

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6393
ANSWERED ON:08.05.2002
SHORTAGE OF OPTOMETRISTS
UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU

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

- (a) whether World Health Organisation has recommended the requirement of minimum 40000 Optometrists for the country of the size of India;
- (b) if so, the exact number of Optometrists in the country;
- (c) the extent to which the shortage of optometrists in the country has affected treatment of high level of blindness and low levels of eye-care;
- (d) whether the Government propose to take any steps to meet the shortage of optometrists in the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

- (a) WHO has recommended one vision center for 50,000 population under the `Vision 2020: The Right to Sight` initiative. As per above norm, 20,000 personnel capable of testing vision would be required in India.
- (b) Estimated number of middle level ophthalmic personnel including optometrists is between 10,000 to 15,000.
- (c) There is shortage of eye surgeons and middle level ophthalmic personnel in rural areas. However, by organizing eye camps, identification and treatment of eye diseases is being carried out satisfactorily in the country.
- (d) & (e) Government of India has prepared a Plan of Action for implementation of `Vision 2020: The Right to Sight` initiative including training of adequate number of eye care personnel in the country.