

HP Police to hand over financial investigation of cases of pharma-opioid trafficking to Enforcement Directorate (ED)

Himachal Pradesh Police is determined to strive for '**Drug Free Himachal**' by enforcing drug laws firmly. We are making every effort to wipe out drug menace, particularly the misuse of pharma-opioids. There are 139 factories having licenses to produce pharma-opioids / psychotropic substances, listed in the schedule of NDPS Act, in Himachal Pradesh. Few of them have been found misusing these licenses and selling pharma products to illegal market.

Recently, on 29-30 May 2021, in a joint operation with Punjab Police, HP Police seized 30,16,332 intoxicant tablets, including 12.45 lakh Tramadol capsules, 7.72 lakh Tramadol tablets, 9.99 lakh Alprax (alprazolam) tablets worth Rs. 15 crores from Unique Formulations, Paonta Sahib, District Sirmour. Investigation revealed that their marketing company PB pharmaceuticals, New Delhi has been found fake and non-existent. By printing name of fake marketing companies on labels, these pharma-opioids have been diverted to illegal market. Sirmour Police registered another case against Unique Formulations and recovered 745 KG of Tramadol raw material worth Rs. 3 crores. One accused who is the main conspirator has already been arrested and the case is under investigation.

In 2019, Apple Field Pharma Company, Paonta Sahib, was shut down by HP Police State Narcotics Cell for unaccounted stock of 47,000 Tramadol tablets and 10,000 Codeine based cough syrup. This case stands chargesheeted and is now under trial. During the investigation, it is reliably learnt that the proprietors/shareholders of Unique Formulations and Apple Field Pharma are the same. Investigation in this regards is underway.

On 31st May 2021, another company Orison Pharma International Kala Amb, District Sirmour was also found with manufacturing tablets containing Tramadol and sold to a marketing company named PP Pharma located in Ahmadabad, Gujarat. Investigation revealed that Orison Pharma does not have any agreement with this firm as per the requirement under Drugs & Cosmetics Act and their transactions are found suspicious. During the inspection of the said pharma company, 30,10,050 Tramadol tablets and 226 Kg of Tramadol mixed raw material worth Rs. 3 crores has been seized by Sirmour Police. Case is under investigation.

On the receipt of information from Interpol Benin (a country in Africa) through Interpol Division of CBI, Himachal Pradesh Police registered FIR against Laborate Pharmaceuticals, Paonta Sahib for illegal export of 1.75 crores Tramadol tablets worth around Rs. 5 Crores (approximately Rs. 100 Crores in illegal market) to Chad, an African nation. The investigation is underway.

HP Police has been taking stringent action against illegal supply of pharma-
opioids.

Year	Cases registered against stockists/pharma companies/retailers	Seizures	Persons arrested
2018	98	55561 tablets, 88166 capsules & 1143 syrups	125
2019	72	19724 tablets, 102956 capsules & 9848 syrups	85
2020	105	118145 tablets, 46370 capsules & 940 syrups	129
2021- Till 30 th April	30	10185 tablets, 5824 capsules & 53 syrups	39

Large scale operations to address pharma-opioid trafficking have been carried out during the last 2 months.

To curb the activities of pharma companies who are indulging in illegal pharma-opioid trade, HP Police is taking strict action against them including financial investigation under NDPS Act for attachment of illegally acquired properties. The information on this subject, is being shared with Enforcement Directorate (ED) to investigate money laundering under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) with the request to attach all properties acquired as a result of “proceeds of this pharma-opioid trafficking crime”
