

and livestock owners need to be educated about the plants that are easily available in the surroundings and which contain large amounts of calcium and vitamin C. They should be made aware of the fact that these plant parts and their products when given as supplements to domestic animals would help mitigate fluoride toxicity. This supplement food is economically cheaper and easily available compared to the commercial supplements sold in the market. Also, these plants can be cultivated easily without any large investment on any type of land as their water demand is less. These plants fruit and flower throughout the year and thus would be always available to the animals.

If the State Government can spend billions of rupees on Jatropa (ratanjot) plantation in the state for the production of biological fuel, fluorosis is a much big-

ger 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.

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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

perpetuates generation after generation. Improved nutrition of the family provides an opportunity to come out of the vicious cycle and enter the virtuous cycle² of improved maternal health and nutrition leading to normal birth weight for the children, enhancement of their physical and cognitive abilities required for education and learning skills necessary for higher income jobs. A Government of UK sponsored international study involving more than 450 experts and stakeholders from 16 countries had concluded that, 'To prosper and flourish in a rapidly changing world, we must make the most of all our resources – both mental and material'³. Further, 'Countries must learn how to capitalize on their citizens' cognitive resources if they are to prosper, both economically and

socially'. Early nutritional interventions and nutritional security as suggested by Bamji¹ could be the right solution.

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