A malnourished nation is deprived on many fronts besides gold medals in sports

Bamji1 has elegantly brought out the harsh reality that a malnourished nation cannot be a sporting nation. I wish to add that besides sports, where the end results are highly visible and can be quantitative, malnutrition also deprives a large section of the Indian population from reaching its genetic potential for cognitive, emotional and behavioural traits, limiting the growth of the nation’s mental capital. Malnourished individuals, both in the rural and urban areas, are predominantly from the low-income families. Malnutrition perpetuates the vicious cycle2 of poverty – poor nutrition of mothers – low birth weight of new born babies – impaired health and development of children – their low capacity for education and learning of skills required for higher income. Thus, the poverty problem affecting both humans and domestic animals, and needs to be controlled. Thus the plantation of these trees and shrubs would not be a financial burden, but would surely provide a fluoride-free animal population without any adverse effects on animal health.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS. I thank Dr S. L. Choubisa, Head, Parasitology and Toxicology Research Laboratory, Department of Zoology, Government Meera Girls College, Udaipur for support.

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