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Press Statement **18 February 2022**

Toxic chemical found in Malaysian water bottles: Enforce ban on bottles containing BPA

On 15 March 2011, Malaysia announced a ban on polycarbonate bottles containing bisphenol A (BPA). The ban came into force in March 2012. The decision to ban these feeding bottles was taken due to BPA's risk to infant hormone systems.

According to Section 27A of the Food Regulations 1985: (1) No person shall import, manufacture or advertise for sale or sell any feeding bottles containing Bisphenol A (BPA). (2) The words "BPA free" may be labelled on the feeding bottles or on the packages of the feeding bottles which do not contain Bisphenol A (BPA).

However in a study carried out by CAP in collaboration with the International Pollutants Elimination Network (IPEN), BPA was detected in all 9 Malaysian samples of polycarbonate bottles tested.

The amount of BPA detected in the Malaysian samples ranged from 0.3 - 5.8ppb (parts per billion). BPA is a toxic chemical with no safe exposure level.

Among the samples was a made-in-China baby feeding bottle found to contain 2.6 ppb of BPA. The bottle also had a "BPA free" label. The product thus not only violated the Food Regulations 1985 but also the Trade Description Act 1972.

In the study conducted by IPEN in eight countries, BPA was present in 76 out of the 98 feeding bottles and food containers analysed. Two-thirds of the sampled bottles labeled as being BPA-free were found to contain the chemical.

BPA exposure is linked to several adverse health effects including cancer, fertility disorders, and sexual dysfunction both in men and women, as well as diabetes.

It is shocking that so many products were mislabeled as BPA-free. Concerned parents are being tricked into buying products that can harm their babies. We need strict rules for labeling toxic chemicals in consumer products.

"It is extremely concerning to find BPA, a toxic chemical with no safe exposure level, in products specifically designed for children. Also, we need to make sure that all bisphenol chemicals are banned as a group, to avoid regrettable substitution of one toxic chemical with another," says IPEN Global Researcher Jitka Straková.

Exposing our children to the endocrine disrupters such as BPA will affect their development and so it should be avoided at all costs.

In view of the latest findings and the dangers associated with BPA, CAP calls on the authorities to strictly enforce the Food Regulations 1985 and the Trade Description Act 1972.

Meanwhile CAP calls on consumers to take the following steps to lessen the exposure to BPA

- Use infant feeding bottles made of glass.
- Use a metal or glass water bottle.
- Avoid the consumption of canned food.
- Use glass food storage containers instead of plastic.
- Eat fresh foods in season to avoid the consumption of canned food.
- Do not use plastic wrap and plastic containers to heat food.
- Throw away any old and scratched plastic bottles.

Mohideen Abdul Kader
President
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Note to Editor:

Link to the report: https://ipen.org/documents/call-action-free-children-bpas-toxic-legacy

What they are: Bisphenols, such as bisphenol A (BPA), are used as chemical building blocks in polycarbonate plastics and epoxy resins and are used in reusable food and beverage containers, reusable water bottles, the linings of food cans, medical and sports equipment, eyeglass lenses, thermal paper receipts, and plastic water pipes.

Exposure routes: A high production volume chemical, most people are exposed to BPA when it leaches from food contact materials into the foods and beverages they consume. BPA leaches from landfills to contaminate wastewater, groundwater, and freshwater, and has been found around the world in beach sand from plastic marine waste. BPA, listed as a substance of very high concern by the European Union, has been demonstrated to be toxic by hundreds of studies. Many countries have moved to ban BPA from baby bottles, but there is strong evidence that replacement chemicals exhibit the same health impacts.

Health impacts: A large body of evidence confirms that BPA can affect brain development and behavior. Exposure can increase anxiety, depression, hyperactivity, inattention, behavioral problems, and is also associated with adverse reproductive outcomes affecting cell division in eggs. BPA is associated with Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) — a complex hormonal condition associated with irregular menstrual cycles, reduced fertility, and increased risk of diabetes. In men, BPA affects fertility and is associated with sexual dysfunction among men exposed to high occupational levels. BPA is associated with breast, prostate, ovarian, and endometrial cancers.