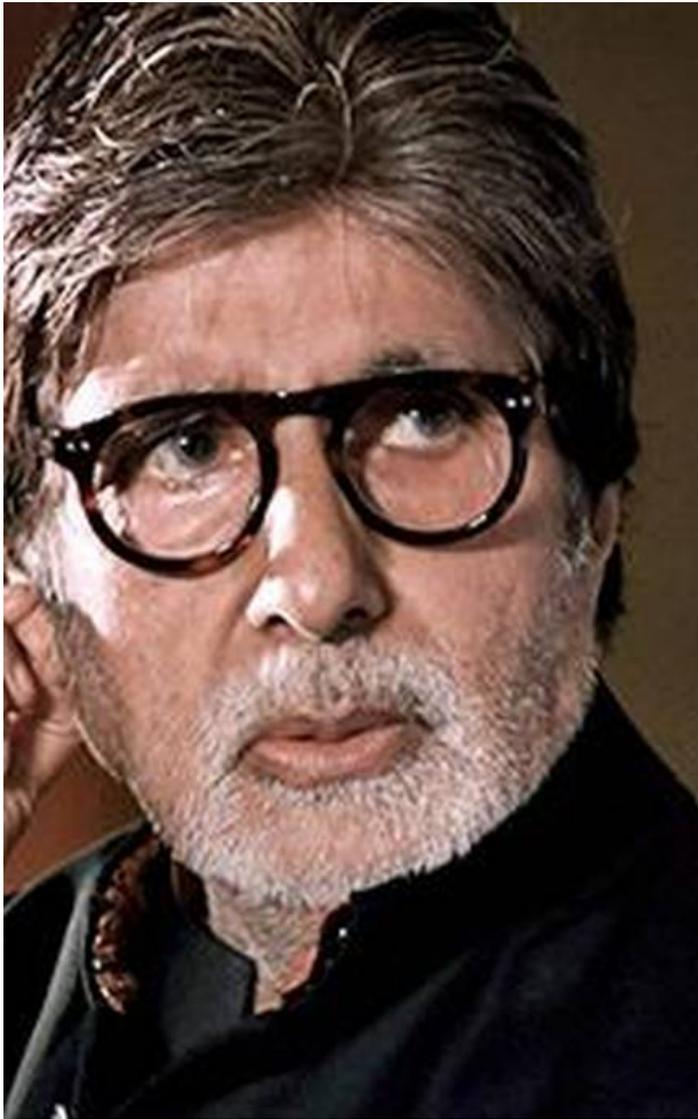




## Association with Horlicks spells trouble for Bachchan

MAITRI PORECHA

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Actor Amitabh Bachchan - PTI

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**NEW DELHI, JUNE 5**

Bollywood actor Amitabh Bachchan's association with Horlicks for a campaign to tackle malnutrition in the country has not gone down well with the former Health Secretary Keshav Desiraju.

Desiraju has written to Bachchan appealing to him to call off his association with the campaign launched by GlaxoSmithKline, under the brandname of Horlicks, as the product is not true to its claims.

While GSK maintains that it is running an awareness campaign, some within the company acknowledge that a consumer on the street will relate to the brand more and not the company.

Desiraju, who is the Chairman of Nutrition Advocacy in Public Interest - India (NApi), believes that it dents Bachchan's image as a socially responsible celebrity.

"Horlicks is a high sugar product, as 100 gram of a popularly advertised pack of Horlicks Delight, contains 78 gram of carbohydrates, of which 32 grams is sucrose sugar. This is harmful for children as it may contribute to childhood obesity and non-communicable diseases in later life. We hope you are aware that WHO recommends a reduced daily intake of free sugars throughout the life to less than 10 per cent of total energy intake. Furthermore, in the interest of good health, WHO suggests intake of free sugars to below 5 per cent of total energy intake," Desiraju stated in his letter.

Starting May 31, a wave of television advertisements and tweets announced the teaming up of Horlicks, News 18 and Bachchan to tackle malnutrition and support Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pet project, Rashtriya Poshan Abhiyaan.

Navneet Saluja, Managing Director, GSK Consumer Healthcare, said, "Our initiative has a singular goal — to help promote the need for nutritional needs across rural and urban India...We are committed to dialling up mass awareness around malnourishment and working with the civil society towards its eradication."



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