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Title: Need for adequate medical facilities and proper crowd management at Sabarimala Temple Shrine in Idukki district, Kerala.

SHRI P.T. THOMAS (IDUKKI): Madam, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the sad incident of stampede and loss of lives that occurred at Pullumedu in Idukki District near the Sabarimala holy shrine in Kerala last month. Nearly 102 people lost their lives and a large number of people suffered grave injuries. This incident has to be viewed as an eye opener, and it is high time to take remedial measures.

Madam, the Sabarimala Holy Shrine is visited by crores of pilgrims every year, but adequate amenities are not there. The implementation of Sabarimala Master Plan is necessary to avert tragedies and it should be done without any delay. There should be a proper mechanism for crowd management and the Centre may extend the necessary help by considering the deployment of paramilitary forces there.

Unfortunately, the medical facilities are very poor there. We are not having even a single medical college in my district, Idukki, and patients are being taken to the medical college located in Salem in Tamil Nadu, or to Kottayam, which normally take three-and-a-half hours of journey.

I request the Government to take immediate steps to convert the present Idukki District Hospital into a Medical College. In addition to that, it is necessary to raise the Primary Health Centre, Kumily, as a General Hospital. Central aid is needed for this as well.

I would request the Government to do the needful at the earliest. I am also requesting the Government to take necessary steps to provide facilities to the pilgrims at the Sabarimala to avert such drastic incidents.