



Press Release

Shell India and VisionSpring to make driving safer

Expand vision correction program to serve 3.65 lakh commercial drivers and transportation workers by 2020

New Delhi, July 10, 2019 – Shell India and VisionSpring committed today to help 3.65 lakh commercial drivers and allied transportation workers to see clearly and drive safer by the end of the very symbolic year 2020. 20/20 being the measure of perfect vision, the **#DriveSafeIndia** initiative will accelerate access to vision correction and advance national goals to improve road safety. Drivers, mechanics and other allied transport workers across four states - **Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka** - will receive free vision screening, low-cost eyeglasses, and referrals for other eye conditions.

The decision to expand #DriveSafeIndia to serve significantly more people follows a program assessment conducted by VisionSpring which evidenced a deep need for eyeglasses among heavy and light commercial vehicle drivers who are driving with uncorrected blurry vision.

VisionSpring found that 25% of drivers participating in the pilot phase of the program failed to meet the standard required for a driver's license. Meaning, without eyeglasses, these drivers were unable to see road signs at 20-30 meters and meet the Indian Motor Vehicles Act eligibility requirement of 6/18 vision or better for both eyes.

Further, during follow-up interviews with 385 drivers, 68% reported that they never had a vision test which is required for a driving license or license renewal. After getting glasses for the first time in their lives, 76% of the drivers articulated that driving safely and optimal job performance would be the most important results of their new clear vision.

Speaking about the initiative, **Mr. Nitin Prasad, Country Chairman of Shell Companies in India**, said, "Indian roads witness one death every four minutes, with almost 80% attributed to driver error. The problem of uncorrected vision, which endangers the lives of drivers, passengers, and all road users, needs urgent intervention. We, at Shell India, are committed to creating an ecosystem that encourages safe behavior on India's roads. The #DriveSafeIndia program is a part of our effort to create safer roads across the country, and these eye camps are an important step in the right direction. We look forward to other companies, individuals, and organizations joining us on this journey to make India's roads safer."

"The current situation is very dangerous. But this problem is solvable," shared **Ella Gudwin, President of VisionSpring**, the pioneering social enterprise that is making eyeglasses accessible across 43 countries. "Eyeglasses were invented 700 years ago, and today they offer a powerful, cost-effective solution for one of our most pressing health and safety problems – deadly traffic accidents. Eyeglasses are a road safety intervention, literally sitting right in front of our eyes. Imagine how many lives could be saved with a simple pair of glasses. But not enough people are wearing them. Together with Shell, we are changing that. We invite allies everywhere to bring vision correction to transit hubs and India's drivers."

Experts validate what most people know instinctively to be true: Eyesight is the dominant sense that drivers rely upon to navigate roads, enabling them to see and avoid hazards. Indeed, 60% of traffic accidents are attributable to impaired vision.

Drivers surveyed by VisionSpring identified blurred vision (43%) and night glare (29%) as their top two vision problems. More than half of those surveyed (57%) were driving heavy commercial vehicles and the rest light commercial vehicles.



Results from the #DriveSafeIndia assessment make a strong case for bridging the gap between driver's license policies and the reality of drivers wearing glasses. Further, it underscores the need for proactive interventions that effectively increase eyeglasses utilization among drivers in need of vision correction.

Notes to Editor: As per industry estimates, India has over 90 lakh truckers and allied transport workers. In 2018, 4.61 lakh traffic accidents and 1.49 lakh fatalities were reported as per Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, India (MORTH). Trucks, buses and light commercial vehicles accounted for almost 28% of all road accidents.

About Shell:

Shell is one of the most diversified international energy company in India with over 8500 employees and presence across upstream, integrated gas, downstream, renewable energy, and deep capabilities in R&D, digitalization and business operations. With a retail presence across six states – Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Assam Shell is expanding its network of fuel stations across the country. It has the entire Lubricants end-to-end value chain in India, from conceptualization and development, to production and distribution. This includes a world class lubricant oil blending plant with a capacity of more than 115 million litres, a distributor network of more than 185 and over 60,000 retailers across the country. The company also fully owns and operates an LNG re-gasification terminal at Hazira. Through its subsidiary, BG Exploration and Production India Limited, Shell holds a 30% interest in, and is joint operator of the Panna - Mukta oil and gas fields. With a focus on digitization and future ready sustainable solutions, the company is nurturing a vibrant ecosystem in India to accelerate energy innovations with Shell E4 for startups, Shell Eco-marathon and investments in new energy companies like Husk Power and Cleantech Solar. Shell also remains committed to making positive contributions to the communities in which it operates through programmes like Road Safety, NXplorers and Access to Energy across India. Follow @shell_india @makethefuture @shell_ecomar to know how it is redefining the energy space.

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About VisionSpring

VisionSpring is the pioneering, international social enterprise accelerating the uptake of affordable eyewear among people who earn less than \$4 per day in emerging and frontier markets. Founded in 2001, VisionSpring uncovers latent demand for vision correction; conducts community, workplace and school vision screenings; trains others to do the same; and supplies radically affordable, durable eyeglasses. VisionSpring has distributed 5.5 million pairs of eyeglasses, providing vision correction in 43 countries, currently working with over 400 NGO, corporate, government, and health partners. Through the proliferation of eyeglasses, VisionSpring has generated \$1.1 billion in economic impact for very low-income households. VisionSpring has been recognized for its innovative work with the Skoll Award; social entrepreneur fellowships from Draper Richards Kaplan, the Aspen Institute, and the Schwab Foundation; and honors from World Bank, Duke University, Fast Company, and Tribeca Film Festival, among others. Learn more: www.visionspring.org and follow @VisionSpring

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