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Title: Need to upgrade the Alappuzha Virology Institute, Kerala for testing corona virus samples and request government to bring back the Keralites Stranded in countries like Malaysia, Philippines and Italy.

ADV. A.M. ARIFF (ALAPPUZHA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity to raise an important matter during the Zero Hour.

Viral diseases are very much prevalent in the State of Kerala. This may be attributed to a number of reasons. We have a large population of migrants in the State. Several Keralites work in other countries. Frequent travelling between different places can lead to exposure to different viruses and thereby causing virus-related diseases. In a State like Kerala which is densely populated viral diseases have a greater tendency to spread. For doing all the viral disease related tests, earlier we were dependent on the Pune-Manipal Virology Institute. The Alappuzha Virology Institute was set up in the State of Kerala with the assistance from the Central Government. When there was the NIPA virus outbreak in Kerala, the suspected blood samples were tested there and now the blood samples of people affected by the Corona virus is also being tested there. But the issue is that after the blood samples are tested in Alappuzha Virology Institute, they are being sent to Pune-Manipal Virology Institute for re-confirmation. This is causing a lot of delay for starting the treatment of the affected people.

So, I would like to request the Central Government to upgrade the Alappuzha Virology Institute to the standard of the Pune-Manipal

Virology Institute. The Central Government should allot a minimum of Rs. 10 crore at the earliest for improvement of the infrastructure of this Institute, particularly given the Covid-19 scenario.

Sir, the other point is that more than 500 Keralites are stranded in countries like Malaysia, Philippines and Italy. The State Government has requested the Central Government for ensuring safe return of these people. I would like to request the hon. Prime Minister and also the Ministry of External Affairs to intervene in the matter to ensure safe return of these people to our country at the earliest. Thank you.