

Regarding rising levels of Uranium in ground water posing a serious health hazard to new born babies consuming Uranium contaminated breast milk-Laid

SHRI RAO RAJENDRA SINGH (JAIPUR RURAL): Breastfeeding is a gold standard of neonatal nutrition as human milk consists of essential compounds crucial for proper development of a child. A recent scientific study published in Scientific Reports has documented the presence of uranium in breastmilk samples across six districts of Bihar-Bhojpur, Samastipur, Begusarai, Khagaria, Katihar, and Nalanda. The study analysed samples from 40 lactating mothers aged 17-35 years and reported detectable uranium in 100% of the samples, with concentrations ranging up to 5.25 pg/L. District-wise analysis showed the highest mean levels in Khagaria (4.035 pg/L) and the lowest in Nalanda (2.354 ug/L). The study found that approximately 70% of exclusively breastfed infants may face non-carcinogenic health risks due to uranium intake relative to body weight and physiological capacity. The study attributes the likely source of contamination to groundwater, referencing earlier investigations that detected uranium concentrations exceeding WHO's 30 ug/L limit in multiple districts of Bihar. Independent investigations conducted in the state of Rajasthan have also recorded elevated arsenic levels in breastmilk and biological samples of women and infants exceeding prescribed limits. These studies identify groundwater and staple food consumption as probable exposure pathways. The matter requires coordinated monitoring and technical assessment.