



Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India

(Registered Under Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860, Delhi R.No. S-23144)

Central Coordination Committee

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Dr. K.P. Kushwaha
Gorakhpur, UP

Central Coordinator

Dr. Arun Gupta
Delhi

Treasurer

Dr. Pawan Garg
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- Dr. Ajay Gaur
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- Dr. K. Kesavulu
Hindupur, A.P.
- Dr. Sunita Katyayan
Ranchi, Jharkhand

BPNI works in

- Advocacy
- Education & Training
- Infant Feeding in Difficult Circumstances (HIV, emergencies)
- IMS Act
- World Breastfeeding Week & Social Mobilization
- Research

BPNI is

- ♦ Regional Coordinating Office - IBFAN Asia
- ♦ WABA's Regional Focal Point - South Asia
- ♦ Member: Steering Group Right to Food Campaign
- ♦ Member: National Coordination Committee of Jan Swasthya Abhiyan
- ♦ Gazeetted NGO under section 21(1) C of the "Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992, as Amended in 2003" (The IMS Act)

National Coordinator

Dr. J.P. Dadhich

BPNI/2013/177

April 16, 2013

To,

Dr. Manmohan Singh
Hon'ble Prime Minister
Chairman, Prime Minister's National Council on India's Nutrition Challenges,
Government of India,
South block, Raisina Hill,
New Delhi-110011

Sub: Matters related to Nutrition in India, and the Prime Ministers' Council on India's Nutrition Challenge's

Respected Dr. Manmohan Singh,

I deeply appreciate that the 'Council' met in 2010 and took some historic decisions for ICDS to be restructured and nutrition to be placed in agenda of other sectors. The 'Council' as per its TOR is the body to review policy and issue directions. I wish to draw your kind attention to few recent critical issues around nutrition that need your attention, and that of the 'Council'.

Concerns on decision-making on nutrition Issues

According a recent evidence in global journal Lancet, Food corporations are invariably and primarily held responsible for the global obesity and non-communicable diseases due to promotion and marketing of processed foods. At the same time the same corporations are increasingly getting into decision-making processes of nutrition.

The 12th Five-year Plan on 'Health' and 'Women's Agency' provides progressive directions to initiate work on avoidance of conflicts of interests institutionally. I raised the issue in the 'Council' meeting held on 24th Nov. 2010 "...any public private partnership in nutrition should be free from conflict of interest", and it is on record in the point 8.

Ministry of Health has recently issued a "India's Call to Action: Child Survival and Development- Strategic Approaches for Private Sector Engagement", which opens gates for corporate sector for **promoting products like 'fortified foods' to poor and the un-reached**. I along with several other public health experts have written to the MOHFW 4 March 2013, (copy attached).

I have information under RTI from the MOHW and MWCD that both do not have any guidelines on prevention, avoidance and management of conflict of interests in making a public policy.

I have also come to know that Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), Movement, a UN led group is trying to set up a "resource centre" in India with involvement of government of India. The

All communications should be addressed to the National Coordinator, BPNI

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Join the ONE MILLION CAMPAIGN: Support Women to Breastfeed (www.onemillioncampaign.org)

SUN strategy promotes creating partnerships with businesses and to set up 'platforms' with businesses (and their front groups projected as not-for-profit). SUN assists in top strategic priority of transnational food business marketing to change traditional food patterns and cultures in lower and middle-income countries. This is exactly what should be avoided as it could be detrimental to health and nutrition outcomes of Indian population both on short and long term.

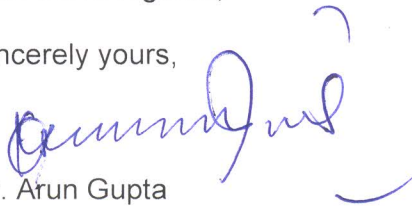
The business network is known to threaten and lobby to weaken existing legislations meant to prohibit "promotion" of baby foods, is not what we expect the Government of India to do.

Since the 'Council' is expected to review policy and issue directions, I wish that the 'Council' meets urgently, and examined such proposals carefully before decisions are made that can negatively impact the nutrition and health of Indian people.

A line of response will be highly appreciated,

With warm regards,

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Arun Gupta
Member, Prime Ministers' Council on India's Nutrition Challenges,
Center Coordinator, Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI)
Regional Coordinator, International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) Asia

Attention: Sh Pulok Chatterji, Principal Secretary PMO

Copy to Smt Sushma Swaraj, LOP, Lok Sabha, New Delhi, India.