

Press release: UK and Indian authorities clamp down on international medicines crime

Following a meeting in Delhi earlier this month, MHRA will send intelligence to the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), enabling them to target regions suspected of sending unlicensed medicines into the UK.

This is another example of co-ordinated efforts to tackle international medicines crime. The DRI recently seized 350,000 tablets of potent medicines such as Diazepam, Tramadol and Zopiclone destined for UK, European and US markets. Rapid mutual intelligence-sharing will help to combat the illegal cross-border trade in medicines.

The UK and India have a longstanding relationship when it comes to collaborating around the issue of medicines. In [2015 both countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#), further increasing collaboration in the area of medicines and medical devices and improving public safety.

MHRA's Head of Enforcement, Alastair Jeffrey:

Our active collaboration with Indian Government agencies sends a strong message to criminals; when we work with our global partners we are able to disrupt criminal activity through the identification, arrest and prosecution of offenders wherever they are.

We are working tirelessly to identify all those involved in bringing unlicensed medicines into the UK.

Our collaborative efforts with key partners like India will help protect the health of UK citizens.

Additional Director General, Vivek Chaturvedi, said:

Indian Customs is committed to detecting and preventing illegal cross border trade in medicines and psychotropic substances. DRI being the apex intelligence and investigative agency has successfully booked a number of cases, carried out seizures and arrested offenders in recent past.

DRI works closely with international law enforcement agencies and regulators and MHRA is an important partner in tackling the menace of trade in illegal medicines.

Such collaboration is mutually beneficial to both countries in

protecting the health of their citizens and in prosecuting the criminals involved in such offences.

Ends

Background

1. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK by ensuring they work and are acceptably safe.
2. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgements to ensure that the benefits justify any risks.
3. The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence is the apex intelligence and investigative agency for matters relating to smuggling and violation of the Customs Act, NDPS Act, and other allied Acts involving cross border offences. The Directorate is part of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs under the Department of Revenue, Government of India.
4. The medicines seized were Zopiclone, Zolpidem, Lorazepam, Diazepam, Tramadol and Alprazolam.
5. MHRA will send intelligence to DRI under the existing bilateral provisions.