

April 21, 2020

Dr V Thiruppugazh,  
JS Policy NDMA  
New Delhi.

**Sub: Commercial Baby foods during COVID19 Pandemic emergency response.**

Dear Dr. Thiruppugazh,

Greetings from Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India!

I hope you recall our discussion in your office in September 2019 about strengthening the National Disaster Management Plan for benefit of infants and young children. We appreciate that recommendation of "baby food" in the earlier version has been deleted in the revised November 2019 version of the plan. We are also thankful to you for ensuring inclusion of 'Supply of provisions to meet the needs of infants/small children' and 'Counseling for lactating mothers' in the responsibilities of central and state governments in the revised plan. (See table 8.10 Responsibility Framework for Preparedness and Response, Food & Essential Supplies, Page 278).

As the country is facing the serious challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, I wish to submit that "commercial baby foods" are being distributed to the families. And MOHFW agrees that it should not be allowed. This is evident from the attached pictures, which are self explanatory.

If you deem appropriate, NDMA could make use of the *Infant Milk Substitutes Feeding Bottles, and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act 1992, and Amendment Act 2003*. (IMS Act 1992 and amendment Act 2003) to prohibit donation and distribution of infant milk substitutes or feeding bottles or infant foods to any other person except to an orphanage by any person except through health care system.

To ensure optimal health and nutrition to the infants and young children, we would like you to issue **specific instructions** to the district administration about "Supply of provisions to meet the needs of infants/ small children • Counselling for lactating mothers", and preventing unnecessary donation, distribution and misuse of baby foods and ensuring provision of counselling to the lactating mothers. However, depending on the assessment of the situation if there is any need to provide infant milk substitutes, it may be used under supervision.

If you need any clarification, we are happy to provide.

We hope it gets your attention.

With regards,

Arun

PS: Our letter is entirely to bring up the right practice and not to complain against anyone.

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**Encl. AA**



Manoj Parida, IAS @manup... · 2d ✓

Baby food as promised 😊



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