Fake hand sanitiser, mask factory busted in Noida; 4 held

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An offender under the Act may be punished with imprisonment up to seven years or fine or both and can be detained for a maximum of six months.

Four people were arrested after a fake hand-sanitiser and face-mask manufacturing company was busted in Noida on Saturday, officials said, a day after the Centre declared the two items as 'essential commodities'.

Sub-divisional magistrate Rajeev Rai said after a tip-off around 2.30 pm, a raid was carried out immediately at the company in the commercial hub of Sector 63.

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"Four people have been arrested from the spot. Over 5,000 face masks and around 5,000 bottles of hand sanitisers have been seized," Rai, who led the raid, told PTI. "Both the items bore the label name 'SG Group' and are pegged worth around Rs 10 lakh but are not genuine products."

He said a detailed assessment of the seized material was underway.

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Pharmacists and traders had earlier claimed shortage of supply of hand sanitisers and masks in Noida and Greater Noida amid fears over the deadly COVID-19, while people rued that these items were being sold at exorbitant rates, if available.

"We will ensure that law takes its due to course over any irregularity related to it," Gautam Buddha Nagar District Magistrate B N Singh told PTI.

The Centre had on Friday brought masks and hand sanitisers under the Essential Commodities Act up to June 30 as the novel coronavirus pandemic led to shortages and black marketing of these items.

The decision has empowered the Centre as well states to regulate production, quality, distributions of masks and hand sanitisers, and also to smoothen the sale and availability of these items, and carry out operations against speculators.

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The Union Health Ministry has put the number of coronavirus positive cases in the country at 84, and issued directives to states specifying list of items and norms of assistance for containment of COVID-19 under their disaster funds.

Two persons -- a 76-year-old man from Karnataka and a 68-year-old woman in Delhi -- have died from the novel coronavirus, which has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization and claimed over 5,000 lives across the world.

Source: https://www.deccanherald.com/national/north-and-central/fake-hand-sanitiser-mask-factory-busted-in-noida-4-held-813907.html