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Title: Reported unethical drug trials being conducted by certain drug companies on human beings in various parts of the country.

SHRI P.K. BIJU (ALATHUR): Mr. Chairman, Sir this is to bring to your urgent attention about the privatization of Universal Immunization Programme (UIP) and the increasing cases of illegal drug trial practices on human beings conducted with or without the knowledge of the victims by the private firms. UIP was started as a flagship programme in the health sector in 1985 by the Government of India, Ministry of Health, with the objective of immunizing 85 per cent of the new born and 100 per cent of expectant mothers by 1990. The vaccines were made solely in the public sector. Mainly three public sector companies were involved in the production of vaccines: i) Pasteur Institute of India, Coonoor, Tamil Nadu which was started in 1907; ii) Central Research Institute, Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh; and BCG Vaccine Lab, Chennai which was established in 1948. Ninety per cent of the vaccines were produced from these PSUs. But in 2008, these PSUs were closed down citing the report from the WHO. After that in this area, new private players, like Panacea Bio-tech, Santha Biotech and Cerum Institute of India, are vying to control the vaccination sector.

Sir, a recent report by BBC has brought to light the existence of an infamous clinical trial business that is spreading in the developing countries. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Biju, you come to the point.

SHRI P.K. BIJU : Sir, I am coming to my point. Such business involves thousands of unaware patients that get drawn into experimenting new drugs without their explicit consent, sometimes under the wrong impression that those trial medications are the official ones. The recent incident has happened in Visakhapatnam. A number of students from the engineering college, one private company ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Biju, why are you bringing engineering college here? You are telling about the vaccination. You come to the point.

SHRI P.K. BIJU : These clinical trials were held in Hyderabad and in Lucknow without the directions from the Centre or from any other agency. Even one recent incident happened in Tamil Nadu. One of the private companies' pentavalent vaccine was used in Kerala and in Tamil Nadu without the proper consent from the people.

So, in view of the above grounds, I strongly urge the Government to keep away from any effort to sabotage UIP and our health sector through privatization. The public sector companies should be reopened. Also, the Government should take stringent action against the private companies for using people as guinea pigs. I would also urge to enact a new law and strengthening of existing laws in order to ensure to avoid such above-mentioned incidents in future. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Biju, this is `Zero Hour'. This is not a debate in which you are participating. So, you have to be very brief.