



# BPNI Bulletin

Number 29 • March, 2007

## BPNI members discuss IYCF with Dr. Kalam

**BPNI NEWS DESK, NEW DELHI:** A team of BPNI comprising Dr Arun Gupta, Dr JC Sobti, Dr Rita Gupta and Dr Deeksha Sharma met President of India, Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, to brief him on infants' nutrition and survival issues on 4th August 2006 during the WBW 2006. In a half an hour discussion the members of BPNI raised the issues of infant survival in India. Dr. Kalam was curious to know the infant status and how infant mortality rates through breastfeeding could be reduced in India.

Earlier in a letter sent to Dr Arun Gupta, President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam appreciated the kind of works initiated by BPNI and expressed his best wishes for the endeavours in improving the health of children in India. "It is a good mission you have taken up", he articulated.

## State mentors trained in Rajasthan

**BPNI NEWS DESK, JAIPUR:** Seven state mentors of Rajasthan were trained in Jaipur from 20<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> June 2006. They were given 6 days training on Infant and Young Child Feeding. Dr Raj Bhandari was the course director of this training programme. These 7 state mentors will impart training to middle level trainers to ultimately reach grass root workers.

**Breastfeeding:  
The 1<sup>st</sup> Hour  
Save  
ONE  
million babies!**

**WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK  
1-7 AUGUST 2007**

## Shri Montek assures to introduce promotion of breastfeeding in 11th plan

**16 national organizations led by BPNI presented a Joint Statement to Planning Commission on IYCF for ensuring infant's right to food and asked the commission to incorporate it in 11<sup>th</sup> plan as part of core strategic intervention**

**BPNI NEWS DESK, NEW DELHI:** Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, had shown keen interests in the data presented by Dr. Arun Gupta, particularly related to IBFAN-Asia Pacific's assessment on breastfeeding practices, policies and programmes in 8 South Asian countries and expressed his deep concern over the high rate of IMR and neonatal deaths in India.

Extremely concerned over India's high rank which stood at 6th among 8 South Asian countries, Shri Ahluwalia wanted Dr Gupta's assertions on the efficacy of early initiation of breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding and how it could reduce the IMR and neonatal deaths in India.

Acknowledging that IYCF, especially breastfeeding, is the most important task in front of the government today, Sh. Ahluwalia requested BPNI to create framework of an institution that could center-stage breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding has also been designated as a key strategy for poverty reduction in the Joint Statement and recognizes optimal infant and young child feeding in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and incorporate 0-6 months for exclusive breastfeeding in all programmes to ensure infants' basic right to food, informed BPNI consultant Radha Holla.

The Joint Statement also asked the Planning Commission to declare "breastfeeding education" as a basic service equal to immunization in both health and nutrition sectors. While recalling major actions later in a press briefing, Dr Arun Gupta, National Coordinator of BPNI, said that five actions (mentioned below) drawn in the Joint Statement should be incorporated in 11th plan.

Sixteen national organizations of health professionals and citizen movements submitted this Joint Statement on Infant and Young Child Feeding to Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia on 29 December 2006 and sought for recognizing "breastfeeding" in the 11th plan as a core intervention for ensuring the survival and optimal development of infants in India.

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### Major actions demanded in the Joint Statement

- Ensure adequate budget for national and state plans;
- Create a commission on infant nutrition for specific tasks and coordination for optimizing infant nutrition;
- Establish accountability and mechanisms on infant nutrition in MOH and MWCD;
- Provide legislation support to all women for adequate healthcare support and assure six months maternity leave to ensure initiation of breastfeeding within one hour of birth, exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months.



*From National Coordinator's Desk***Partnership Work!**

On an afternoon of 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006, I met Vinod Paul, Prof. of Pediatrics, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), the stalwart of newborn health of this proud nation-India. He was instrumental in designing the child health strategy of the *RCH-II*. Over lunch, we were discussing the intricacies related to breastfeeding and what measures and interventions that India should take to scale up the 'breastfeeding trend'?



It was to understand from Vinod - "Why does breastfeeding comes up in the priority list and then abruptly fizzles out?" Each time, breastfeeding is discussed with much vigour and buried down with the same argument: "we cannot go vertically". We were, however, toiling with several possibilities to enhance prioritizing breastfeeding actions that would protect lakhs of infants and malnourished children in India. But, one thing that kept the discussion alive was the issue of breastfeeding that needed a consultation at the highest level with planners, bureaucrats, politicians and officials of the government.

In two hours of discussion with Vinod, I vehemently argued if 'immunization' could have budget provision, why not a budget provision for 'breastfeeding'. Having discussed on the nitty-gritty of both sides, we agreed breastfeeding needs a bigger leap and many partners need to come together to recognize the importance of breastfeeding. Vinod said, "I like the idea of a budget head that will make it work and let us go for it. Let's reach the Prime Minister". An idea struck: develop a *Joint Statement on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)* and present it to the Prime Minister.

We acted fast to develop the *Joint Statement*. I sent e-mails to our several partner organizations requesting them to explore the possibility of working together towards drafting a *Joint Statement* on IYCF. And the response was overwhelming. The first meeting of the partners was hosted by Indian Medical Association (IMA) at its office in New Delhi on 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2006, wherein a draft of the *Joint Statement* was evolved. Later, it was finalized through e-mails.

Three conveners-IMA, NNF and BPNI- wrote a letter to the Prime Minister for an appointment. Despite of the fact that there was no communication from Prime Minister Office (PMO), we did not give up our hopes and approached Mr. Jairam Ramesh, a Union minister of UPA government. He facilitated a meeting with Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission. We were asked to make a presentation on the *Joint Statement*, and a detailed explanatory note was also submitted. In the discussion which lasted almost two hours, the Deputy Chairman assured to take an action on issues pertaining to breastfeeding. He agreed with most of the points indicated in the *Joint Statement* and referred the matter for further discussion with the members and advisors of Planning Commission. In the discussion, Deputy Chairman also agreed with the idea for an apex commission/body which would oversee all breastfeeding matters.

This is the replication of another success story we had in 2004. In 2004, our several partners joined hands in the solidarity of breastfeeding movement to strengthen the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992 (IMS Act), which was saved from being repealed.

Whenever BPNI and its partners worked together on infant and young child issues that achieved triumphs. It was because of one thing common we had no 'conflict of interests'.

**Dr. Arun Gupta, MD, FIAP**  
National Coordinator



## Northern states show interests in breastfeeding promotion

**BPNI NEWS DESK, BHOPAL:** Dr Arun Gupta was invited to Bhopal's regional consultative meet on nutrition to get an idea about standard of IYCF practices. DWCD and other bodies hosting the consultative meet wanted him to discuss 'optimal breastfeeding' and how it could be promoted in the four northern states of India.

Dr. Gupta's presentation on IYCF at the regional consultation on nutrition in Chandigarh in January 2006 resulted in a keen interest on promoting optimal breastfeeding in the four northern states of Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.

After the regional consultation meet on nutrition held at Chandigarh in January 2006 which yielded huge benefits on this front, many states of northern India are now showing keen interest in 'breastfeeding promotion'.

His idea of promoting breastfeeding and its actual benefits, many believe, would provide fresh ammo and create a space to promote optimal breastfeeding among young children in northern India. This was the second regional consultative meet of four northern states of India on nutrition held from June 9-10, 2006 at Bhopal.

## Principal Secretary Vijayaraghwan of Tamil Nadu visits BPNI

**BPNI NEWS DESK, NEW DELHI:** Principal Secretary L. N. Vijayaraghwan from Min. of WCD, Tamil Nadu, came to BPNI office in New Delhi on 5th May, 2006, to discuss ways of promoting breastfeeding in Tamil Nadu. In a brief discussion with Dr. Arun Gupta and other BPNI members, he raised several issues and problems confronted by the state, including women undergoing

caesarean sections in urban areas and the problem of poverty in rural areas.

His visit to BPNI was considered as a positive sign to deal with the breastfeeding issues in Tamil Nadu as it opened new vistas for mutual partnership in delivering the 'breastfeeding promotion' services in the state.

BPNI representatives shared their views with Mr. N Vijayaraghwan on how to deal with the problems of lower rate of breastfeeding in the state and assured to extend all possible cooperation to the state. They also discussed the requirements of arranging training materials to organize programmes in Tamil Nadu.

## National training on IYCF counseling : A Training Course - The 3 in 1 Course in Gwalior

**BPNI NEWS DESK, GWALIOR:** BPNI/ IBFAN in collaboration with UNICEF and Department of Pediatrics, G.R Medical College, Gwalior, organized a national training from 18 Sept - 1 Oct, 2006 on *Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) counseling: A Training Course - The 3 in 1 Course (An Integrated Course on Breastfeeding, Complementary Feeding and Infant Feeding & HIV-Counseling)* for capacity building of faculty members of pediatrics, community medicine experts, gynecologists and nutritionists. The training programme has helped healthcare professionals and experts of the NGOs to improve their understanding on IYCF practices and to recognize

'breastfeeding' as a basic need for survival of infants. This was intended to build few national trainers who would be known as IYCF counseling specialists. Nine doctors who also attended in this workshop became national trainers on IYCF counseling. A total of 27 participants of various backgrounds and disciplines actively involved into health care services in various states had attended this training. Dr. A. G. Shingwekar, Prof. & Head, Dept. of Pediatrics, GRMC, Gwalior and Dr. Ajay Gaur, Associate Prof. Dept. of Pediatrics, GRMC, Gwalior, were its course directors.





## Experts veer around suitable models to achieve higher rate of optimal IYCF practices in northern states

### 1<sup>st</sup> regional workshop on child survival, nutrition and health organized by MWCD, UNICEF and BPNI

**BPNI NEWS DESK, NEW DELHI:** The regional workshop on "Promoting Child Survival, Nutrition and Health by Achieving Optimal IYCF Practices" was organized in New Delhi on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2006 with an aim to sensitize various stakeholders on the importance of optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF), to share state level models on IYCF with top level government officials and other representatives and to draw an action plan to achieve higher rate of optimal IYCF practices in northern states of India.

Emphasizing a strong need for creating awareness on optimal IYCF, Smt. Reva Nayyar, Secretary, Ministry of Women & Child Development (MWCD), GOI, who inaugurated the opening session of the workshop said that adding punch lines on optimal infant feeding in daily or weekly newspaper advertisements and in advocacy materials of polio campaign or any other government publicity materials would greatly help to create awareness on IYCF.

Shri Chaman Kumar, Joint Secretary, MWCD in a welcome address highlighted

the objectives of this workshop and cited its due importance.



MWCD in collaboration with UNICEF and BPNI had organized this regional workshop in New Delhi. This was the first of its kind regional workshop organized in northern India. Chief secretaries and high level government officers of concerned ministries and departments,

representatives of UNICEF and BPNI, representatives of various professional organizations (IMA, IAP, FOGSI, NNF, TNAI, NIN) and NGOs, senior nutritionists, public health and child right groups from states of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Uttaranchal and Haryana had attended this workshop.

Dr. Arun Gupta, National Coordinator, BPNI in a presentation on "Optimal Breastfeeding for Child Nutrition and Survival" stressed the need for all the states to draw State Specific Plan of Action on IYCF practices keeping in view the revised national guidelines on IYCF.

He advised to recognize counselling on IYCF as core "service delivery", to introduce 'Minimum Essential Package (MEP)' of providing nutrition support to lactating mothers for 1 year, incentive to workers to educate, support and help mothers to initiate breastfeeding within one hour, on providing IYCF counselling skills to families at village level and provide warmth and hygiene to newborns.

**Smt. Shashi P. Gupta, Technical Advisor, FNB, Govt. of India,** presenting the revised national guidelines on IYCF said that the guidelines should form an integral part of nationwide ICDS and RCH programmes.



**Mr. Cecilio Adorna, Country Representative, UNICEF,** appreciated the efforts of MWCD for organizing the 1<sup>st</sup> regional workshop. He emphasized the need for accreditation system for each anganwadi centers run under ICDS scheme.



**Dr. Arun Gupta, National Coordinator, BPNI,** stressed on establishment of IYCF/breastfeeding support centers and create a budget line for IYCF in 11<sup>th</sup> plan and to establish clear coordinating mechanisms at national and state levels to address ICDS and RCH-II and NRHM.



## Key Action Recommendations

### For Government of India:

- Adequate financial resources should be allocated for improving optimal IYCF practices to prevent and reduce child malnutrition.
- National policy should recognize skilled counseling on IYCF as “service delivery component” in the ICDS.
- Sensitize MPs on the issues of infant nutrition and survival.

### For State Governments :

- Establish state level core groups on IYCF for effective coordination to improve child survival, growth and development.
- Sensitize MLAs and PRIs on the issues of infant nutrition and survival.
- Establishment of IYCF / breastfeeding support centers in all private health facilities run by trained women and in public services for every population of 5000.
- Strengthen the health professionals' curriculum on IYCF.
- Revive BFHI for all health facilities, link this with community workers and make skilled training in IYCF counseling as prerequisite for ANM, ASHA, AWW and TBA.



**Shri Dalip Singh,**  
Principal Secretary, Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of Haryana, in his presentation on “Improving Infant and Young Child-feeding in Haryana” mentioned that ICDS centers in Haryana are now working as counseling centers.



**Shi R. L. Kalsia,**  
Principal Secretary, Social Security and Women Empowerment, Govt. of Punjab, stressed the need of mothers' nutritional support and encouragement by health professionals to breastfeed successfully. This will help us in improving the breastfeeding status in the state of Punjab.



**Shri. A.K. Angurana,**  
Principal Secretary, Jammu & Kashmir in his presentation mentioned that breastfeeding practices vary from region to region and early initiation of breastfeeding is not commonly practiced which, according to him, is mostly driven by tradition, culture, beliefs and practices of the society.





## Maternity entitlements protect young children's right to food

Mrs. Mina Swaminathan  
Adviser (Education, Communication, Gender)  
M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation

The only way to protect the child's right to breastfeed is to find ways for the child and mother to remain close together throughout the day and night. Maternity entitlements which allow the women to absent herself from work for six months after the birth of a child without economic loss.

The first six years of life are the most significant from the point of view of growth and development, and any damage done at this stage is irreversible. It has also been established that brain growth and development, or the establishment of neuron connections, is at its maximum during the first four years of life and these are likely to be seriously affected by malnutrition, especially in the first two years. Hence, proper nutritional inputs at this stage are essential to ensure optimal growth and development of children.

Early childhood can be considered in three stages, namely (a) birth to six months (b) six months to two years, and (c) two to six years. The food and nutrition needs of young children and protecting their right to food can be described as follows:

- **Birth to six months:** Exclusive breastfeeding (WHO guidelines)
- **Six months to two years:** Supplementary feeding, which is adequate in quantity and frequency, and appropriate in quality along with continued breastfeeding
- **Two to six years:** Adequate quantities of healthy, safe, nutritious and pleasant food.

Estimates of child under-nutrition and mal-nutrition in the country also show that this is the most serious undernourished age-group (national average of 46% undernourished children below 3 (NFHS-3-2005-06).

**Protecting Infant's Right to Breastfeed**  
Breastmilk is the infant's only food for the first six months of life. So the only way to protect the child's right to

breastfeed is to find ways for the child and mother to remain close together throughout the day and night. This is because the young child has to be fed frequently, and at irregular intervals during the day, and also at night, implying that mothers who have to be absent for long period from their infants during the day in order to engage in economic activity will be unable to feed

The only way to protect the child's right to breastfeed is to find ways for the child and mother to remain close together throughout the day and night. Maternity entitlements which allow the woman to absent herself from work for six months after the birth of a child without economic loss.

them adequately. One lasting solution to this is to provide maternity entitlements which will allow the woman to absent herself from work for six months after the birth of a child without economic loss. Maternity entitlement protects both the woman (right to work) and the child (right to food).

### Maternity Entitlements in India

In India, very few women get the benefit of maternity entitlements, although 30% of the 150 million women in the

workforce may be mothers of children below 2 years. This is because Maternity Benefit Act passed as early as 1961 was modeled on the prevailing laws in industrial countries. It provides entitlements only to women in the organized sector, which employs barely 10% of the female work force. Besides, studies have shown that a large number even among the eligible women cannot avail of this facility, for various reasons. One important reason is that the entire burden of support is placed on the employers, so employers in the private sector often try to avoid it, either by not employing married women, or terminating their services when they marry, become pregnant or give birth. Shared responsibility is likely to give better results.

In the late eighties, several state governments in India (including Tamil Nadu started schemes to give some allowances to women at the time of childbirth. Later the central government also took up this scheme entitled National Maternal Assistance Scheme. The amounts given (for e.g. first Rs. 300/ and later Rs. 500/ under the Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Childbirth Assistance Scheme in Tamil Nadu) were barely enough to cover the costs of childbirth, and besides were not even intended to support breastfeeding. These schemes have to be greatly modified to suit the latter purpose.

The norms suggested by ILO are one hundred (preferably 120) days wages at the stipulated wage or minimum wages

### The gains of maternity entitlements

#### For Women

- Economic support during absence from work
- Rest and attention to own health
- Mental peace and freedom from anxiety

#### For Child

- Full and complete feeding
- Love and constant attention from mother, essential for bonding and sense of security and psychosocial development of the child



in that occupation, plus leave of absence from work, and health services. The latter two conditions cannot apply in the case of women in the unorganized sector, who form 90% of the work force.

In its report (1999) the National Labour Commission had suggested a three-tier or four-tier scheme to meet different needs.

#### These are:

**Lowest level, or 'Safely net':** For those who cannot afford to contribute. Provision to be made entirely by the State (Central and State governments).

**First level:** For all those who are employed in establishments. Provision to be shared between government, employer and employee. Proportion of contribution by each sector to be determined.

**Second level:** For those employed in casual labour, contract labour, piece work, self-employed or where employer is otherwise not visible, government and employee alone will share.

**Highest level or Voluntary level:** For those who can afford to contribute, in the insurance model.

Such provisions should be included in proposed Unorganized Sector Workers' Social Security Act.

#### Tamil Nadu's New Scheme

In Tamil Nadu, a new scheme of maternity entitlements is being implemented from September 2006, with the following three major elements:

**Scope and Coverage:** Applicable to all pregnant women below the poverty line and above the age of 19, for two children only.

**Amount :** Rs 6,000/- to be paid in six monthly installments.

**Period:** Payable for three months before childbirth and three months after childbirth.

This is a commendable first step for the poorest women, who are most in need, and should be emulated, with improvements, by State and Central governments.

Write to Mrs. Mina Swaminathan at: [mina@mssrf.res.in](mailto:mina@mssrf.res.in)

## Training for Developing National Trainers Infant and Young Child Feeding Counseling A Training course

The '3 in 1 course'

*(Integrated course on breastfeeding, complementary feeding and infant feeding & HIV)*

#### Who can become a National Trainer?

- Senior level health professionals (pediatrics, gynecology, community medicine, nursing) or
- Nutrition professional.

*Interested members who wish to become National Trainers may contact us at:*

**National Coordinator,**

BP 33, Pitampura, Delhi 110034

Tel: 011-27343606, 27343608

Email: [arun@ibfan-asiapacific.org](mailto:arun@ibfan-asiapacific.org) or [bpni@bpni.org](mailto:bpni@bpni.org)

[www.ibfan-asiapacific.org](http://www.ibfan-asiapacific.org) / [www.bpni.org](http://www.bpni.org)



## Become an "Infant and Young Child Feeding Counseling Specialist"

BPNI/IBFAN Asia-Pacific in collaboration with UNICEF is organizing Regional Training Courses on Infant and Young Child Feeding Counseling: A Training Course The 3 in 1 Course (An Integrated Course on Breastfeeding, Complementary Feeding and Infant Feeding & HIV-Counseling) at Delhi, Ranchi, Aligarh, Gwalior, Bangalore and Gorakhpur during April / May 2007.

Duration of the course: 7 days (9 AM to 6 PM.)

Course Fee: Rs. 3,000/- (training materials, lunch and tea).



This course will prepare you as specialists who will:

**Help mothers to be successful in exclusive breastfeeding, appropriate complementary feeding and help in selecting feeding option for HIV +ve mothers. Be able to set up IYCF counseling centers.**

*Interested members for any query may contact us at:*

**National Coordinator**

BP 33, Pitampura, Delhi 110034

Tel: 011-27343606, 27343608

Email : [arun@ibfan-asiapacific.org](mailto:arun@ibfan-asiapacific.org) ; [bpni@bpni.org](mailto:bpni@bpni.org)

Web site : [www.ibfan-asiapacific.org](http://www.ibfan-asiapacific.org) ; [www.bpni.org](http://www.bpni.org)

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The representatives had sought for adequate measures that could protect infants and young children from further deaths and ensure proper development for those who survived. Today, overwhelming evidence exists that universally initiating breastfeeding within one hour of birth, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, and continued breastfeeding with adequate and appropriate complementary feeding for at least two years, can rapidly reduce infant mortality by more than 43%. Breastfeeding has also been shown to lead to optimal brain development, increasing IQ levels.

## High use of honey in pre-lacteal feeding in Karnataka

By: Dr. R.G. Geethalakshmi

President of B.P.N.I. Davangere District Branch &

Professor of Community Medicine, J.J.M. Medical College, Davangere, Karnataka

The study conducted on 1000 mothers of the infants & young children in Davangere city reveals very low rate of early initiation of breastfeeding. The refusal of providing colostrum to the newborn babies has been seen high in home deliveries. This is not the case in hospitals where mothers were encouraged to provide colostrum to their babies.

The initiation of breastfeeding within one hour of birth is abysmally low in Karnataka. Only 16.3% mothers provide breastmilk to their babies within one hour of birth, which is just at par with the finding of N.F.H.S-II (15.8%), but that figure contrasts the national goal, which was set at 50%. In hospital deliveries, however, the initiation of breastfeeding within one hour, according to the findings of the study, is little more compared to home deliveries. Although the trend among all religious groups is not so significant when it comes to early initiation of breastfeeding.

What is most interesting in the study, conducted in Davangere city, is that the honey is the most preferred pre-lacteal feed given to newborn children. This is a common prevailing practice within the Muslim community too. 46.3% of the Muslim mothers against only 1.2% Hindu mothers, according to the study, provide pre-lacteal feeds to their newborn children. The pre-lacteal feeding practices among babies born in joint families are more than in nuclear families. This may be because of traditional customs and influence of elders in the joint family. Pre-lacteal feeds are given more in home delivery babies, which are about three folds higher than in hospital delivery babies.

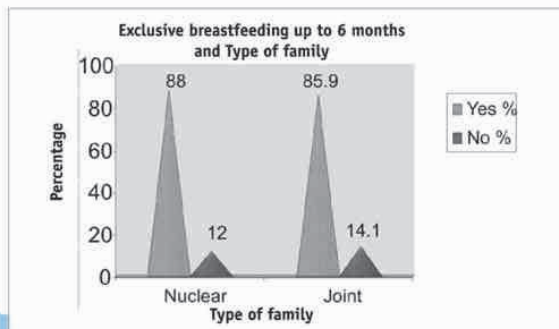
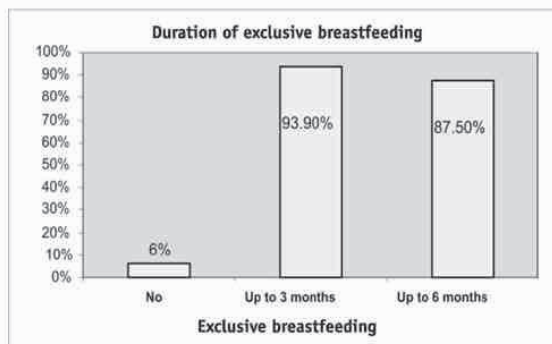
The refusal of providing colostrum to the newborn babies has been seen high in home deliveries. This is not the case in hospitals where mothers were encouraged to provide colostrum to their babies. But the hospitals in the Davangere city need to improve a lot to completely educate the mothers of the children about the benefits of colostrum. Better education and proper counseling about breastfeeding in the hospitals thus will help to attain the actual benefits of colostrum and the risks involved in pre-lacteal feeding.

Exclusive breastfeeding, as a matter of fact, is at much higher

rate with 88% of the mothers have been exclusively breastfeeding their babies until their age exceeding 6 months. It is more than national average of 40% and the 10<sup>th</sup> five year plan goal of 80%. This may be because of the intensive education given to the mothers in M.C.H. clinic at J.J.M. Medical College of Davangere city.

The 6% of the pre-lacteal feeding children were not included under exclusive breastfeeding practices. And there were also 6.4% children within the age of 3 to 6 months refrained from exclusive breastfeeding practices.

The study was conducted on 1000 mothers of under-five-children who routinely attended M.C.H. clinic for immunization at J.J.M. Medical College of Davangere city in Karnataka. The mothers were randomly interviewed by using a method of pre-



tested questionnaire on the breastfeeding practices, pre-lacteal feeds and colostrums feeding practices. Mothers of 216 children within the age group of 6 to 23 months were interviewed about exclusive breastfeeding up to 6 months, complementary and bottle-feeding, and mothers of another 61 children within the age group of 24 to 60 months were interviewed about continued breastfeeding.

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www.bpni.org • www.indiaonline.com  
Email : geethamohan2001@yahoo.com



## World Breastfeeding Week 2006 - AWARDS



S. No.	Name	Category
1.	BPNI Karnataka State Branch	Best State Branch
2.	BPNI Madhya Pradesh State Branch	Best State Branch
3.	BPNI Jharkhand State Branch	Best State Branch
4.	BPNI Cuddalore District Branch	Best District Branch
5.	BPNI Amravati District Branch	Best District Branch
6.	BPNI Akola District Branch	Best District Branch
7.	BPNI Davangera District Branch	Best District Branch
8.	BPNI Gorakhpur Branch	Best District Branch
9.	BPNI Dhanbad District Branch	Best District Branch
10.	BPNI Tiruvapur District Branch	Best District Branch
11.	IAP Kerala State Branch	Best NGO
12.	Lactation Helpline	Best NGO
13.	Committee for Legal AIDS to poor (CLAP)	Best NGO
14.	Sree Balaji Medical College	Best NGO
15.	Counterpart International India	Best NGO
16.	R.V. College of Nursing	Best Institution
17.	Social Justice Empowerment & Welfare, Dept. Govt. of Sikkim	Best Institution
18.	University College of Medical Science & G.T.B. Hospital	Best Institution
19.	Dr. (Mrs.) Nelan Paul	Individual
20.	Dr. Dayanand & Dr. H.B. Mallikarjuna	Individual
21.	S. Shantharam	Individual
22.	Dr. Kanthasamy Neminathan	Individual
23.	Dr. Sandeep Pandit	Individual





## WBW 2006 celebrations in states and districts

World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) 2006 was celebrated almost in all states and districts of India from August 1-7 with much enthusiasm and vigour. It is a programme for mass people, celebrated every year in India, to uphold the rights of the infants and towards saving the lives of thousands of young children.

BPNI state and district branches, in association with various clubs and individual members representing professional health and civil movement organizations, had organized dozens of public seminars, meetings, talk shows in radios and televisions to inform the masses about 'breastfeeding'. As part of the programme, BPNI members attended antenatal clinics, conducted seminars and workshops for nurses and doctors, distributed pamphlets on IMS Act in local languages and met policymakers for advocacy.

This year, the theme of WBW was on IMS Act. BPNI state and district branches including several clubs and mass movement organizations used variety of communication channels to spread the message on IMS Act. BPNI headquarter prepared a WBW Theme Brochure, a 6-page folder that explained the need of the IMS Act, 'What is banned under this Act', different Sections of the Act and penalties that gave some action ideas. All these activities were covered widely in print and electronic media.

### Andhra Pradesh

**BPNI, HYDERABAD:** In Andhra Pradesh, the BPNI state and district branches celebrated WBW 2006 with series of meetings, workshops and seminars were organized at several places of the cities and district towns. Top government officials including officials of government health institutes and boards, principals of woman colleges and social activists

made WBW 2006 Telugu brochure.

In Hyderabad, the BPNI members organized meetings with doctors, nurses and field health staff at Area hospital and MCH office. Dr. K. Kesaiah, Vigilance Officer, Dr. Satyavathi, DM & HO and AP Vaidhya Vidhana Parishad attended the meetings as its guests.



from NGOs were part of the programme. WBW 2006 was observed in five districts of Andhra Pradesh, which include Anantapur, Kurnool, Krishna, Chittoor and Hyderabad.

Food & Nutrition Board, GOI, Dept. of Women Development and Child Welfare, Govt. of. A.P. and UNICEF - Hyderabad office organized "WBW workshop" at Indian Institute of Health and Family Welfare, Hyderabad, which was attended by Y. V. Anuradha, Director, Woman Development and Child Welfare, Prof. Indra Sekhar Rao, Gandhi Medical College, Hyderabad, Smt. Vijaya Khadar, Dean, Acharya N. G. Ranga Agriculture University, Dr. Lakshmi Bhavani, Project Officer (H&N) UNICEF and about 300 participants from DWCWA, Nursing Colleges, Home Science, National Institute of Nutrition and medical students and faculty members from Social and Preventive Medicine. As its chief guest, Smt. Anuradha released the BPNI



In Anantapur district, the members of BPNI organized meetings with nursing students at B. V. Syamalarathnam Nursing College, Hindupur, Women's Degree College, Hindupur, and organized few meetings for mother groups and anganwadi workers of ICDS. The members had also visited few slum areas and spinning mills in Hindupur where they assessed the situation of pregnant women and working mothers of infants.

As a result of WBW celebrations in Andhra, the IMS Act was introduced in the curriculum of AP State Legal Services Authorities. P. Ranganayakulu, MLA, promised in a public meeting to build a 20-bedded Infectious Disease Ward (IDS) at Hindupur hospital. A resolution was passed by the staff of Indian Institute of Health & Family Welfare in association with BPNI members to educate media people on the optimal IYCF practices and to request movie and commercial serial makers



not to show any sequence showing baby fed with the bottle.

BPNI Krishna district members celebrated WBW 2006 with meetings and talk shows were organized at several places including in schools with adolescent girls and other masses.

IMS Act and other information materials were made in Telugu language which were distributed in many places of the district. Rainbow FM covered the celebration in its youth programme repeatedly for 3 days, and other releases were published in local publications. BPNI in collaboration with Food & Nutrition Dept. and Acharya Nagarjuna University had made a presentation on the IMS Act.

## Delhi

**BPNI, NEW DELHI:** WBW 2006 was observed in Oswal Bhavan, ESI Jhilmil, Kasturba hospital, Batra hospital, Rural Health Training Centre, Medical Research Centre and in several hospitals and prominent public places of east and north Delhi.

The DNB residents along with nursing students and staff had participated in open discussion forums arranged for expectants and new mothers in the OPD block of Batra hospital and Medical Research Centre in New Delhi. In east Delhi, a public awareness programme on breastfeeding was organized. In north Delhi, a lecture-cum- discussion on IMS Act "Making it known to the People" was organized from 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> August.

Dr M M A. Faridi, President of Delhi IAP and Head of the Department of Pediatrics, UCMS and GTB hospital, explained about the benefits of breastfeeding. Other prominent health experts attended this WBW were Dr LN Taneja, Dr Sapna Mittal, Head of Department of Pediatrics, ESI Jhilmil, Dr Duggal, Department of Pediatrics, Kasturba hospital, Dr Chander Kant and Dr Tarsem Jindal from BPNI. The speakers discussed the rules, regulations and violations of IMS Act. In most places, the members had distributed pamphlets and awareness materials.

## Karnataka

**BPNI BANGALORE/MYSORE/GULBARGA/BELGAUM:** The 10 district branches of BPNI in Karnataka observed the WBW 2006. BPNI Haveri district branch in association with Rotary club distributed posters to all 260 anganwadi health workers, 40



PHCs, LHV's and ANMs in the district.

The "IMS Act: Making it Known to People" was made in Kannada language along with a C.D. was prepared to distribute in several places. As part of the awareness programme, IMA-Karnataka state branch had carried an editorial in its August issue on IMS Act and on the importance of breastfeeding. Almost 10,000 doctors in the state had received the message.

About 120 hospitals complying with Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) were informed about the IMS Act. The details of IMS Act was also shared with the members of DWCD, Bar Association, Collegiate Association of Karnataka, All India Radio (AIR), and other selected media organizations, including top government authorities in Bangalore, Mysore, Gulbarga and Belgaum.

## Maharashtra

**BPNI, AMRAVATI:** BPNI Amravati branch in collaboration with IMA, IAP and OBGY Society celebrated the WBW 2006. NGOs like Aarogya Sadhna Mandal, Dr Punjabrao Deshmukh Medical Aid Trust, Rotary Club, Amba Jaycees Club, Inner Wheel Club, Bhartiya Stree Shakti and Govt. Health Department joined hands with BPNI to make the celebration a grand success.

A public rally comprising of nursing students, doctors and members of various NGOs displaying banners with slogans and messages on breastfeeding proceeded through main roads of the city. A panel discussion on breastfeeding issue was relayed





on "Akashwani" Nagpur centre and quiz competitions on 'Breastfeeding' were organized for the medical students and health workers.

## Manipur

**BPNI, IMPHAL:** WBW 2006 was inaugurated at the main auditorium of Rural Development Organization (RDO), Lamsang, Imphal west district, on August 1, 2006. The function was jointly organized by BPNI and IAP Manipur state branch.

MLA W. Brajabidhu Singh and IAP central board member Dr K C Singh graced the occasion as its president and chief guest respectively. IAP state branch president Dr. Th Nabachandra, BPNI state branch president Dr N Nabakishore Singh, Dr A Naranbabu of IAP, Dr A Ibotombi Sharma and joint director of FWD graced the occasion as guest of honors. Other prominent personalities attended the programme were Dr Shyamkumar Laishram, Dr N Nabakishore Singh, Dr A Naranbabu Singh, Dr K C Singh and Dr A Ibotombi Sharma. The speakers discussed the IMS Act, importance of exclusive breastfeeding, hazards of artificial feeding and feeding bottles. Local dailies, DD, AIR, and local TV channels covered the programme.

## Jharkhand

**BPNI, RACHI:** BPNI Jharkhand state branch (JSB) in association with FNB, GOI, Ranchi, Infantry Division Dipatoli, School of Nursing, RIMS, Bariyatu, conducted workshops on IMS Act & IYCF for nursing students and staff. In another two occasions, panel discussions for army wives, and XISS students were organized at Rachi.

## Rajasthan

**BPNI, JAIPUR:** During the WBW 2006 celebration, the state members had shared the IMS Act with policy makers, government officials, caretakers of the crèches, women's groups, politicians, PRIs and a large section of people by distributing its Hindi and English versions, encouraging people to stop the use of infant milk substitutes, feeding bottle and infant foods. Shri Bhawani Joshi, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare released a poster in a workshop developed by BPNI. In an orientation workshop, which was attended by Ms. Karuna Singh, Mr Ajit Bansal and Dr Raj Bhandari, a large number of caretakers of crèches, children and their mothers gathered. Discussions and talk shows on 'breastfeeding and IMS Act' that broadcasted through DD and AIR to create attention of the masses in the state.

## Uttar Pradesh

**BPNI, GORAKHPUR:** In Gorakhpur district, BPNI members in association with several paramedical personnels, local MPs, MLAs and MLCs, employed women, nursing mothers, students of schools and colleges, representatives of professional organizations like IMA, GP Association, FOGSI, UNICEF and NGOs and several government officials from various

departments had celebrated WBW 2006. In many places, the IMS Act was discussed in public gatherings and meetings during the whole week and attempts were made to sensitize the public about the breaking of the laws by baby food companies.

## Punjab

**BPNI, SANGUR:** The Sangur district branch celebrated WBW 2006 in a variety of activities including mass meetings, public functions, interactions with parents of the newborn babies, awareness generation through media and distribution of IMS Act in cities and villages.

In two separate meetings, the members of BPNI discussed the nitty-gritty of the IMS Act with the members of Lions Club and IMA-the trio organizations along with the Senior Citizens Welfare Association and Yog Sansthan hosted the inaugural function of WBW 2006 in presence of 250 audiences by inviting Mr. S.S.Uppal, city SP as its chief guest. *Punjab Today* and all other local channels had broadcasted the function along with newspapers like *Punjab Kesri*, *Jagran*, *Jag Bani* and *Amar Ujala*.

Dr. V.K.Ahuja, Dr. R.C.Jain, Dr. Suresh and Dr. Sanjay Bansal were instrumental in training the medical staff of respective hospitals about IMS Act.

## West Bengal

**BPNI, KOLKATA:** BPNI West Bengal state branch in collaboration with Department of Law & Order, Women & Child Development & Social Welfare, Medical and Nursing Education and Services, Directorate of Health & Family Welfare and genre of other state administrative departments and NGOs had celebrated WBW-2006.

Dr. Parbati Sengupta, while introducing the theme, stressed the importance of IMS Act. Informing the general public in a WBW gathering, Dr Sengupta, however, reiterated that large public in general and many members of the medical profession in particular were ignorant about the IMS Act and its implications. This needs to be correctly addressed in whatever possible forms and through various means of communication.

Citing various legal examples, Dr. Sanjib Mukherji pointed out that there were various ways in which the IMS Act could be violated. AIR and a local television channel had invited Dr Mukherji to join in a talk show on "*IMS Act and the present situation of breastfeeding*".

From 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> August, there were whole lot of programmes and arrangements. Seminars, interactive sessions, meetings and awareness programmes were organized at several places including in government departments, hospitals, nursing colleges and at campuses of the NGOs. The state branch had also distributed Bengali IMS Act literatures and leaflets to general public.



## BPNI International Events

## South Asia Breastfeeding Partners Forum - 3 at Kabul

**BPNI INTERNATIONAL NETWORK, KABUL:** Dr Arun Gupta, National Coordinator, BPNI, Dr MMA Faridi, Mrs. Radha Holla and Mr Rahul Dev represented BPNI at South Asia Breastfeeding Partners Forum-3 held at Kabul, Afghanistan, from 18<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 2006. Dr. Sayed M. Amin Fatimi, Afghanistan's Minister of Public Health



released the *State of the World's Breastfeeding: South Asia Report Card*, in Kabul on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2006 at the inauguration of the South Asia Breastfeeding Forum -3, an international gathering of health professionals and policy makers. The *Report Card* assesses and rates the practices, policy and programmes related to Infant and Young Child Feeding in eight countries of the region, and ranks them on their performance in promoting IYCF. The countries are Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

## Youth leaders promoting breastfeeding

**BPNI INTERNATIONAL NETWORK, PENANG:** Youth leaders from different countries of the world had participated in a five-day workshop held at Penang, Malaysia from 9-10 October 2006 organized by WABA. Subrata Dutta from BPNI had participated in this workshop. The main objective of **WABA Youth Initiative**, an international programme to initiate the movement in



various countries is to get youths interested in breastfeeding and to develop and sustain young advocates to promote and protect breastfeeding through the perspectives of human rights, reproductive health and gender equality.

## Maldives promotes breastfeeding

**BPNI INTERNATIONAL NETWORK, MALDIVES:** Dr Arun Gupta was invited for an expert consultation on protecting, promoting and supporting optimal breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding in Maldives from 8<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 06. The aim of the consultation was to bring a regulation for



protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding.

## Conference on breastfeeding and complementary feeding in Bangladesh

**BPNI INTERNATIONAL NETWORK, DHAKA:** More than five hundred delegates from different countries and organizations participated in a national conference on breastfeeding and complementary feeding organized by Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation (BBF) in Dhaka on 19-20 August 2006. Government of



Bangladesh, UNICEF, WHO, Plan International, Save the Children and many other national and international organizations were part of this conference. Dr Arun Gupta was invited in this conference to address on IYCF strategy, challenges and opportunities, state of the code in south Asia and also to participate in a BBF staff development session.

## Conference on global peace

**BPNI INTERNATIONAL NETWORK, CANADA:** Dr. Arun Gupta participated in an international conference at Canada on Alliance for Civilizations for Global Peace:



Human Security, Regional Conflict and Global Governance as one of the members of the research group. Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, Hawaii in collaboration with Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, organized this conference in Canada on June 25-27, 2006. On July 29, the members led by Dr. Gupta met the CIDA officials Mr. Ken Porter and Ms Monica for implementing the *Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding*.



## BPNI National Events

### Luminaries in right to food campaign

**BPNI, NEW DELHI:** BPNI members attended a public gathering on 'Bal Vikas Samvad' (A wake-up call for 'children under six') organized under the auspices of Right to Food Campaign at Constitution Club



Lawns, New Delhi on 19<sup>th</sup> Nov 2006. Dr Arun Gupta, Dr Sunita Katyayan, Radha Holla and Subrata Dutta from BPNI attended this programme. Groups like Peoples Health Assembly, Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, Gram Swasthya Abhiyan, CARE, and groups of ICDS functionaries from different parts of India attended the programme. There were also luminaries like Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, actress Shabana Azmi, deputy chairman of the planning commission Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, chairman of the UGC and as well as many activists representing different NGOs working in various parts of the country.

### Training programmes on IYCF counseling in four regional centers of NIPCCD

**BPNI, NEW DELHI:** BPNI in collaboration with NIPCCD organized skill-training programmes on IYCF for the trainers of different branches of NIPCCD, anganwadi training centres and NGOs. Four such training courses were organized at NIPCCD's regional centres in Bangalore,



Guwahati, Indore and Lucknow.

First training was conducted at the regional centre, Guwahati from 30<sup>th</sup> Oct to 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2006. Participants of various middle level training centres, anganwadi training centres and ICDS functionaries of Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya and West Bengal attended the course under BPNI resource persons Dr K. Ratan Kumar Singh (Imphal) Dr (Ms.) Meenakshi Regon (Guwahati), Mr Sitanshu Shekhar Senapati (NIPCCD) and Dr Sunita Katyayan as its course director supervised the whole training programme.

The second training was conducted at southern regional centre, Bangalore from 30<sup>th</sup> Oct to 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2006. The participants from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu attended the course. Dr Asha Benakappa, Dr HB Mallikarjun, and Dr K Kesavulu were the BPNI trainers and the course facilitator was Dr Naveeda Khatoun from NIPCCD, Bangalore.

The third training was conducted at the regional centre, Lucknow from 18<sup>th</sup> Dec to 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec 2006. Dr BB Gupta from Gorakhpur was its course director, Dr Usha Vats from Kanpur and Dr Azra Ahmed from Aligarh were the resource persons of BPNI.

Fourth training was conducted at the Regional Centre, Indore from 18<sup>th</sup> Dec to 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec 2006. The participants attended the course were from the states of Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. BPNI trainer Dr Anurag Singh from Jodhpur was its course director, Dr Ajay Kumar Saraf from Jabalpur, Mrs. Anjali Sarwate from Indore and Dr Nisha Jain from Bhopal were the BPNI's resource persons.

### Training for ICDS officers and supervisors in Uttarakhand

**BPNI, NEW DELHI:** BPNI in collaboration with Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Development of Uttarakhand government organized 4 training workshops at Haridwar. A total of 135 supervisors and officers of ICDS department working in various districts as middle level trainers to train frontline workers of Uttarakhand were trained in

the workshops.

Dr. Ramneek Sharma from Chandigarh and Dr. Kundan Mittal from Rohtak conducted the first batch of the training, started from 11<sup>th</sup> Dec and continued up to 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 2006. The second batch of training was started from 18<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> Dec 2006 and its trainers were Dr AK Rawat from Rewa, Dr Kiran Guleria from Delhi, Dr Ulka Jamal from Dhar and Dr Kamna Nigam from Indore.

The third batch of officers and supervisors were trained by a team of national trainers consisting Dr Anita Gupta from Delhi, Dr Rajinder Gulati from Ludhiana and Dr Ranjana Tiwari from Gwalior. This workshop was held from 25<sup>th</sup> Dec to 30<sup>th</sup> Dec.

While the fourth training workshop was scheduled from 1<sup>st</sup> Jan to 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2007 and BPNI national trainers Dr Dheeraj Shah from Delhi, Dr Usha Vats from Lucknow and Dr S Manazar Ali from Aligarh conducted the training workshop.

### Meeting with Secretary of Women and Child Department, Govt. of UP

**BPNI, NEW DELHI:** Dr Arun Gupta, Dr. MMA Faridi and K.P. Kushwaha of BPNI discussed the issues of IYCF with Balvinder Singh, secretary of WCD in a meeting on 11 July 2006. In the meeting, the representatives of UP government had agreed to organize training programmes for medical students and health workers and to develop 450 middle level trainers to train anganwari workers in the state. Following this, P.K.Sudhir of BPNI had attended another meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2006 with the deputy director of ICDS department to formulate the training programmes in Uttar Pradesh.

### Orientation lecture at Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, N. Delhi

**BPNI, NEW DELHI:** PK Sudhir from BPNI delivered a lecture on the importance of breastfeeding and complementary feeding in Deen Dayal Upadhyay (DDU) hospital, New Delhi on 28<sup>th</sup> Sept 2006 in which a group of 25 CDPOs, supervisors of ICDS scheme, lady health worker and staff nurses of DDU hospital participated.



## Newspaper Clipping

### Malnutrition ails Indian kids

NFHS Survey Shows 45.9% Children Under 3 Yrs Are Underweight

**WARNING BELLS**

NEW DELHI: India's economy may have shown dramatic growth but the data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) released on Friday is a stark reminder of the health problems that afflict the country. As many as 45.9% of children under three years of age are underweight, the survey shows. This is a stark contrast with China, where only 10% are underweight.

The figure for women aged 15-49 is also alarming, with 59% of them underweight. Even the improved infant mortality rate (IMR) of 106 per 1,000 live births in 1998-1999, down from 177 in 1988-1990, is a far cry from the 10 per 1,000 target set by the Millennium Development Goals.

"Malnutrition is a global problem but our children are particularly at risk," said Dr. Anand Kumar, director of the National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD). "The survey shows that 45.9% of children under three are underweight, which is a shocking figure. It is a tragedy that in a country like India, where we have so many children, so much poverty, and so much potential, we are facing such a high level of malnutrition."

Dr. Kumar stressed that malnutrition is not just a health problem but also a social and economic one. "Children who are malnourished are more susceptible to diseases and infections," he said. "They also have a lower capacity to learn and grow, which affects their future productivity and the country's economic growth."

The NFHS survey also found that 12.5% of children under three are severely underweight, which is a much higher figure than in most other countries. This is a cause for serious concern, as severe malnutrition can lead to long-term health and developmental problems.

Dr. Kumar called for a multi-sectoral approach to address the problem of malnutrition. "We need to focus on improving the quality of food, ensuring that children are fed on time, and providing them with the necessary healthcare and education," he said. "We also need to address the underlying causes of malnutrition, such as poverty and lack of access to basic services."

The NFHS survey is a landmark study that provides a comprehensive picture of the health and well-being of Indian children. It is a call to action for the government and the public to work together to improve the health and nutrition of the next generation.



### The Daily Star

### Breastfeeding may prevent 13pc child deaths

Experts tell int'l meet

**SENIOR CORRESPONDENT**

Experts at a meeting yesterday called exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life a simple no-cost solution to prevent 13 per cent of child deaths.

The three-day international meeting, held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, was organized by the Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation (BBF) and the National Nutrition Programme (NNP) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Dr. Anand Kumar, director of the NICHD, said that exclusive breastfeeding is a simple, no-cost solution to prevent 13 per cent of child deaths. "It is a tragedy that in a country like India, where we have so many children, so much poverty, and so much potential, we are facing such a high level of malnutrition," he said.

Dr. Kumar stressed that malnutrition is not just a health problem but also a social and economic one. "Children who are malnourished are more susceptible to diseases and infections," he said. "They also have a lower capacity to learn and grow, which affects their future productivity and the country's economic growth."

The NFHS survey is a landmark study that provides a comprehensive picture of the health and well-being of Indian children. It is a call to action for the government and the public to work together to improve the health and nutrition of the next generation.

### स्तनपान से बच सकती है 13 फीसदी नौनिहालों की जान

नई दिल्ली: 26 अप्रैल को जारी की गई नेशनल फॅमिली हेल्थ सर्वे (NFHS) के आठवां दौर के आँकड़ों के मुताबिक भारत में 45.9 फीसदी 3 साल से कम उम्र के बच्चों में कम वजन का प्रभाव है। यह आँकड़ा दुनिया के किसी भी देश में नहीं मिलेगा।

डॉ. आनंद कुमार, नेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ़ चिल्ड्रन हेल्थ एंड डेवलपमेंट (NICHD) के निदेशक, ने कहा कि यह आँकड़ा बहुत चिंताजनक है। "हमारे बच्चों की जान बचाने के लिए हमें स्तनपान को बढ़ावा देना होगा," उन्होंने कहा।

डॉ. कुमार ने कहा कि स्तनपान केवल बच्चों की जान बचाने के लिए नहीं है, बल्कि यह उनके शारीरिक और मानसिक विकास के लिए भी बहुत जरूरी है। "स्तनपान करने वाले बच्चे कम बीमार पड़ते हैं, वे तेजी से बढ़ते हैं, और वे अपने स्कूल में बेहतर प्रदर्शन करते हैं," उन्होंने कहा।

डॉ. कुमार ने कहा कि सरकार और समाज को स्तनपान को बढ़ावा देने में मदद करनी चाहिए। "हमें बच्चों को स्तनपान करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करना चाहिए, और हमें स्तनपान करने वाली महिलाओं को सही जानकारी देनी चाहिए," उन्होंने कहा।

डॉ. कुमार ने कहा कि स्तनपान केवल बच्चों की जान बचाने के लिए नहीं है, बल्कि यह उनके शारीरिक और मानसिक विकास के लिए भी बहुत जरूरी है। "स्तनपान करने वाले बच्चे कम बीमार पड़ते हैं, वे तेजी से बढ़ते हैं, और वे अपने स्कूल में बेहतर प्रदर्शन करते हैं," उन्होंने कहा।

### Breast-feeding can reduce infant deaths by 22%, says study

By Neelam Ranj/TNN

**BABY BLUES**

New Delhi: What does it take to save the lives of 2.5 lakh newborn babies a year in India? Not huge resources or an elaborate health-care plan, but a simple no-cost solution: breastfeeding. A recent study of more than 10,000 newborn babies published in the American journal *Pediatrics* has shown that if all babies start breastfeeding within one hour, neo-natal deaths will be reduced by 22%.

The study, conducted in Ghana, estimates that of the four million babies who die in the developing world each year in the first month of their lives, almost one million can be saved. Numbers for India — which sees about 1.2 million deaths in the first month — would be about 2.5 lakh babies saved.

"Everyone assumes breastfeeding comes naturally to a mother. It does, but there's also no denying that mums need support. Just the way a mother holds a baby can hinder flow of breast-milk. Which is why interventions are required — both at the institutional level and at home," says Dr Arun Gupta of the Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India. Citing the National Family Health Survey 2, which reveals only 15.8% of newborn start breastfeeding within one hour, he stressed the need to provide skilled assistance to mothers.

UNICEF's chief of health in India, Marzio Babille, blames superstition and cul-

tural beliefs for denying babies the big immune boost that comes from colostrum (first breast milk). "There is a belief that colostrum is bad for a baby, so in some states, a baby is fed water or honey diluted with water. Not only is this a missed opportunity, but it's dangerous as the water or the spoon could be contaminated."

Referring to global evidence to support exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, Marzio says a Lancet study had proved this can impact mortality by 16% in children under five years. He also expressed concern over the decline of breastfeeding in urban areas.

Gupta says spending Rs 5,000 per baby could save a life. "An incentive of Rs 50 could motivate a frontline worker to provide support. If this is given for every woman delivering annually, it will cost Rs 125 crore (approx 25 million births per year). So saving 2.5 lakh newborns would mean a cost of Rs 5,000 for every baby saved. Now it's up to the government to do the maths."

### WHAT'S KILLING INDIA'S FUTURE?



### Children of a lesser God?

Dr. Anand Kumar, director of the NICHD, said that exclusive breastfeeding is a simple, no-cost solution to prevent 13 per cent of child deaths. "It is a tragedy that in a country like India, where we have so many children, so much poverty, and so much potential, we are facing such a high level of malnutrition," he said.

Dr. Kumar stressed that malnutrition is not just a health problem but also a social and economic one. "Children who are malnourished are more susceptible to diseases and infections," he said. "They also have a lower capacity to learn and grow, which affects their future productivity and the country's economic growth."

The NFHS survey is a landmark study that provides a comprehensive picture of the health and well-being of Indian children. It is a call to action for the government and the public to work together to improve the health and nutrition of the next generation.



## Resources

### Website

- **www.bpni.org:** This is designed for parents, public, professionals, media and any other person interested in infant feeding issues to get information about various aspects of breastfeeding including technical information. It also gives information about the organisation, its areas of work and resources available. It has links with various other International Organisations working on infant feeding.
- **The Law to Protect, Promote and Support Breastfeeding:** A book of BPNI that explains the provisions of the IMS Act in a simple manner. **Rs 60** (Second edition 2004)
- **Maternity Home Practices & Breastfeeding** an ACASH (Mumbai) publication (English) **Rs 75**
- **Helping Mothers to Breastfeed** an ACASH (Mumbai) publication (in English) **Rs 125**

### Books & Booklets

- **Protecting, Promoting and Supporting Breastfeeding - The Indian Experience:** This book is more than a documentation of the growth of the Indian movement to centrestage breastfeeding in national and international health policies, and restrain the infant food industry's unethical marketing practices. It also helps in understanding why breastfeeding is central to child survival, what undermines breastfeeding, and what can be done to prevent it. **Rs. 290**
- **Breastfeeding & Complementary Feeding-Guidelines for Nutrition professionals:** This book is specially prepared for nutrition professionals to help them counsel mothers and teach students on optimal infant feeding practices. It helps to update their knowledge about infant feeding issues. **Rs 150**
- **Breastfeeding & Complementary Feeding- Guidelines for Nurses:** This book is specially prepared for nurses, to enable them to self learn and use this as a teaching tool about infant feeding. This will also help them to promote optimal infant feeding practices and dispel false beliefs of mothers regarding infant feeding. **Rs 150**
- **The Science of Infant Feeding:** A book on breastfeeding and infant feeding with scientific advances of 20<sup>th</sup> century (Published by Jaypee Brothers.) **Rs 450**
- **Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding: A Guide for Parents.** **Rs 25** (Hindi & English)

### Information Sheets

- **Information Sheet 1 – Guidelines for Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding: (ALL STATE SPECIFIC INDIAN LANGUAGES)** This four page document provides accurate information on infant feeding for people, women in particular, especially pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers, **Rs 3** (Minimum ORDER 100 COPIES)

### Posters

- **Breastfeeding Posters:** 12" X 18" (Art Paper, four colour, sticker tape (in English and Hindi) **Rs 5**
- **Closeness and Warmth:** 15" X 20" Breastfeeding a Bliss. **Rs 10**

### Video

#### Video Cassette

- **Maa Ka Pyar- Shishu Ahar:** This BPNI video covers early initiation, exclusive breastfeeding, how to breastfeed and complementary feeding, **Rs 250**

#### Video CD

- **Maa Ka Pyar –Shishu Ahar:** This BPNI CD covers early initiation, exclusive breastfeeding how to breastfeed and complementary feeding, **Rs 100** (Reduced Price)

- Note:**
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