

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2057
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10TH MARCH, 2026**

POLICY GAPS IN SCREENING OF DIABETIC RETINOPATHY

2057. DR. FAUZIA KHAN:

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry is aware that diabetic retinopathy remains largely neglected in the national healthcare framework, with limited access to preventive screening and timely treatment for diabetes-related vision loss across government facilities;
- (b) if so, the steps being taken to integrate routine retinal screening for diabetics into national and state health programmes, expand specialist care, and promote awareness about eye health through targeted campaigns;
- (c) whether the Ministry plans to strengthen digital health infrastructure to enable early detection and management of diabetic eye diseases; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) and (b) Screening and management of Diabetic Retinopathy (DR), a complication of diabetes and a cause of preventable visual impairment, are addressed under the National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCBVI) and the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD). These programmes collectively facilitate early detection, screening, referral and management of diabetes and its complications, including diabetic retinopathy, through public health facilities across the country.

The Department of Health and Family Welfare provides technical and financial support to States and Union Territories across the country under the National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD) as part of the National Health Mission (NHM). The programme focuses on strengthening infrastructure, human resource development, screening, early diagnosis, referral, treatment, and health promotion for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) including diabetes. Under National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD), 770 District NCD Clinics and 6,410 NCD clinics at Community Health Centres have been set up.

A population-based initiative for the prevention, control and screening of common non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes, has been rolled out across the

country. Under the initiative, persons over 30 years of age are targeted for their screening for the common NCDs including diabetes. In addition, NP-NCD gives financial support under NHM for awareness generation (IEC) activities for NCDs to be undertaken by the States/UTs as per their Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs).

Under NPCBVI, strengthening of eye care services including screening and management of diabetic retinopathy is supported through District Hospitals, Medical Colleges and other public health facilities. Routine retinal screening of persons with diabetes, provision of fundus cameras, and training of healthcare providers in diabetic retinopathy management, referral linkages and IEC activities are supported under NPCBVI.

(c) and (d) Strengthening of infrastructure, including digital health initiatives and expansion of screening services, is an ongoing process and States/UTs are supported under the National Health Mission based on their proposals in the Programme Implementation Plans (PIPs).

National NCD Portal enables digital tracking of screening, diagnosis and treatment of NCD patients and supports improved continuum of care. National NCD Portal has been rolled out by the Government of India for NCD screening and management and ensuring continuum of care for NCDs including diabetes. Further, Government is promoting the use of digital health technologies and tele-ophthalmology for early detection and management of diabetic retinopathy. Digital platforms and retinal imaging systems are being deployed in several States/UTs to facilitate remote screening and specialist consultation.
