GENERAL SCIENCE 26 September 2026

Counterfeit Medicine Seizure Exposes Gaps in Drug Regulation

Recent seizure of counterfeit oncology and ICU medicines in Bengaluru highlighted vulnerabilities in the pharmaceutical supply chain.

Counterfeit medicines are fake, mislabelled, or expired drugs repackaged and sold as genuine, posing severe public health risks.

KEY EXAM POINTS

- **Bengaluru** police seized counterfeit, expired, and mislabelled critical medicines, including **oncology therapies** and ICU injectables.
- Unscrupulous operators **repackaged** expired or cheap formulations with counterfeit branding and distributed them using forged invoices.
- Spurious life-saving drugs were sold to hospitals and pharmacies at steep discounts of up to **50%**.
- The operations exploited regulatory boundaries and enforcement gaps across different **state borders**.
- Counterfeit oncology drugs cause **therapeutic failure**, allowing malignant tumors to progress to untreatable stages.
- Ingestion of sub-potent or contaminated counterfeit drugs leads to **secondary toxicity** and severe clinical complications.

DID YOU KNOW..!?

The **Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940** regulates the import, manufacture, distribution, and sale of drugs in India.

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (**CDSCO**) is the national regulatory body for cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices.

The Supreme Court has interpreted the Right to Health as an integral part of the Right to Life under **Article 21** of the Constitution.

The **Drugs Technical Advisory Board** (DTAB) is the highest decision-making body under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act on technical matters.

The **Mashelkar Committee** (**2003**) recommended strengthening the drug regulatory system and establishing special courts for speedy trial of drug counterfeiting cases.

The Drugs Consultative Committee (**DCC**) is a statutory committee constituted under **Section 7** of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act to secure uniformity in administration.

State Licensing Authorities (SLAs) grant licenses for manufacturing and selling drugs, while CDSCO approves new drugs and clinical trials.

REVISION FLASHCARD

Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and CDSCO regulate pharmaceutical quality and safety in India.

Syllabus Relevance: High relevance for Unit 1 (General Science - Health, Medicine, and Public Safety) and Unit 5 (Polity - Article 21).

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