

Interpol seized \$41 mn fake drugs to be sold online

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Singapore: Interpol's sixth and the biggest annual worldwide crackdown, Pangea VI has ended in seizing of \$41 million worth of illegal pharmaceuticals that were being sold online.

The worldwide police crackdown that led to a record seizure found that 99 countries were netting nearly three times as many counterfeit pills as last year's crackdown, with four times the value. The UK led the list of these countries with nearly half of the 9.9 million doses of illegal drugs being seized from the country.

The drugs involved in the haul were for slimming, hair loss and erectile dysfunction, the UK Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) said. All across the world, counterfeits like antibiotics, anti virals and drugs for breast cancer, asthma, diabetes and epilepsy were seized.

The investigators tracked down those involved using internet service providers, online payment systems, postal inspections and raids that eventually led to the closure of 10,000 online pharmacies and the arrest of 58 people.

As per the World Health Organisation, medicines accounting for six percent of counterfeit products seized at the European Union borders. In November last year, the WHO had launched negotiations for a treaty to fight the counterfeit drug trade.