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ASOP Global Commends DEA's Operation Meltdown to Shut Down Hundreds of Illegal Online Pharmacies

WASHINGTON, DC (February 5, 2026) – The [Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies](#) (ASOP Global) today commended the [U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration](#) (DEA) for its decisive enforcement action under [Operation Meltdown](#), which resulted in the seizure of more than 200 illegal online pharmacy website domains and significant actions against a transnational criminal organization responsible for distributing diverted and counterfeit pharmaceuticals to U.S. consumers.

According to the DEA, the operation targeted an India-based organization that allegedly contributed to at least six fatal and four non-fatal overdoses in the United States. Beginning January 27, 2026, coordinated actions by DEA field offices nationwide led to multiple arrests, administrative sanctions against DEA registrants, and the shutdown of hundreds of online pharmacies accused of dispensing controlled substances without valid prescriptions.

“These criminal networks deliberately exploit the trust patients place in online health care and weaponize the internet to distribute dangerous drugs,” said Matthew Strait, ASOP Global board member and former DEA official. “Operation Meltdown demonstrates the DEA’s unwavering commitment to protecting patients and preserving the integrity of the closed system of pharmaceutical distribution. These actions save lives and send a clear message that illegal online pharmacies, no matter where they are based, will be identified, dismantled, and held accountable.”

ASOP Global emphasizes that illegal online pharmacies continue to pose a serious and growing threat to public health by selling counterfeit and unapproved medications to unsuspecting consumers. Many of these rogue websites use U.S.-based domain names, professional-looking designs, and false claims of legitimacy to deceive patients into believing they are purchasing safe, regulated medications.

According to a recent ASOP Global Foundation [consumer survey](#), nearly two-thirds of Americans (65%) mistakenly believe that all online pharmacies or health-service websites are reviewed or approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or state regulators. In addition, more than half of respondents (51%) believe that only safe and legitimate sellers appear on the first page of online search results, highlighting widespread misconceptions that can expose patients to illegal and dangerous online drug sellers.

ASOP Global encourages patients to remain vigilant when purchasing medications online and to verify that online pharmacies require a valid prescription and are properly licensed. Consumers can visit the FDA’s [BeSafeRx campaign](#) to learn how to safely buy prescription medications online and identify legitimate, state-licensed pharmacies.

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About ASOP Global

The Alliance for Safe Online Pharmacies (ASOP Global), a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., with activities in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Latin America, and Asia, is dedicated to protecting consumers around the world, ensuring safe access to medications, and combating illegal online drug sellers.