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Title: Issue regarding the vaccine of COVID-19.

**SHRI RITESH PANDEY (AMBEDKAR NAGAR):** Thank you, hon. Chairperson. India currently has two vaccines under emergency use approval -- one is Covidshield, developed by AstraZeneca and Oxford University, and the other is Covaxin, developed by Bharat Biotech. While the efficacy data of Covidshield was established before any Government in the world approved it for its emergency use, the efficacy data of Covaxin is still pending and interim data of Phase-III trials may only be expected by March, according to the Chairman and Managing Director of Bharat Biotech.

Commencing the use of Covaxin without establishing its efficacy data in clinical trials has been criticised by the scientific community. It also explains the hesitancy of doctors and health workers to take the Covaxin shot. India aims to vaccinate 30 crore people by August, which means it needs to vaccinate over 10 lakh people a day. In three weeks since India's vaccine drive has begun, we have not even vaccinated 10 lakh people. Additionally, there have also been technical glitches with India's online vaccine platform, Co-WIN, which has further created obstacles in our ability to carry out the ambitious vaccination plan.

People's mistrust in the vaccine is a serious public health issue because vaccination is the only safe way to immunise the Indian population against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. This issue has become even more serious given that we have no definitive answer as to how long our body's antibodies will last and whether the antibodies prevalent in the

Indian population will offer a robust enough protection against the novel strains of the corona virus circulating around the world. We must be prepared for a second or a third wave of the virus.

Hon. Chairperson, in the light of this, I would request the Government to take appropriate steps.