speaker Madam, I humbly invite the kind attention of this august House to the pathetic condition of nurses working in private hospitals and the nurses working in government hospitals on contract basis. Even though the nurses are the holders of a professional degree, they are getting remuneration less than what a coolie worker earns per day. For instance, a coolie worker in Kerala earns a daily wage of Rs. 800 and a nurse working in a private hospital is getting an average of Rs. 200 per day. The work time of a coolie is eight hours per day but a nurse has to work twelve hours or more daily.

As you are aware, a student has to spend an average of Rs. 10 lakh to complete the B.Sc. course in nursing. About 99 per cent of the nursing students fund this amount from bank loans and the overwhelming majority of them are in debt trap as salaries are not sufficient to repay the loans.

Due to the legislations by Parliament and the State Legislative Assemblies the salaries, working time, and other benefits of employees in various sectors have been revised from time to time but the nurses are being ignored and neglected in this regard. Therefore, their salaries and working conditions are very pathetic. Many Parliamentarians including me have raised the plight of nurses in this august House several times. However, the Government always replies that health is an issue that could be addressed by the State Governments. The problem being faced by the nurses is a national issue. It is also related to labour and employment.

The condition of nurses working in the private sector or in Government hospitals on contract basis is the same across the country. Delhi is witnessing the strike of nurses; Kerala and other States are also witnessing the protest being staged by nurses. Having understood the sheer exploitation that exists in this sector, the hon. Supreme Court issued a directive that the basic salary of a nurse should be Rs. 20,000 per month. However, it has not been implemented so far. The Parliament and the Government of India can neither ignore nor neglect the condition of nurses in the country. Therefore, I humbly request the Government to kindly introduce a comprehensive Bill in this regard.

HON. SPEAKER: Next, Shri K.C. Venugopal.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Madam, I may please be allowed. ...(*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: His name is there.

...(*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER: You can associate.

...(*Interruptions*)

HON. SPEAKER:

Shrimati P.K. Shreemathi Teacher,

Shri Jose K. Mani,

Shri N.K. Premachandran,

Shri Mullappally Ramachandran,

Shri M.K. Raghavan,

Shri M.I. Shanavas,

Shri E.T. Mohammad Basheer,

Shri P.K. Kunhali Kutty,

Adv. Joice George,

Shri C.N. Jayadevan, and

Dr. Mamta Sanghamitra are permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Anto Antony.