

Ensure there is no sale of 'misbranded products': HC to Uttarakhand govt

A division bench gave the direction while disposing of a Public Interest Litigation filed by a Rishikesh-based social worker.

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The high court has also directed the chief medical officers of all districts to inspect markets and ensure that no misbranded product is sold in Uttarakhand. (HT File Photo/Representative image)

The Uttarakhand high court has directed the state government to ensure that no misbranded products such as soft drinks and beverages, including water, are sold in Uttarakhand.

A division bench of justices Rajiv Sharma and Lok Pal Singh gave the direction while disposing of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by Sunil

Dutt Sharma, a Rishikesh-based social worker, in 2015. The order was issued on June 19 but its copy was made available on Wednesday.

Pramod Bailwal, counsel for the petitioner, said that the Sharma had alleged that Rakesh Singh, a resident of Rishikesh, was manufacturing and selling lemon soda and cold drinks without any authorised branding in gross violation of the Food Safety and Standards Regulations (Packaging and Labelling) 2011.

Citing the petition, the HC order noted that Singh had installed a unit with no name and title.

“There is no manufacturing agency label, rate, date of manufacturing and expiry on the bottles in the shops and open trolleys. The beverage is consumed by all the citizens. The state government has not taken any action to check this menace,” the order said.

The HC said that according to the counter affidavit filed by the authorities concerned, the food and drug testing laboratory in Rudrapur had submitted a report on June 30, 2015, indicating that the samples of the carbonated lemon soda did not conform to the provisions of the Food Safety and Standards Regulations (Packaging and Labelling) rules and that the product was found to be “misbranded”.

The court said that the report was sent to Singh. “It is the statutory duty cast upon the state government that no person manufactures, misbrands or sells any product which is injurious to health. The products must conform to the norms laid down by the Food Safety and Standards Regulations (Packaging and Labelling) 2011.

CMOs to inspect markets

The HC has also directed the chief medical officers of all districts to inspect markets and ensure that no misbranded product is sold across Uttarakhand. The order said that strict action will be taken against persons selling misbranded items by taking samples every seven days. The HC has directed the chief medical officers to order the closure of units running illegally in Uttarakhand.