

### **Malnourishment among children**

766. SHRI T. M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that inspite of various efforts taken by Government, a considerable percentage of children in the country remains malnourished;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether it is also a fact that the malnourishment has been noticed in highly affluent section also; and
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) to (d) As per the last National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), in 2005-06, 42.5% children under 5 years are underweight.

The problem of malnutrition is multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature, the determinants of which include household food insecurity, illiteracy and lack of awareness especially in women, access to health services, availability of safe drinking water, sanitation and proper environmental conditions and adequate purchasing power etc. Besides, early age at marriage of girls, teenage pregnancies resulting in low birth weight of the newborns, poor breast-feeding practices, poor complementary feeding practices, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children in repeated infections, also aggravate the malnutrition amongst children.

Under nutrition is also present in the affluent sections as 19.7% children under 5 years are underweight in the highest wealth Index. Studies indicate considerable prevalence of overweight and obesity in the affluent school children possibly because of decrease in physical activity, sedentary life styles and change in dietary habits.

### **Malnourished children**

767. SHRI T. M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the country ranks first among the Common wealth countries as far as malnourished children are concerned;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that the malnourished children are more in the country as compared to other developing nations; and
- (c) if so, the steps being taken by Government to improve the health of children in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) to (c) As per the last National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), in 2005-06, 42.5% children under 5 years are underweight, 48.0% are stunted and 69.5% (children 6-59 months) are anemic.