(continued)

Cataract surgery involves the removal of the natural lens of the eye and implantation of an artificial intraocular lens.

Presbyopia

Presbyopia occurs with age due to many factors: reduced elasticity of the lens fiber and its capsule and reduced contractibility of the ciliary muscle.

Before the invention of presbyopic glasses, many skilled workers that used near vision have to give up their occupation early.

Vitamin A deficiency

Vitamin A deficiency and xerophthalmia are among the most widespread and serious nutritional disorders that affect humankind. For many years the problem has remained unchecked and continued to exact a devastating toll in blindness and death among young children. Vitamin A deficiency is widespread, clinically affecting 100 million children worldwide.

Trachoma

Trachoma is an infectious eye disease, and the leading cause of the world’s infectious blindness. Cuban stamp depicts the cross-section of an eye and microscopic view of conjunctival cells infected with trachoma microbes.

Onchocerciasis

Onchocerciasis (river blindness) is a chronic filarial disease caused by the nematode Onchocerca volvulus. It is a major cause of infectious blindness.

There are over 18 million infected persons worldwide out of whom 2 million have visual impairment and about 400,000 have total blindness.

Occupational Blindness

Millions around the world have already lost some degree of sight due to an eye injury. 90% of
all workplace eye injuries are preventable with the use of proper safety eyewear.

**Phototoxicity**

Solar retinopathy is damage to the eye’s retina, particularly the macula, from prolonged exposure to solar radiation. It usually occurs due to staring at the sun or viewing a solar eclipse. Unprotected exposure to welding arc results in inflammation to the cornea and conjunctiva due to exposure to ultraviolet light.

**Rehabilitation of the blind**

With adequate rehabilitation each blind or visually impaired person will be able to achieve his or her maximum potential in the home and community, in educational settings, and in employment.

There are many recreation and leisure activities that can be adapted for people who are blind or have low vision. Recreational activities will help the blind to learn to live independently and productively, as well as keep them entertained and healthy.

**The Braille System**

**Louis Braille** (1809–1852) Frenchman, who was blind from the age of three, was the inventor of Braille System, a worldwide system used by blind and visually impaired people for reading and writing.

Braille is read by passing the fingers over characters made up of an arrangement of one to six embossed points. It has been adapted to almost every known language.

Many countries issued stamps to commemorate the bicentenary year of the birth of Louis Braille. The Indian stamp has his name embossed in Braille system.

**Guide dogs**

Guide dogs are assistance dogs trained to lead blind and visually impaired people around obstacles.
The two most common breeds are German Shepherd and Labrador Retriever. The dogs always walk on the left side of their masters.

Guide dogs

Guide dogs are protected by law, and therefore may accompany their handlers to most places that are open to the public. They are well represented on stamps issued by many countries.

White Cane

A white cane is used by many people who are blind or visually impaired both as a mobility tool and as a courtesy to others. Blind people have used a cane as a tool for travel for centuries but it was not until after World War I that the white cane was introduced.

Eye donation

Corneal transplant is one of the most common transplant procedures. Although approximately 100,000 procedures are performed worldwide each year, some estimates report that 10,000,000 people are affected by various disorders that would benefit from corneal transplantation.

Blind Schools & Hospitals

Many stamps have been issued to commemorate blind schools & hospitals.

Foresight Prevents Blindness

The theme of World Health Day on 7 April 1976 was “Foresight Prevents Blindness.” It laid emphasis on the importance of preventive measures against blindness. The problem of blindness has been posing a serious public health, social and economic problem mostly in developing countries.