

Title: Demanded withdrawal of certain policies of the Central Provident Fund Commission (CPFC) which are against the welfare of the workers in the cashew industry in Kerala.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (ADOOR): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to raise a matter of urgent public importance.

More than two lakh workers are engaged in the cashew industry in Kerala. A majority of them are women workers belonging to the economically lower strata of the society. Cashew industry is merely a seasonal business offering only 100-200 days of work per annum. The cashew workers are thus toiling hard to earn their livelihood whereas the family pension offered to them is expected to be a great relief to them. Unfortunately, certain revised policies of the PF authorities in computing break in service, age, etc. have spoilt the whole system and most of the poor cashew workers are being excluded from the pension scheme. I would like to bring such anomalies to your notice for serious consideration so that the revised policies are revoked.

In this connection, it may kindly be noted that the aggressive, smoky, carbonised life prevailing in the cashew industry makes all the workers asthmatic. The only hope that they are having at the eve of their life is the pension. Hence the pension scheme should be compassionately reviewed and it should be liberalised. The same problems are faced by the labourers working in the coir industry and in the plantation sector.

In Kerala, the entire cashew workers are starting an agitation protesting against this 'anti-workers' decision of the CPFC. Thousands of workers from different trade unions had staged a demonstration in front of the Kerala Raj Bhavan and the Regional Provident Fund Commissioner's Office demanding withdrawal of the decision. I hope that the Government of India will seriously consider this matter and withdraw the recent decision. Thank you.
...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now Shri Abdullakutty. Hon. Members, half-an-hour more is left. All of you will be accommodated. Kindly cooperate with me. Everybody will get a chance.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : If you interrupt, you will not get a chance.

...(Interruptions)