

Nestlé Breaks the Law

by

Sponsoring Homeopaths

Breaking the Law and Undermining Breastfeeding

Series 2 (2005)

It is Life vs. Death for many

In countries like India, promotion of artificial feeding puts health of millions of children at risk. Scientific evidence proved beyond doubts that breastfeeding is the best possible nutrition to infants and is the normal food for babies. It is in fact the **'Gold Standard'**. Any effort to undermine the availability of **"Gold Standard"** is highly detrimental to the health of children, family, community, in turn, nation as a whole.

When artificial milk foods are promoted to mothers, who cannot afford it, or do not have access to clean water, fuel, wood or cannot guarantee hygiene and sanitation, babies fall sick and malnourished, suffer frequently from diarrhoea and other diseases, resulting deaths in many cases. Several deaths of children may be prevented, if babies are exclusively breastfed for the first six months, followed by adequate and appropriate complementary feeding, beginning after six months, along with continued breastfeeding for two years or beyond.

Multinational Corporation Nestlé often uses 'doctors' and other 'health workers' to present their infant formula, as more scientifically balanced and better for babies than breastmilk. Often, these health workers have the impression that mothers don't have 'enough milk'. More often, they are not capable of handling this problem, thus end-up promoting formula feeding. Nestlé continues to aggressively promote its products falsely and its strategy to use medical and health professionals has not at all changed, rather they expand it to smaller places, including indigenous systems of medicine.

This is the news shared from a North-East corner of India, where Nestlé sponsored a meeting of **Homeopaths** to promote their products. Nestlé hosted **'free lunch'** and distributed **'free health files / records'** for use of doctors, and thus found breaking the Indian Law *"The Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992, as Amended in 2003 (IMS Act)"*.

Dr. Gautam Ghosh, a Homoeopath and a citizen, concerned with the well-being of children of his area, reported this matter to us through his letter dated 2 August 2005, along with pictures as evidence. These are reproduced in this document for you to see and to act, defending children's health and putting health first. In another letter of 23rd August 2005, he wrote to us *"When the phase I (doctors' own sub) was over, they [Nestlé] took the charge of the dias and started delivering their phase (phase II). Distributing some brochures of the products, their representative started appealing to prescribe more and more infant food. Phase II took about 40 minutes followed by a lunch party. The whole program was sponsored by Nestlé"*.



'Invitation Card'



Nestlé spreading health or disease!

Pictures speak a thousand words!

'Lecturing'



Dr. Partha Sarkar, Secretary HMAI, Jalpaiguri unit is delivering lecture on skin disease. Unit president Dr. Pabitra Sen is seen with grey hair and spectacle who chaired the meeting. This meeting is followed by a Lunch Party given by Nestlé India.



Dr. Sridam Chowdhury delivering lecture. Dr. Partha Sarkar, Secretary, HMAI, Jalpaiguri Unit, Dr. Pabitra Nanda Sen, President, HMAI, Jalpaiguri Unit, Dr. Jadu Gopal Dasgupta, Vice-president, HMAI, Jalpaiguri Unit

'Free Lunch'



The luminaries of doctors from homeo world took part in Lunch hosted by Nestlé India soon after the symposium was over on 9.7.05 at Jalpaiguri, West Bengal

'Free health files / records'



According to the WHA Resolution 58.32 in (1). URGES Member States: (4) to ensure that financial support and other incentives for programmes and health professionals working in infant and young-child health do not create conflicts of interest;

According to the IMS Act 1992 (amended in 2003) in Section 9 (2): No producer, supplier or distributor referred to in sub-section (1), shall offer or give any contribution or pecuniary benefit to a health worker or any association of health workers, including funding of seminar, meeting, conferences, educational course, contest, fellowship, research work or sponsorship.

What you can do?

Individuals

- Keep a vigil in your area about 'Sponsorship', what food companies are doing, especially in health systems.
- Ask companies to behave and stop unethical marketing.
- Report to the concerned authorities, dissenting about the issue

Ministry of Health, Government of India / State Governments

- Take stern action to effectively implement the IMS Act "Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992 (IMS Act) as amended in 2003" (<http://www.bpni.org/cgi1/imsact2003text.asp>)
- Appoint a State Officer to look into such issues.

Ministry of Health, ISM Department

- Issue appropriate guidelines for all systems of medicine to strictly follow IMS Act in letter and spirit.

The Homoeopathic Medical Association of India

- As a part of the Health Care System, implement the IMS Act especially Clause 9, including stipulated rules, throughout the country, issuing guidelines to the State and District Branches.

The brochure "Breaking the Law and Undermining Breastfeeding - Series 2" is a part of the series to expose what baby food companies do to market their products.

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The Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) is a registered, independent, non-profit, national organization that works towards protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding of infants & young children. BPNI believes that breastfeeding is the right of all mothers and children. BPNI works through advocacy, social mobilization, information sharing, education, research, training and monitoring the company compliance with the IMS Act.

BPNI does not accept funds or sponsorship of any kind from the companies producing infant milk substitutes, feeding bottles, related equipments, or infant foods (*cereal foods*).