

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2883
TO BE ANSWERED ON 28TH DECEMBER, 2018**

BLINDNESS

**2883. SHRI GOPAL SHETTY:
SHRI VISHNU DAYAL RAM:
SHRI HARISH CHANDRA ALIAS HARISH DWIVEDI:**

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

- (a) whether India is the worst affected country in the world by blindness and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (b) the estimated number of blind people in the country particularly in rural areas, State/UT-wise;
- (c) the financial assistance provided so far to tackle the problem of blindness during the last three years, State/UT-wise;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to organize free eye check up in schools and slums to detect eye disease at an early stage and create awareness among people about eye donation and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the other steps taken or proposed to be taken to check the increasing cases of blindness in the country?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)**

(a): As per the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Data on Visual Impairments 2010, China accounts for 20.9% and India 20.5% of the total blindness in the classified 6 WHO regions in the world.

As per the Rapid Assessment of Avoidable Blindness (RAAB) conducted under the National Programme for Control of Blindness & Visual Impairment (NPCB&VI) in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare during the year 2006-07, the prevalence of blindness in India was found to be 1% (as per the earlier definition of blindness of visual acuity <6/60).

The number of blind persons in India also appears high due to large population base, increase in ageing population and semi tropical location of the country, lack of public awareness, orthodox beliefs and economic constraints etc. The causes of blindness in India are as under:

- Cataract (62.6%)
- Refractive Error (19.7%)
- Glaucoma (5.80%)
- Corneal Blindness (0.9%)
- Posterior Segment Disorder (4.7%)
- Posterior Capsular Opacification (0.9%)
- Surgical Complication (1.2%)
- Others (4.1%)

(b): As per the estimates of detailed Blindness Survey conducted in 2001-02, the State/UT-wise number of blind persons in the country including rural areas is given at **Annexure-I**.

These figures have been calculated as per definition of blindness visual acuity <6/60 in better eye, which was followed by NPCB&VI at the time of 2001-02 survey, whereas the definition of blindness by WHO is visual acuity <3/60. Since May, 2017, the WHO definition of blindness has also been adopted by India under NPCB&VI, which would considerably bring down the number of blind persons in the country.

(c): The funds approved under the State Programme Implementation Plan (SPIP) and spent during each of the last three years under this programme, State/UT-wise is at **Annexure-II**.

(d): School Eye Screening is an ongoing activity under NPCB&VI to identify children suffering from refractive errors. The children found with refractive errors are provided corrective spectacles free of cost by the District Health Society concerned under the Programme.

Further, comprehensive eye screening camps are conducted for general population including slums at district level to identify patients suffering from cataract and other eye ailments. The patients identified suffering from cataract and other eye ailments are provided appropriate curative services/eye surgery free of cost at District Hospital and identified NGO Eye Hospital under NPCB&VI.

Information, Education and Communication (IEC) is also an on-going activity under NPCB&VI to create awareness about eye health including promotion of eye donation to restore vision of corneal blind in the country. A nation-wide campaign is organized during the annual event-Eye Donation Fortnight from 25th August to 8th September each year to promote eye donation.

(e): The following steps have been taken under NPCB&VI to check the rising number of cases of blindness in the country:

- Decentralized implementation of the scheme through State/District Health Societies;
- Reduction in the backlog of blind persons by active screening and transporting operable cases to fixed eye-care facilities at Government and identified NGO eye hospitals for operation/treatment;
- Besides Cataract, provision for treatment/management of other eye diseases like, Diabetic Retinopathy, Glaucoma, Corneal Blindness, Retinal Diseases, Childhood Blindness including Retinopathy of Prematurity etc.;
- Involvement of private practitioners in eye care services;
- Screening of children for identification and treatment of refractive errors and distribution of free spectacles to those suffering from refractive errors under School Eye Screening Programme;
- Collection of donated eyes for corneal transplantation and strengthening of eye banking services;
- In-service training to Eye Surgeons in various fields of ophthalmology for development of skills;
- Strengthening of eye-care infrastructure at various levels to improve quantity and quality of eye-care services;
- Promoting preventive Eye care and creating awareness through IEC activities;
- Regular monitoring and evaluation for effective implementation of the programme.

Estimated Blind/Visual I y Impaired Persons in India

S.No.	State/UTs	Estimated Blind Persons (visual acuity <6/60) by NPCB definition
1	ANDAMAN & NICOBAR	3919
2	ANDHRA PRADESH	1075331
3	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	24877
4	ASSAM	812471
5	BIHAR	646455
6	CHANDIGARH	9099
7	CHHATTISGARH	334815
8	DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	2359
9	DAMAN & DIU	1691
10	DELHI	155748
11	GOA	20429
12	GUJARAT	541388
13	HARYANA	398468
14	HIMACHAL PRADESH	42541
15	JAMMU & KASHMIR	162126
16	JHARKHAND	379423
17	KARNATAKA	938664
18	KERALA	178296
19	LAKSHADWEEP	667
20	MADHYA PRADESH	700467
21	MAHARASHTRA	919146
22	MANIPUR	32963
23	MEGHALAYA	17065
24	MIZORAM	6950
25	NAGALAND	20881
26	ODISHA	513897
27	PUDUCHERRY	7596
28	PUNJAB	245322
29	RAJASTHAN	875333
30	SIKKIM	3513
31	TAMIL NADU	484465
32	TRIPURA	24572
33	UTTAR PRADESH	1560897
34	UTTARAKHAND	47486
35	WEST BENGAL	954632
	TOTAL	12143952

Source: Blindness survey 2001-02.

**Details of SPIP Approval Vs Expenditure under National Programme for Control of
Blindness for the F.Y. 2015-16 to 2017-18**

(Rs. in lakhs)

S. No.	Name of the States/UTs	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
		SPIP Approvals	Expenditure	SPIP Approvals	Expenditure	SPIP Approvals	Expenditure
A.	High Focus States						
1	Bihar	1043.95	824.77	1379.16	618.16	1857.90	1182.84
2	Chattisgarh	458.00	307.38	761.20	434.18	961.73	572.34
3	Himachal Pradesh	100.00	151.92	127.00	90.15	243.51	31.35
4	Jammu & Kashmir	400.00	146.03	534.24	67.72	413.59	274.36
5	Jharkhand	466.00	254.00	685.77	538.78	693.90	572.19
6	Madhya Pradesh	1000.00	1672.04	1834.13	2420.69	2657.60	2320.32
7	Orissa	900.00	874.04	1384.09	846.88	1879.11	709.98
8	Rajasthan	904.57	1372.00	1708.13	1458.38	1809.38	1518.22
9	Uttar Pradesh	2200.00	1582.45	2481.94	1811.67	5065.15	2394.57
10	Uttarakhand	274.00	177.65	213.44	167.93	289.69	289.26
	Sub Total	7746.52	7362.28	11109.10	8454.54	15871.56	9865.42
B.	NE States						
11	Arunachal Pradesh	251.25	0.00	335.38	206.13	391.68	142.86
12	Assam	1355.25	1073.30	1401.56	621.16	1598.67	808.34
13	Manipur	168.30	36.12	418.46	24.54	844.60	4.86
14	Meghalaya	190.50	45.69	203.02	87.70	101.64	48.85
15	Mizoram	297.00	128.78	214.31	113.36	368.79	156.56
16	Nagaland	0.00	0.00	324.11	90.96	309.57	130.10
17	Sikkim	198.21	114.06	79.96	82.79	69.15	52.65
18	Tripura	300.00	220.18	0.00	178.35	332.64	80.33
	Sub Total	2760.51	1618.12	2976.80	1404.99	4016.74	1424.56
C.	Non-High Focus States						
19	Andhra Pradesh	539.00	1300.45	773.39	1140.19	1950.14	993.40
20	Goa	145.00	75.54	142.74	58.91	73.82	33.41
21	Gujarat	569.00	2247.89	2238.79	2277.84	2302.19	2209.34
22	Haryana	234.00	241.79	365.12	219.48	208.99	85.28
23	Karnataka	1073.89	981.17	1959.73	1398.44	3232.88	2013.95
24	Kerala	400.50	434.61	554.07	419.21	593.81	670.52
25	Maharashtra	1840.41	1168.12	2160.83	1417.35	2978.67	1197.01
26	Punjab	323.78	749.89	700.66	490.79	807.29	202.55
27	Tamil Nadu	991.32	1606.12	2013.90	2411.41	2350.04	2691.77
28	Telangana	1520.00	415.04	770.01	575.25	1447.45	1227.73
29	West Bengal	950.00	697.20	1724.69	1056.59	2123.65	1627.78
	Sub Total	8586.90	9917.82	13403.93	11465.47	18068.93	12952.74
D.	Small States/UTs						
30	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	10.00	11.26	61.63	15.82	71.68	4.47
31	Chandigarh	68.13	53.29	74.09	52.12	65.10	19.27
32	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	18.96	24.46	56.23	33.12	34.58	12.73
33	Daman & Diu	0.00	11.15	23.76	2.34	16.97	0.45
34	Delhi	199.50	143.19	261.10	90.91	569.54	105.16
35	Lakshdweep	10.26	0.00	16.07	0.00	22.43	7.71
36	Puducherry	75.00	26.83	97.18	90.76	80.75	50.20
	Sub Total	381.85	270.17	590.06	285.08	861.05	199.99
	Grand Total	19475.78	19168.39	28079.89	21610.07	38818.28	24442.71

Note:

1. SPIP stands for State Program Implementation Plan.
2. Expenditure includes expenditure against Central Release, State share & unspent balances at the beginning of the year.
3. The above figures are as per FMRs reported by States / UTs.