

Melamine-tainted drinks emerge again in China: report

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Authorities in central China are searching for a batch of dairy products containing high levels of melamine, the chemical that killed six babies and sickened 300,000 others in 2008, state media said Monday.

The government in Hubei province's Xiangfan city has asked all local businesses to look for 50 packages of a corn-flavoured dairy drink, the official China Daily newspaper reported.

Tests showed the melamine levels in the drinks were high, suggesting that the chemical -- which is normally used in making plastics -- was deliberately added during the production process, the report said.

It was not clear how many individual drinks were in one package.

The report said the company that made the drinks being sought in Hubei had bought [milk powder](#) as a raw material from a supplier in another province without knowing it was tainted with melamine.

China's [dairy industry](#) was rocked in 2008 by revelations that melamine was added to powdered milk to make it appear higher in protein content, sickening babies and causing worldwide recalls of products containing Chinese dairy.

The government said at the time it had destroyed all tainted milk powder and gave the all-clear, but reports of melamine-laced products have regularly re-emerged since then.

In July, authorities in [China](#) said they found 25,000 tonnes of milk powder tainted with [melamine](#) earlier this year.

Earlier this month authorities in Beijing sentenced the father of one of the children sickened in 2008 to two and a half years in prison.

Zhao Lianhai was jailed for seeking to cause "public disturbances" after he campaigned for compensation for victims of the scandal.

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