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Title : Shortage of life saving vaccines in the country.

SHRI M.B. RAJESH (PALAKKAD): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this House and also the Government to a very serious issue, that is, the acute shortage of vaccines in Kerala as well as in the whole of the country. Life-saving vaccines which prevent rabies, diphtheria, tuberculosis, polio etc. are now hugely lacking in supply. The country present is in need of 58 crore doses of vaccines, while only 30 crore doses are available. So, there is a huge shortage of 28 crore doses.

Earlier, one hundred per cent of our requirement was met by three public sector vaccine producing factories of Kunoor, Chennai and Kasauli. However, the Government had closed these three public sector vaccine producing factories. This is the reason for the present shortage of vaccines.

Presently, the country is hugely dependent on private sector for vaccines. It is clear that the closure of these public sector vaccine producing factories was to help the private sector. The prices of vaccines produced by private sector are eight times higher than those produced in the public sector. While the prices have skyrocketed and private companies are making huge profits, our immunisation programmes for children have been badly affected. This will seriously harm the health of our future generation.

So, in order to save our infants from the clutches of fatal diseases, the Government should intervene immediately and re-open the closed public sector vaccine producing factories.