

(b) the budgetary provisions and actual amount spent on each scheme during each of the last three years, state-wise; and

(c) the method of monitoring and the implementation of these schemes?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Incidence of contract

1468. SHRI PARAS RAM BHARDWAJ : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the incidence of cataract is increasing in the country despite the claims of reduction during the last two years;

(b) whether the Government propose to start efforts on warfooting to contain the disease by involving voluntary organisations; and

(c) if so, the details of the action plan and the role of the voluntary organisations in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY) : (a) No recent survey has been undertaken.

(b) The Government has already started in 1994, World Bank Assisted Cataract Blindness Control Project in some major States, namely U.P., M.P., Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh, which accounts for 2/3rd total prevalence of cataract in India. These States would perform over 11 million sight restoration surgeries during the 7 year project. In addition pilot projects in Karnataka and J&K have also been launched. Pattern of assistance has been revised in all States. Distt. Blindness Control Societies alongwith other voluntary organisations have been involved in this project.

(c) Action Plan to contain incidence of cataract include:

- (i) Strengthening service delivery.
- (ii) Developing human resources for eye care.
- (iii) Promoting outreach activities and public awareness, and
- (iv) Developing institutional capacity.

Role envisaged for voluntary organisations include :

- (a) Service delivery through camps;
- (b) Screening and outreach activities;
- (c) Expansion of service delivery by selected non-profit institutions in underserved areas.

Forest Cover

1469. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :

SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE :

Will the Minister of environment and forests be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the forest cover in the country at the beginning of 1980, State-wise;

(b) the position at the end of 1995;

(c) the reasons for reduction in the coverage, if any; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) and (b) On the basis of the State of Forest Reports 1987 and 1993 published by the Forest Survey of India for the assessment period 1981-83 and 1989-91 respectively, the State-wise actual Forest cover is given in the enclosed statement.

(c) The main reason for the reduction in the coverage can be attributed to wide gap in demand and supply of fuelwood, fodder and small timber, damage due to sniffting cultivation, forest fires and grazing and also due to diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes.

(d) The various steps taken by the Government to increase the forest cover are :

- (i) Guidelines have been issued to all the State/ Union Territories Government to involve the village community in the protection and regeneration of forest through a mechanism of usufruct sharing and benefit distribution.
- (ii) Steps have been undertaken to substantially increase the coverage through afforestation/ tree planting activities during the eighth five year plan.
- (iii) All the State/U.T. Governments have been requested to implement the recommendations of the Policy Advisory Groups on wood substitution and fuelwood conservation.
- (iv) Financial assistance is being provided to the States/U.Ts. for rehabilitation of degraded forest through involvement of tribals and rural poor and also for control of forest fires.
- (v) Forest (conservation) Act, 1980 has been enacted to prevent the diversion of forest lands for non-forestry purposes without prior approval of the Central Government.