

Partial transcript of the 25th Sitting of the House of Representatives on 20th May 2016

Transcribed from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwUc5Qhm4js>

START: 24:36

MP FOR FYZABAD:

Thank you Madam Speaker. Given recent statements that the number of people accessing treatment for non-communicable diseases, so called NCDs, through the public health care system is placing a heavy burden on the state's resources of a reported \$6 Billion annually – Would the honourable prime minister state whether the Government plans to maintain funding for the treatment of the NCDs?

PRIME MINISTER:

Madam Speaker, I don't know that I can respond to a statement which I don't believe is accurate because if it is that the State is spending \$6 billion annually on non-communicable diseases what then is the national budget for health? Something can't be right here. \$6 billion on non-communicable diseases in a budget of what? This is the entire budget for the whole health system. So something is in error, and so therefore I can't respond to this error.

MP FOR FYZABAD:

Honourable Prime Minister based on this reported statement would you be able to correct this or give the accurate figure in the circumstances?

PRIME MINISTER:

Anybody who's familiar with the national budget would know to dismiss a statement like this as an error. We are not and we are not in the position even if we want to, to spend \$6 billion on any aspect of the health system. That is the whole budget on one item. So therefore, something is wrong with the question. It is based on misinformation. You're asking me to respond to misinformation. As a Member of Parliament who dealt with the national budget you must know that there's no way that there could be \$6 billion being spent on one item like this.

MP FOR CHAGUANAS EAST:

Honourable Prime Minister would you be kind enough to indicate therefore, in view of the comment you have just made, whether the Government will continue to support NCDs expenditure?

PRIME MINISTER:

Of course as part of the overall health effort the Ministry of Health will - there's an allocation for non-communicable diseases and that will continue and depending on what is happening in the country it may have to expand. If we have an outbreak of this or an outbreak of that or depending on what is the problem. But, certainly to predicate it on this scale of expenditure as an unusual development is a bit of an error and some misinformation.

MP FOR FYZABAD:

Ok Madam Speaker. Prime Minister, in view of the established role of primary health care in the prevention and treatment and early detection of NCDs, can the Prime Minister indicate whether his government intends to expand and increase the number of health centres with extended hours in the nation?

SPEAKER:

Member for Fyzabad I won't allow that as a supplemental question.

MP FOR CHAGUANAS EAST:

Honourable Prime Minister, again I just, I am on the question with the NCDs. Honourable Prime Minister are you aware that there is also a critical shortage of supply of drugs for NCDs?

PRIME MINISTER:

I am not aware of that.

END: 26:29

START: 45:14

MP FOR OROPOUCHE EAST:

Thank you very much, to the Honourable Prime Minister in terms of cost reduction, given his statement to the Member for Fyzabad earlier, I'd like to ask the Prime Minister if he's aware of the statement made on the 17th of May, three days ago by his Minister of Health who indicated at page 9 of the Express, photographed riding a stationary bicycle, that the provision of health care to those suffering from diabetes, hypertension, lung cancer and other NCDs cost the state more than \$6 billion annually? If he's aware of that statement of the Minister of Health and would you be reducing that cost as well?

SPEAKER:

Member I will not allow that as a supplemental question.

END: 45:57