

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

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2604
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.08.2023**

‘RISING CASES OF OPHTHALMIC PATIENTS’

**2604 SHRI ARUN KUMAR SAGAR
SHRI RAHUL KASWAN**

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that the number of ophthalmic patients is increasing in the country along with the complaints that once they lose their sight the same not be cured and if so, the details thereof along with the reasons therefor, State/UT-wise;
- (b) whether the Government proposes to formulate any scheme to check ophthalmic diseases and provide financial/medical assistance to people with 100 per cent blindness in the States particularly in Rajasthan and if so ,the details thereof, State/UT-wise;
- (c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard as per the international standards;
- (d) whether the excessive use of Mobile /Computer/electronic items affects eyesight and ophthalmic diseases in people are increasing due to this and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether the Government has got any survey conducted in the country to ascertain the number of people suffering from low vision/ophthalmic diseases; and if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(PROF .S. P. SINGH BAGHEL)**

(a) to (e) National Survey on Blindness and Visual Impairment was conducted by Government of India from 2015 to 2019. The survey was conducted in randomly selected 31 districts in country among the population 50 years and above. As per the survey, the most common cause of blindness and visual impairment is Cataract as detailed in Annexure.

No complaints have been received by National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCBVI) Division that once patients lose their sight, the same are not cured. NPCBVI has been formulated to check the ophthalmic diseases and provide medical assistance to the people in the country including the people of Rajasthan. NPCBVI is implemented in all

States/UTs uniformly. Report of survey containing the state-wise details thereof including Rajasthan is available on the website <https://npcbvi.mohfw.gov.in> of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (National Blindness & Visual Impairment Survey India 2015-19-A Summary Report.)

The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities provides various benefits to the persons with disabilities including blind persons under Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP) and Scholarship schemes. Further, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 has a provision of reservation for various categories of persons with disabilities including blind persons in government employment and higher educational institutions.

Studies have shown a significant association between the excessive use of mobile phones, computers and other electronic gadgets, with the occurrence of eye diseases, specifically refractive errors.

The North India Myopia Study (NIM Study) conducted by AIIMS, New Delhi and published in Public Library of Science (PLoS) in 2017 showed that Myopia is an important health issue in India and is associated with long hours of reading and screen time with use of computers and video games.

A Southern India study during COVID pandemic Refractive errors increased due to smart classes in schools or use of laptops, television viewing computers or mobiles. (Journal of Clinical and Diagnostic Research, 2022 Oct, Vol-16 (10) NCO5-NCO8).

CAUSE OF BLINDNESS & VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN POPULATION AGED ≥ 50 YEARS

Principal Cause	Blindness VA<S/60 (%)	MSVI VA<6/ 18- 3/60(%)	Overall VI VA<6/ 18 (%)
Refractive error	0.1	15.8	13.4
Aphakia uncorrected	1.7	0.9	1.0
Cataract untreated	66.2	72.0	71.2
Cataract surgical complications	7.2	5.7	5.9
Corneal opacity (trachomatous)	0.8	0.1	0.2
Corneal opacity (non-trachomatous)	7.4	0.8	1.8
Phthisis	2.8	0.0	0.4
Glaucoma	5.5	0.8	1.4
Diabetic retinopathy	1.2	0.7	0.8
ARMD	0.7	0.8	0.6
Other posterior segment disease	5.9	2.2	2.8
All other globe/CNS abnormalities	0.5	0.2	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0