

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2343

ANSWERED ON:15.12.2004

BLINDNESS

Athawale Shri Ramdas;Barad Shri Jashubhai Dhanabhai;Shukla Smt. Karuna

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

- (a) whether the number of blind persons in the country is increasing rapidly ;
- (b) if so, the number of blind persons in the country at present and the reasons of the increasing blindness in the country; and
- (c) the details of the measures being taken by the Union Government at the district level so as to check the blindness in the country?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE ( SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) No, Sir. According to the National Surveys on Blindness, the prevalence of blindness was estimated to be 1.49% in 1986-89, which has reduced to 1.1% in 2001-02.

(b) There are estimated 12 million blind persons in the country.

(c) Under National Programme for Control of Blindness, following measures are being taken to reduce the prevalence of blindness:

1. Promoting free Intra Ocular Lens implantation for treatment of cataract;
2. Detection and correction of refractive errors in school children and providing free glasses to the poor;
3. Promoting eye donation and eye banking for treatment of corneal blindness;
4. Public awareness for prevention and treatment of eye diseases
5. Enhancing capacity for eye care services in Government and Voluntary sectors by providing assistance for infrastructure development, equipment and training.