

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2062
ANSWERED ON:06.12.2006
EYE CELL TRANSPLANT RESEARCH
Shivanna Shri M

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

- (a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn towards successful eye cell transplantation on mice as reported in The Hindu dated November 10, 2006;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the efforts being made by the scientists and doctors of the country in this regard?

Answer

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

(a) to (c): The experiment reported is the use of a class of cells called precursors to photoreceptor cells, obtained from 3-4 days old mice into adult mice that have genetic defect causing blindness. Earlier studies had tried using such cells from adult mice, which did not work. The use of stem cells has not proved 100% successful for this form of blindness. It is likely that with more experiments and experience, they might be useful. The present experiment on mice do give the hope that we can improve our existing methods and adapt them to humans in the near future, on a trial basis. Right now, it is premature.