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Title: Regarding pricing of life saving drugs in the country.

SHRI P. K. BIJU (ALATHUR): The Department of Revenue had issued a notification on January 28, withdrawing exemption of import duty on a number of drugs, including cancer and other lifesaving drugs. This resulted in excise/ import duties to the extent of over 22 percent, which made these drugs more expensive. The price of Glivec, an anticancer tablet, for example, has risen from Rupees 8,500 to Rupees 1.08 Lakh. There are over 75 drugs on this list. The medicines on which custom duty will now be imposed include the ones used for treating kidney stones, cancer chemotherapy and radiotherapy, life-threatening heart rhythm disorder, diabetes, Parkinson's disease, bone diseases, antibiotic to treat infections. Besides, drugs used for bacterial infections, leukemia, anesthetic medication, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or Hepatitis B virus cells, allergies, allergies, arthritis, lupus and ulcerative colitis might also see spurt in prices. This will also impact the indigenous drugs being manufactured in SEZS, thus adversely impacting the government's aim of making healthcare affordable and accessible to patients in India. India was the only country where drugs were available at affordable prices and even the third world countries depend on India for its drugs.

I urge the Government to desist from its move to hike the price of life saving drugs which could adversely affect the poor patients.