

many, many years. The merger between the *erstwhile* Air India and Indian Airlines has still not been successfully completed, and the employees of Indian Airlines, especially, are very unhappy. The Government needs to take urgent measures, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, to turn the Company around. Providing additional equity and loan will be only a temporary relief, but no solution. We have to find a solution to make the Company competitive. Funds will be required, of course, for aircraft acquisition. But taxpayers' monies should not be given to meet losses; there will be end to that. The Company is, probably, overstaffed, and, due to political and administrative pressures, has often succumbed to even unreasonable demands from Unions as it is afraid of facing a strike. And the Unions have reasons to complain because of interference. Costs must be reduced, if necessary, even by reducing the number of employees and rationalising their emoluments. Practice of appointing non-industry professionals as CEOs may have also contributed, Mr. Deputy Chairman, to the Company's present plight. Political and administrative interference, as I said earlier, lack of autonomy and the resulting weak work ethic is preventing the Company from successfully competing in a fiercely competitive market place where even the private companies are making losses. Urgent, corrective steps need to be taken. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

**Demand to take effective measures to tackle the malnutrition  
among children in the country**

SHRI A. ELAVARASAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, I would like to bring before this House the alarming levels of hunger in children in some States, including Tamil Nadu. The State of Tamil Nadu, once an exemplar for other States in the country in successful implementation of nutritional programmes, has now become one of the ten States in the country with alarming levels of hunger, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute's India State Hunger Index of 2008. The ratings are based on the prevalence of calorie energy deficiency, child mortality and the number of children below the age of five who are underweight. The National Family Health Survey data of 2008 show a similar trend. According to this survey, almost one-third, that is, 31 per cent, of children under the age of five in Tamil Nadu are stunted or too short for their age, which indicates that they have been undernourished. Further, seven out of every ten children below the age of five have iron-deficiency anaemia, according to the report of the National Family Health Survey. Anaemia has actually increased from 69 to 73 per cent in the age group of infancy to three from the last survey of 1998. Only 40 per cent of the households have access to adequately iodized salt and vitamin-A deficiency persists despite prevention programmes. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to view this situation seriously and implement nutritional programmes more effectively to wipe out the alarming level of malnutrition in all the States, including Tamil Nadu.

**Demand to resolve the problem of the shop-owners affected by the  
elevated express way project from Chennai Port to Maduravayal**

SHRI N. BALAGANGA (Tamil Nadu): Sir, an elevated express way project from Chennai Port to Maduravayal for a distance of 17.5 kilometres has been formulated and approved by the National