

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2397
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2009
PREVALENCE OF DEAFNESS
Kodikunnil Shri Suresh

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

- (a) the number of children born deaf every year and the percentage of population suffering from progressive and acute hearing loss in the country. State-wise and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether Government has any plan to address the menace of deafness;and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABIAZAD)

(a) Based on an estimated incidence of 0.2% and estimation of birth rate of 1.5%, 30,270 babies are born deaf annually in India (WHO,SEARO).

NSSO 58th round (2002) reveals that the prevalence rates of hearing impaired among the children below 4 years was 55 both in rural and urban areas. The data depicts that among the hearing impaired persons 31.6% cases had profound, while 38.8% cases had severe and the rest 28.8% cases had moderate hearing impairment. The state-wise details are at Annexure- I and the reasons therefor are at Annexure II.

(b) & (c) Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India has launched pilot phase of National Programme for Prevention and Control of Deafness in the year 2007 in 25 districts of 10 States and 1 Union Territory. It has been expanded to 35 additional districts in 11 States and 1 Union Territory during the year 2008-09. In the year 2009-10, 41 additional districts will be included in the programme.

The programme is aimed to achieve the following objectives:-

- (i) Prevent avoidable hearing loss on account of disease or injury.
- (ii) Early identification, diagnosis and treatment of ear problems responsible for hearing loss and deafness.
- (iii) Medically rehabilitate persons of all age groups, suffering with deafness.
- (iv) Strengthen existing inter-sectoral linkages for continuity of the rehabilitation programme, for persons with deafness.
- (v) Develop institutional capacity for ear care services by providing support for equipment and material and training personnel.