

India probing cough syrup linked to Gambia child deaths

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Indian authorities are investigating cough syrups made by a local pharmaceutical company after the World Health Organisation said they could be responsible for the deaths of 66 children in The Gambia.

The UN health agency issued an alert this week warning that four cough and cold remedies manufactured by Maiden Pharmaceuticals in northern Haryana state could cause acute kidney injuries.

Laboratory testing had found unacceptable levels of potentially life-threatening contaminants, the WHO said, adding that the [products](#) may have been distributed beyond the West African country.

India's [health ministry](#) said late Thursday it had been informed of the WHO's findings last month and was awaiting the results of its own lab tests of the four drugs.

It added that the company was not licensed to distribute the four products in India and had only manufactured and exported them to The Gambia.

"It is a usual practice that the importing country tests these imported products on quality parameters, and satisfies itself as to the quality of the products," the ministry statement said.

Maiden Pharmaceuticals did not respond to AFP requests for comment after the WHO's health alert.

The company has caught the attention of Indian regulators several times.

The Food and Drug Administration issued notices to the firm four times this year for "substandard" product manufacturing based on batch tests, according to the agency's website.

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