

Tainted baby formula may have made hundreds ill

AT LEAST 60 babies in the UK became ill after drinking contaminated formula milk – with experts warning that ‘hundreds more’ may have been affected.

Dozens of parents reported that their infants were sick earlier this year after consuming the baby formula, which contained the toxin cereulide, according to the UK Health Security Agency.

But child health experts now say that many more infants could have suffered ‘avoidable sickness’ after it emerged contaminated products were on sale for up to eight months before the first recall notice was issued in January.

Cereulide can cause vomiting and stom-

By **Rosie Taylor**

ach pain. In rare cases, consuming it may result in liver or kidney failure.

Experts are warning that babies remain at risk of harm from future contamination without stricter rules on formula safety. They say that baby formula brands ‘mark their own homework’ instead of having their products tested for safety independently.

Multiple batches of products made by Danone and Nestle, including for the Aptamil, Cow & Gate and SMA brands, were recalled in the UK in January and February after a worldwide contamination alert. The issue was later traced back to an ingredient

made by a third-party supplier in China. The formula industry said there was no confirmed link between babies consuming the products and the cases of sickness.

Dr Vicky Sibson, director of child health charity First Steps Nutrition Trust, said: ‘Considering products were on shelves for months before parents were warned about the problem, then potentially hundreds of babies suffered avoidable sickness. There is no independent safety testing of formula in the UK, so we rely on the industry to tell us when there is a problem.’

She said UK authorities should monitor cases of sickness in babies reported to GPs and hospitals in order to spot when

illnesses may be caused by formula contamination. In a report released today, the trust says contamination is becoming more likely as manufacturers rely on supply chains which are ‘vulnerable to disruption’.

Just three manufacturers produce 90 per cent of formula consumed in the UK.

Nestle said it ‘acted quickly and decisively with the precautionary recall on January 5’. Danone said its products are made ‘in factories that are independently certified’ and pass strict quality controls.

Natasha Bye, of industry body the British Specialist Nutrition Association, said that formula ‘is one of the most tightly regulated food categories’.

Private sector is at a tipping point so do NOT add to our burden, CBI tells Labour

By **John-Paul Ford Rojas**
Deputy Business Editor

HIGH taxes are leaving struggling businesses at a ‘tipping point’ amid dire concerns Labour is treating them as a ‘cash tap’, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) will warn.

In a stark speech today, Rain Newton-Smith, chief executive of the business lobby group, will insist that Britain’s private sector, also being battered by the global effects of the Iran war, cannot take any more cost pressures.

And the head of Britain’s biggest business group will sound the alarm over Labour’s civil war, which is leaving the economy ‘holding its breath’, denting confidence and investment and threatening a ‘summer of stagnation’.

In a speech at the CBI’s national business dinner in London, Ms Newton-Smith will say: ‘Business is not a cash tap that can be turned on without consequence.’

‘Adding to the burden now would have serious consequences. You cannot tax your way to growth and we must not try.’

It comes after a tranche of Government files this week revealed how MPs want to squeeze more taxes from firms and businesses.

In messages released as part of the Mandelson Files, senior Cabinet minister Pat McFadden admitted that MPs were constantly asking him: ‘Who can we tax in order to pay benefits to others?’

Yet businesses are already buckling under the pressure of hikes in employer National Insurance (NI) contributions, increase in

Homes where no one works at 10-year high

THE number of homes in the UK where no one works has hit the highest level in more than a decade.

Jobless households soared to 3.17million at the start of the year, according to the Office for National Statistics.

It is the highest level since 2015 and represents one in seven households in which there is at least one person of working age.

The number has surged by 113,000 in the past year and by nearly 200,000 since

By **Jason Groves**

Labour came to office in 2024. Measures blamed for crushing the jobs market include Chancellor Rachel Reeves’ employer National Insurance raid and steep minimum wage hikes.

Yesterday Ms Reeves visited the construction site of Universal Studios theme park in Bedfordshire, which is set to receive £1.3billion in Government funding.

the minimum wage, a raft of new workers’ rights, bungled rates reform and soaring energy bills. CBI figures show taxes paid by businesses hit record levels last

‘You can’t tax your way to growth’

year of £345 billion, including £27 billion from Labour’s NI raid.

‘That is not free money,’ Ms Newton-Smith will say. ‘It is not free of consequence. You cannot fix the cost of living without fixing the cost of doing business.’

‘And the cost of doing business is reaching a tipping point.’

And on Labour’s leadership turmoil, she will add: ‘The chal-

lenges in our economy won’t fix themselves while politicians look inwards.

‘Big decisions need taking. The world is moving fast – it will not wait. We need a government that is getting on with governing.’

‘Business cannot afford a summer of stagnation while the politics play out.’

‘There is a real, material cost to what’s happening in Westminster now.’

The CBI’s findings show that business taxes grew by 13 per cent in the latest financial year – faster than the 9 per cent overall increase in taxes.

That has helped make UK firms less profitable than any time since the financial crisis in 2008.

‘The business leaders I meet are



Dirty work: Ms Reeves yesterday

Anger over careers day at Thames Water... just for refugees

By **Christian Calgie**
Senior Political Correspondent-at-Large

BRITAIN’S biggest water firm faced criticism last night over a careers event exclusively for refugees – days after a report warned of a ‘lost generation’ of young British workers.

Tomorrow, refugees will turn up at Thames Water’s Reading headquarters for a series of workshops ‘and the chance to ask questions about roles, skills and future opportunities’.

The ‘Refugee Insight Day’ will also grant those in attendance the opportunity to ‘take part in networking with hiring teams’.

The event – which comes after a report last week by ex-Cabinet minister Alan Milburn revealed over one million young people are not in education, employment or training – drew a furious response from Reform UK.

Zia Yusuf, the party’s home affairs spokesman, told the

‘British workers at back of queue’

Daily Mail: ‘While Britain is sleepwalking into a youth unemployment crisis, with nearly one in five young people on track to be without work, Thames Water has offered career opportunities exclusively to refugees.’

‘British workers are being pushed to the back of the queue and denied opportunities in their own country.’

A Thames Water spokesman said last night: ‘We are committed to improving workforce diversity, so it reflects the communities we serve.’

The Centre For Social Justice said last week that employers have hired 27 young workers from outside the EU for every Briton taken on in recent years.

HMRC figures show that the number of non-EU or non-UK nationals under 25 in employment rose by 289,400 since January 2020. But at the same time, employment of young Britons rose by just 10,800.