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Title: Need to control the prices of all essential medicines and expansion of the National List of Essential Medicines.

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM): India has a booming drug industry and has contributed to making generics at low prices worldwide. But unfortunately medicines within India are overpriced and unaffordable, a glaring silent violation of human rights, that gives sleepless nights to millions of patients leading eventually to misery and poverty. The Margins in medicines are extremely high often rising up to 1000-4000 per cent. Despite the growing number of competitors drug prices have not come down or for that matter cost of health services has increased. Still a large number of people cannot afford medicines and have to pay significant amounts of their wages or money taken on loan for purchasing medicines. Public health remains grossly neglected while cost of medicines constitutes 50 to 80 percent of health care and the state of health insurance scheme pathetic and health safeguards as illusive. Notwithstanding inflation on account of medicinal prices, the patients have no choice since they cannot choose what to buy and at what cost.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government to take strong steps for preventing overpricing of medicine and also bring all essential drugs under price control. Price control of all essential medicines in the National List of Essential Medicines should be based on therapeutic class rather than on individual drugs.

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MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Members, would you like to go back and say something from your seats?

...(Interruptions)