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Title: Pathetic condition of Nurses in the country.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMATHITTA): Respected Madam, I request the Government to urgently introduce a Bill to protect the rights of the nurses in India. The nursing community in India is suffering from various kinds of exploitations that are ranging from bondage system to long hours of work.

Even though the bonded labour is abolished in our country, this practice still exists in the nursing sector. Having understood the gravity of the issue, the hon. Chief Minister of Delhi convened a meeting in this regard. The Central Labour Commissioner was also present at that meeting. He assured that he will issue an order to all the States regarding the abolishment of bondage system in nursing sector. But the bondage system still exists in the country. It underlines the urgent need for an initiative from the Parliament in the form of an enactment of a law in this regard.

Another problem faced by the nurses is the absence of a standardized pattern to ensure a reasonable salary. The nurse-patient ratio is also alarming in many hospitals. It should be noted that the expected ratio is 1:5, but in many hospitals it is 1:20. The medical benefits available to nurses are marginal or 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. Even though they are working in hospitals, the hospital authorities are reluctant to provide medical assistance to their nurses. Recently, in June, 2010, a nurse died in Delhi for not getting medical assistance.

Meeting of the Indian Nursing Council held at Hyderabad on 31st July, 2010 passed a Resolution and submitted its proposal to the Government of India regarding the following matters:

- a) To ensure reasonable salaries and other allowances to nurses.
- b) Standardize the duty time of nurses at 8 hours per day and also provide for sick and other leaves.
- c) To provide medical assistance whenever needed.
- d) To ban bondage system (withholding of certificates by the hospital authorities).

Therefore, I would like to request the Government to introduce a Bill to protect the interests of the nurses in the country by including the above provisions in the same.

Thank you.