

India asks China to act on fake medicines issue

Chinese origin 'Made in India' drugs seized in Nigeria

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Concerned over Chinese-origin fake "Made in India" medicines, which were seized in Nigeria in June, the Indian Government has raised the issue with Chinese authorities in India and China.

The Commerce Ministry has registered its concern with the Chinese Embassy in India and through the Indian embassy in China, an official familiar with the development told *Business Line*.

The authorities were asked to take action against those involved in misrepresenting products for wrongful gains, the official added.

Similar seizures had taken place a year ago as well, and

India had taken up the issue then too with the Chinese authorities.

No similar incidents had been reported since, the Ministry official said, until the latest incident about two months ago.

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Nigerian health regulatory authority, Nafdac, had seized consignments of fake "Made in India" medicines with origins in China late June.

The fake drugs included antibiotic Ciprotab, anti-malarial Lariam and psychotropic drug Lexotam, a Nafdac note said.

The seizure of the fake Ciprotab had Indian exporter VS International worried, as the brand is its flagship in the Ni-

► *Nigerian regulator says the medicines "were transported by Qatar Airlines, Emirates Airlines and Lufthansa Airlines in clear violation of pre-shipment procedures for imported goods."*

gerian market, Nafdac observed that the recent seizure of fake medicines was "worrisome" as they originated from China and "were transported by Qatar Airlines, Emirates Airlines and Lufthansa Airlines in clear violation of Nafdac's pre-shipment procedures for imported goods."

The former Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Joint Commissioner, Mr Ramakant Gudal, pointed

out that something was "amiss" if the fake Chinese-origin problem has re-emerged — especially as China was tough in enforcing laws.

Exports from India to Nigeria are estimated at over Rs 1,000 crore, he said, adding that volume-wise Nigeria is among the biggest purchaser of medicines in the region from India.

The seizure of counterfeits is a major setback for Indian

manufacturers and exporters, he said. Mr Gudal now runs QCS, a quality certification agency, and has been appointed by Nafdac to inspect drug exports from India, he said.

The agency has its own inspectors, and checks medicine samples from factories, godowns and airports; gets it tested in authentic laboratories and provides a "clear report of inspection and analysis" report, he explained.

While manufacturers and exporters are tightening their own anti-counterfeit measures, Mr Gudal said that airline companies and authorities at transit points need to undertake more stringent scanning measures.