

NUTRITION ADVOCACY IN PUBLIC INTEREST-India (NAPi)

October 5, 2020

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Sh. Keshav Desiraju
Former Secretary, Health, GOI

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Shri Nitinbhai Patel

Hon'ble Health Minister,

Gujarat.

email min-hnfw@gujarat.gov.in; pa2min-hnfw@gujarat.gov.in

Sub: Ultra-Processed Foods(UPFs): Policy Actions and Awareness in your State

Dear Shri Nitinbhai Patel Ji,

Greetings from NAPi and BPNI !

We, the Nutrition Advocacy in Public Interest in India (NAPi), working since 2016, are a national think tank on nutrition –comprising independent experts in epidemiology, human nutrition, community nutrition, pediatrics, medical education, administration and management; having decades of experience in respective fields; along with BPNI, the Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India, working for last 30 years to protect promote and support breastfeeding and optimal infant and young child feeding practices.(Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding for two years or beyond along with appropriate complementary feeding after six months).

We would like to draw your kind attention to the real emerging issue regarding consumption of Ultra-Processed Foods, and its negative impact on human health. Available scientific evidence reveals that 10% increase in the consumption of UPFs increases the chances of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and certain types of cancer by approximately 10%. In children, obesity and asthma go up. This concerns health of millions of people especially as the non-communicable diseases become a life long health problem and cost is substantial other than its misery people suffer from.

We are happy to share with you a **“Statement and call to action on consumption of ultra-processed foods”**(Annexure-1), endorsed by 125 scientists from 27 States/UTs. The Statement resulted from a Webinar *“What you need to know about Ultra-Processed Foods (UPFs)? The science, policy responses and politics in global context”* held on 20 July, 2020. BPNI and NAPi organised it in collaboration with Deakin University Australia and NUPENS / UPS Brazil. More than 300 persons from 36 countries attended and discussed. All the details/discussions are up on the website. <https://www.bpni.org/ultra-processed-foods/>

Globally, there is a rising trend of consumption of UPFs, and in India too. It should be halted to look forward to a healthy food transition in the globalised

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world. Please find attached an Op Ed piece by our members Prof. HPS Sachdev and Dr. Arun Gupta.(Annex-2)

To make people aware of the consumption of ultra processed foods we have developed an advocacy document “The Unseen Dangers of Ultra-Processed Food”, which is available in several languages on our website. We enclose Gujarati and English version. (Annex-3). Other languages on the website are:- [English](#), [Hindi](#), [Gujarati](#), [Punjabi](#), [Assamese](#), [Bangla](#), [Kannada](#), [Marathi](#), [Manipuri \(Meetei mayek\)](#), [Manipuri \(Bengali Script\)](#)

Based on the above, may we request you for following four actions in public health interest of people of your State, within the prevention of Non Communicable Diseases(NCDs) programme.

1. Adopt “Nova Classification” of Food groups and launch periodic state level surveys to find out the consumption pattern of food in both urban and rural areas.
2. Set up a ‘State task force’ to advise on research and surveys, as well as monitoring food industry behaviour.
3. Launch an awareness campaign on how to identify UPFs and AVOID eating them. Attached document “ The Unseen Dangers of Ultra Processed Foods” in local languages may be adapted and disseminated within the Health Ministry’s Urban Health and NHM.
4. Develop regulation to control marketing of the UPFs.

Your utmost attention to this subject would be very valuable to the health of people of your State in the short and long term. We look forward to a positive response from your end. We would be happy to respond if you or your team has any questions/clarification.

With our best regards,

Sincerely,

Dr. Arun Gupta, and Dr. Prakash Vaishnav(BPNI member from Gujarat) on behalf of BPNI And NAPi

Encl: aa

Copy to:

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