

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:973
ANSWERED ON:05.08.2011
CATARACT FREE INDIA
Siddeswara Shri Gowdar Mallikarjunappa

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

- (a) the number of people suffering from various eye related diseases including cataract in the country;
- (b) the steps taken for providing treatment of such diseases alongwith the funds allocated and spent for the purpose during the Eleventh Five Year Plan;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to make Cataract Free India with the help of the World Health Organisation (WHO); and
- (d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the modalities worked out therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY)

(a): As per the Survey-2001-04 conducted under the National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, there are around 12 million blind persons due to various eye related diseases including cataract (Visual Acuity < 6/60) in the country.

(b): The steps taken for providing treatment of eye diseases under NPCB are as under:

Improving quality of eye care services;

Preventive Eye care;

Revamping Medical Education;

Ensuring optimal utilization of Human Resources;

Coverage of underserved areas for eye care services through public- private partnership;

Development of eye care infrastructure;

To make eye care comprehensive, besides cataract surgery, assistance for other eye diseases like, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma management, laser techniques, corneal transplantation, vitreo-retinal surgery, treatment of childhood blindness etc.;

Regular monitoring and evaluation;

Better quality of services.

An amount of Rs.1250.00 crore has been allocated for NPCB during the Eleventh Five year Plan, out of which Rs.982.48 crore (as on 01.08.2011) has been released for implementation of various eye care activities under NPCB.

(c) & (d): NPCB is committed to reduce the burden of avoidable blindness including blindness due to cataract to 0.3% by the year 2020 in India by adopting strategies advocated for Vision 2020: The Right to Sight. The Programme is sustained entirely through domestic budget for implementation of eye care activities in the country. World Health Organisation (WHO) has only been providing technical support for some of the eye care activities.