

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2198  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 29.07.2022**

**BLINDNESS IN CHILDREN DUE TO CATARACT**

**2198 SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA VISWANATH**

Will the **MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken measures to prevent irreversible blindness in the children due to Cataract;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has taken steps to promote awareness among the parents about the effects and symptoms of cataract in the newborn babies and
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

**ANSWER  
THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
(DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR)**

(a) to (b): Government of India is implementing Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) under National Health Mission (NHM) for screening of all children from 0 – 18 years of age in respect of Defects, Development delays, Deficiencies and Diseases wherein 32 selected health conditions are monitored. Congenital cataract is one of the selected health conditions. District Early Intervention Centre (DEIC) manages cases pertaining to Children from 0-6 years under Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK). Under the Karyakram Congenital Cataract and Vision Impairment are managed for early diagnosis and referral to prevent irreversible blindness in the children. The comprehensive approach for identification and management under RBSK includes: i) New Born screening for Congenital cataract; ii) Availability of diagnostic and evaluation facilities with appropriate screening

equipment as per the guidelines; iii) Free Paediatric cataract surgery for identified newborns is supported under National Health Mission.

(c) to (e) Under National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCBVI), the ASHA worker, ANM are involved in educating and informing the parents of the school going children about effects and symptoms of cataract in the newborn babies. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has issued “Comprehensive Newborn Screening Guidelines for screening of Birth Defects” at all delivery points for comprehensive clinical examination of all newborns, within the first 48 hours of life with special focus on visible birth defects. Early Newborn Eye examination is an integral part of RBSK. “Guidelines for Universal Eye Screening in Newborns including Retinopathy of Prematurity” has also been issued by MoHFW in this regard.

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