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Title: Need to direct the NACO to keep sufficient quantity of the first and second line medicines and also to take steps for improvement of Antiretroviral Therapy Centres of Excellence to provide treatment for all HIV/AIDS patients.

SHRI R. THAMARAISELVAN (DHARMAPURI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to bring to the kind attention of the Government that hundreds of HIV/AIDS patients, including children, receiving anti-HIV medicine from the Government outlets found themselves in a precarious position after the outlets went out of stock for the first and second line drugs increasing the risks for HIV positives. This is because of poor and inefficient planning. The medicines that came first were not distributed first as well as there was a poor supply chain. This matter was brought to the notice of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health by the networks of people living with HIV/AIDS, which praised the network's role as a monitor of the HIV programme and came down heavily on the National AIDS Control Organization.

Sir, there are 14.86 lakh people living with HIV/AIDS registered in anti-retroviral treatment centres across the country out of 24 lakh HIV/AIDS affected people. In Tamil Nadu alone, more than 1.96 lakh people were affected with HIV/AIDS. The more expensive second line drugs are being given only meagre percentage of AIDS patients numbering 4,208. The NACO should not see only the criterion of cost. Failure to procure the third line drugs will have the future public health complications as people living with HIV could develop a very serious resistance to HIV, which could prove costly. The NACO should simplify the economic and bureaucratic barriers mentioned in the eligibility criterion for enrolling in the Government programme to receive the first and second line drugs free. Failure to get the costly treatment free of cost as well as for simplification of the procedure which eventually will lead to expansion of the free HIV treatment programme, the patient groups have also approached the Supreme Court for redressal of their genuine health problem.

Therefore, I would request the concerned hon. Minister to direct the NACO to keep sufficient quantity of the first and second line medicines and also to take steps for the improvement of Antiretroviral Therapy Centres of Excellence to provide treatment for all HIV/AIDS patients across the country.