

Centre permits distilleries to manufacture hand sanitisers

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Thursday said it has given permission to distilleries and sugar mills to manufacture hand sanitisers in bulk and has already issued licences to 45 distilleries. To maintain demand and supply of hand sanitisers, states have been asked to remove any bottlenecks in supply of raw materials for making hand sanitizers and to give permissions to the applicants, including distilleries, who intend to manufacture hand sanitisers, it said.

"We had received 100 applications, of which we have given licence to 45 distilleries so far apart from 564 other manufacturers. These companies will manufacture hand sanitisers in bulk," Consumer Affairs Secre-

tary Pawan Agarwal told PTL.

More than 55 distilleries are likely to be given permission in one or two days and many more are being motivated to produce hand sanitizers, he said.

The permission has been given under the Drug Prices Control Order, he added.

The secretary further said, "These manufacturers have also been asked to work in three shifts to maximise their output. What was produced in a month will be manufactured in a day."

Most of them have commenced production and others are likely to commence output in a week, the consumer affairs ministry said in a separate statement, and added

there will be sufficient supply of hand sanitisers for consumers and hospitals.

In order to ensure that hand sanitisers are made available to the general public and hospitals at a reasonable price, the government has also fixed the maximum retail price of hand sanitisers at Rs 100 for 200 ml bottle. The prices of other quantities of hand sanitisers will be fixed in the proportion of these prices.

Both central and state governments are taking all steps to ensure supply of essential items during the lockdown to combat the coronavirus.

In order to prevent spread of coronavirus, hand sanitisers are used by the public, health workers and hospitals. AGENCIES