

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per the "Indian Nutrition Profile" based on studies conducted in 187 districts from 18 States/ Union Territories, 49.2 per cent of children under five years were found to be underweight during 1995-96;

(d) The reasons for prevalence of malnutrition include poor feeding practices, inequitable food intake, seasonal variations in food supply, frequent episodes of illness (especially diarrhoea), low level of female literacy and socio-economic deprivation.

(e) The Government is seized of the problem of malnutrition and a number of direct and indirect interventions through different sectors are being undertaken to address the problem of malnutrition. The National Nutrition Policy was adopted in 1993 to provide inter-sectoral and sustainable action in agriculture, health and education for reducing malnutrition. Integrated Child Development Services, Balwadi Nutrition Programme and Mid-day meal programmes are being implemented. Micro-nutrient deficiencies of iron, iodine and Vitamin A are being prevented through iodization of salt and supply of ferrous sulphate and folic acid tablets and vitamin A solution. Other initiatives of the Government which contribute to improving nutritional status include Poverty Alleviation Programme, Public Distribution System for essential foodgrains Urban Basic Services and Awareness Generation on nutrition and health.

#### **Illegal use of Domestic LPG Cylinders**

1009. SHRI AMAN KUMAR NAGRA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the LPG cylinders for domestic use are still being commercially used in restaurants as a result of which the I.O.C. has been incurring losses to the tune of lakhs of rupees each year;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any proposal is under consideration of the Government to check the said misuse or to conduct and independent inquiry into the matter from time to time;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENT AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR) : (a) IOC have detected 7 cases diversion of domestic product during 1997-98 and 11 cases during April-December, 1998-99.

(b) The price differential between domestic and non domestic product has been found to be the main reason for such diversion.

(c) to (e) Oil Industry has an established system of checking diversion of domestic cylinders to commercial purpose through the field officers by conducting inspection and raids at distributors as well as at commercial premises. Suitable action is taken against the distributors who are found to be indulging in various malpractices as per the revised LPG Marketing Discipline Guidelines.

#### **Measures to Check Defection**

1010. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :  
DR. ASHOK PATEL :

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce any legislation to check the rising trend of defection from the political parties in order to avoid elections at the short intervals;

(b) if so, the details of the measures proposed in this regard; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) to (c) Government would consider about bringing a legislation for giving effect to such measures for strengthening Anti-defection Laws on which consensus emerges amongst political parties. It is not possible to indicate any time-frame for taking a decision in this respect.

#### **Creation of New Post of an Additional Postman**

1011. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the rules for creating a new post of an additional postman in any sub-post office;