

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1243  
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2003  
UNDERNOURISHMENT  
GUNIPATI RAMAIAH;SRINIVASULU KALAVA

**Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether it is a fact that according to FAO data, 51% of world's undernourished are from the region of South Asia;
- (b) is so, the share of India in it;
- (c) the percentage of undernourished and the stunted growth of children;
- (d) the reasons for the widespread undernourishment in India; and
- (e) the steps being taken to tide over the problem?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI JASKAUR MEENA)

- (a) No, Sir. As per FAO publication titled "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2003", 36.7% of the undernourished people in the developing world were in South Asia.
- (b) 26.8% of the total undernourished people in the world were in India.
- (c) The percentage of undernourished and stunted growth children under three years in India as per NFHS 2 (1998-99) is 47% and 45.5%, respectively.
- (d) Malnutrition is an outcome of an interrelated set of factors ranging from food insecurity at the household level due to poverty and low purchasing power, ignorance of child feeding practices, poor access to health care, safe drinking water, sanitation and other social services, to high rate of population growth. Natural calamities such as drought further aggravate the problem.
- (e) The Government is seized of the problem of malnutrition and has been implementing a number of nutrition related direct and indirect interventions through its different sectors for addressing the multifaceted problem of malnutrition. To quote a few, the national Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme and Nutrition Education Programmes of Department of Women and Child Development, Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Programme including National Anaemia Control Programme and National Prophylaxis Programme against Vitamin A Deficiency of Department of Family Welfare, National IDD Control Programme of Department of Health, programmes for ensuring food security for the people by the Department of Food and Public Distribution, Poverty Alleviation and Food for Work programmes of Ministry of Rural Development, Mid Day Meal scheme of Department of Education, are being implemented to address the problem of undernourishment in the country.