
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

GROUP 1 PHASE 1

ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SITUATION OF ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFICKING

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I. INTRODUCTION

Ordinarily, drugs should be used to treat or control diseases. To this end, the use of drugs is entirely lawful and poses no problem. The problem, however, arises when the drugs are used abusively, for example, to intentionally activate such a degree of ecstasy in the subconscious that it leads to negative degeneration and devastation of the social fabric.

Illicit drug trafficking is accelerating at an unprecedented pace, spreading very rapidly across the globe, as a result of rapid globalization. The IT revolution has reduced the world to a small village and has made communication exceptionally fast and easy. The drug trafficker has found very useful tools to reach his desired destination with ease and with a high degree of secrecy, speed and specificity (three S).

Illicit drug trafficking is one, if not, the biggest of all transnational organized crimes. A large variety of drugs are involved, leading amongst which is cannabis (marijuana and hashish), opiates (opium and heroin), stimulants and cocaine. According to the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, cannabis continues to be widely cultivated and trafficked. More than 155 countries reported seizures of cannabis in 1999. In the Central Asian Republics, fields of cannabis cover several thousands of hectares and these constitute the major source of supply for the illicit Russian drug market. Indoor cultivation of cannabis continues to develop especially in the Netherlands, Canada and the U.S.A. Opium production was, however, in decline in the year 2000 in some countries. It is mainly produced in Afghanistan, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Colombia and Mexico.

119TH INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

In spite of the versatile countermeasures taken by the various countries of the world to fight illicit drug trafficking, the trade continues to grow. Several reasons have been advanced to explain the survival of this heinous and illicit business. Corruption of government officials apart, the drug traffickers employ a wide range of other means to establish and expand their trade through various trafficking modes which include concealment in "double-bottom" bags; hide-outs in sea vessels, trains, cargo containers, aircraft, vehicle fuel tanks and tyres; using children as innocent carriers, the list is exhaustive. It is thus difficult to stop this illicit drug trade. But it is the view of this group that consumer countries, in order to stop production, must take all necessary measures not to allow this material to reach their countries and if it does reach it should not be distributed. All this can be done by persuasion through various media and groups. This will not only discourage the traffic in narcotics but also the distribution and even the users of these drugs.

II. CURRENT SITUATION

A. Global Situation

The recent increase in the scope, intensity and sophistication of crime around the world threatens the safety of citizens everywhere and hampers countries in their social, economic and cultural development.

Drug abuse is a global phenomenon. It effects almost every country, although its extent and intensity differ from region to region. Drug abuse trends around the world, especially among youth, have started to rise over the last few decades. Criminal groups have established international networks to carry out their

activities more effectively through sophisticated technology and by exploiting today's open borders, in some countries.

Illicit cultivation of opium and coca bush is now mostly concentrated in the territories of two and three counties respectively. The year 2000 recorded a decline in global opium production and a stabilization in cocoa production. The total increase in cultivation in the year 2000 is due to a 19,200 ha increase in cultivation in Myanmar, partly offset by a 8,400 ha decrease in Afghanistan and a 3,500 ha decrease in Laos.

In the year 2000, close to 50% of the global illicit poppy cultivation areas were located in Myanmar, 36% in Afghanistan, and 10% in other Asian countries. The Americas, Colombia and Mexico accounted together for 4% of global cultivation. Overall, the cultivation of cocoa bush, the production of cocoa leaf and the potential production of cocaine remained more or less stable in the year 2000 due to (1) continued eradication in Bolivia; (2) a decline of cultivation in Peru; (3) some increase in Colombia. In the absence of reliable information on global cannabis cultivation, seizures seem to confirm that cannabis continues to be widely cultivated and trafficked.

According to Interpol, "the indoor cultivation of cannabis continued to develop during the year 2000, especially in the Netherlands, Canada and the U.S.A. An increasing amount of cannabis from Colombia and Jamaica made its way to Europe during the year. The Central Asian Republics, where vast fields of cannabis cover several hundreds of hectares, remain for the time being a major source of supply for the illicit Russian market.

Cannabis ranked first, both in terms of numbers of seizure cases and amounts seized. Large scale seizure cases of cocaine, notably when it is trafficking by sea, are more likely than heroin or amphetamine-type stimulants.

The most significant increases in seizures in 1999 were reported for amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), reflecting increasing levels of trafficking and law enforcement activities in East and South-East Asia. Seizure of opiates, expressed in heroin equivalents, grew by 14%, largely reflecting the 1999 bumper harvest in Afghanistan.

The estimates show that worldwide the most widely consumed substances are cannabis (144 million people), followed by amphetamine-type stimulants (29 million people), cocaine (14 million people) and opiates (13.5 million people of whom some 9 million are taking heroin). The total number of drug users was estimated at some 180 million people, equivalent to 3% of the global population or 4.2% of the population age 15 and above.¹

B. Country Specific Situation

1. Cameroon

Cameroon is in a region where drug trafficking is expanding. It is more of a transit than a producing country. It however produces a very insignificant quantity of marijuana when compared with the volume of production of the world. Much of what is consumed in the country is smuggled into it from the neighbouring countries, especially from Nigeria. Cameroon does not grow cocaine.

The illicit drug traffickers employ a wide range of *modus operandi* to go ahead with their illegal business. These include,

inter alia, the concealment in double-bottom bags, hide-outs in sea vessels, cargo containers, aircraft and vehicles. Women may have it hidden in their plaited hair. In some cases, children may be innocent carriers on the understanding that they are generally less suspected. In extreme cases, the traffickers take the risk to swallow small water-proof balls of the drug. Some others have had incisions in some parts of their bodies on which the drug is placed and the broken portion of the body stitched. Here, medical people are involved in the illegal business.

For now, there are no known groups in the illicit drug business in Cameroon.

2. Honduras

Drug trafficking in Honduras has increased in the last few years because it has a very good geographical location, i.e. it lies in the heart of Central America and, adjacent to two oceans. That is an advantage for the drug traffickers.

In the south of the country the drugs are smuggled in by land, most of the time from Nicaragua and El Salvador, and in the north of the country the trafficking is more often carried out by sea, and drugs from Colombia reach Honduras via speed boats.

Honduras is not only a transit country but it also has a lot of consumers. The trafficking is not only inside the country but there is international trafficking among the countries of South and Central America. Traffickers use Honduras as a transit country to the final destination, that is, the U.S.A.

(i) *Drugs more currently used*

The drugs more currently used in Honduras are:

¹ Global Illicit Drug Trends 2001, UNODDCCP

119TH INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

- Marijuana (Cannabis)
- Powder cocaine
- Crack cocaine
- Heroin
- Amphetamines

(ii) *Principal countries*

Based on the experience and analyzing the current situation of the countries in the area we can say that the principal countries related with drugs are:

Producing: Colombia and Mexico
Transit: Central America
Market U.S.A.

(iii) *Modus operandi*

The *modus operandi* more frequently used is bringing the cocaine from Colombia in speed boats or by plane. The traffickers drop it in Honduras, either in the water or on the land where there is usually someone waiting to collect it by boat or by car and take it to the borders in Guatemala and then Mexico. From where it goes into the U.S.A. Another way is by bringing the drugs in big containers from Nicaragua, which go across Honduras to the borders with Guatemala, and Mexico and finally to the U.S.A.

(iv) *Organized Groups*

In Honduras, there are many organized groups, inside the country and abroad. Police have identified three major organized groups inside the country that deal only with Marijuana, and also two big international organized groups that have members from Colombia, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Mexico.

3. Japan

The most frequently abused drugs in Japan are stimulant drugs (mostly metamphetamine) and the second is cannabis. In the year 2000, the seizure of Stimulant drugs totaled 1,026.9 kg. Arrests made in violations of the

Stimulant Drug Control Law totaled 18,942. The seizure of dried cannabis amounted to as much as 306.4 kg.

The main sources of stimulant drugs are traced to China and North Korea. Most of the cannabis came from the Philippines, Thailand and the Netherlands.

Each smuggling case has come to involve a large amount of drugs. On a beach in Kagoshima prefecture in October 1999, police and concerned authorities seized 564.6 kg, the largest single seizure ever. While most of the illicit drugs in circulation in Japan have been smuggled from abroad by international drug and criminal syndicates, visiting foreign nationals have been found operating as consignees.

These illicit drugs have been smuggled by vessels or cargo aircraft disguised as bona fide articles. Some arrivals were found carrying parcels of illicit drugs concealed about their persons or in their carry-on luggage. Approximately 76% of the total volume seized was in smuggling incidents using vessels in 2000. It appeared that there were also criminal acts that attempted to unload substances from regional ports as well as coastal areas outside the ports by methods including the transfer of cargo from mother ship to small boats and concealment in trading vessels.

Boryokudan, traditional organized criminal groups, were quick to realize that the stimulant drug trafficking yielded huge profits because of the significantly large margins between the wholesale costs and retailing prices. Moreover, a stable demand could be expected as abusers develop dependency for the drug. Boryokudan groups smuggled in the stimulant drug in

partnership with transborder drug syndicates and dominated domestic traffickers, thus contributing to the spread of abuse.

In 2000, a quarter of arrested Boryokudan members were Stimulant Drug Control Law violations. And this figure accounts for 40.8% of the total stimulant drug offender's arrests. Boryokudan members often use sophisticated methods, for example, using cellular phones with a system of prepaying charges for calls to be made in which the users can remain anonymous and conclude drug sales without meeting the buyers.²

4. Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan the most common abused drugs is opiates (opium and heroin). Cannabis is gradually increasing. A small amount of stimulant drugs such as ecstasy are also abused.

Opium is produced in Afghanistan. Most of the opium is transferred to Europe and the USA through Russia, and the rest are consumed in Kyrgyzstan. Cannabis is produced in Kyrgyzstan. Approximately 90% of cannabis is exported to Russia, and the rest is consumed in Kyrgyzstan. Stimulant drugs like ecstasy are produced in Europe, and trafficked to Kyrgyzstan through Russia and consumed in Kyrgyzstan.

The world center of illegal drug production is shifting from the so-called Golden Crescent (area of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and northern part of India) to Afghanistan intensively. It has resulted in an increase of drug

trafficking in its neighboring countries, mainly in Central Asia. The mass production of illegal drugs in Afghanistan has led to a decline of price in the world drug market. It also has a great influence on Kyrgyzstan, and drug abusers have increased more than before.

At present there are four major routes to smuggle drugs from Tajikistan to Kyrgyzstan:

Route 1: Kyzyl-Art, covering Osh-Khorog highway and peripheral zones, bordering Mt. Badakhshan.

Route 2: Altyn-Mazar, which begins at Raushan plateau of Zaalay mountain range and spreads to the Chon Alai valley.

Route 3: Batken, including mountain routes, used to cross through Jergital and Garm rayons to Batken and Kadamjai rayons of Osh Oblast.

Route 4: Leninabad, including all of the highways, starting with Laylak rayon and adjoining areas of Uzbekistan and oblast centers.

Automobiles can be used in route 1 and route 4. Therefore, drugs are hidden inside the containers of vegetable and fuel tanks loaded on large size trailer trucks. Route 2 and route 3 are located in the high mountain areas, thus, drugs are transferred by horses and people.

No stable organized groups are recognized in the country.

5. Pakistan

(i) *Illicit Drug Trafficking*

Drug trafficking is presently, in most probability, one of the biggest illegal national and transnational activities

² White Paper on Police 2001, National Police Agency Government of Japan, and Japan Coast Guard Annual Report 2001, Japan Coast Guard

119TH INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

earning titanic profits (and generating other transnational crimes) and threatening the present and future economies and generations.

The drugs situation in Pakistan has improved almost miraculously so much so that by 1999–2000 only 16.8 tons of heroin yield was possible as compared to 800 tons in 1979–1980. Pakistan is thus struck off the list of producer countries and on the other hand has become a victim and a transit country.

The increase in poppy cultivation in Afghanistan since 1993 and growth in the sophistication of the Afghan drug trade is putting enormous pressure on the GOP's (Government of Pakistan) border control efforts and Pakistani society. Successful interdiction operations occur, but traffickers have superior fire power and faster vehicles, the territory is enormous and law enforcement is widely dispersed, with little mobilization capacity. This means more problems in fighting this crime.

Both Afghan origin cannabis and opiates transit through Pakistan. Afghanistan produced an estimated 3656 metric tons of opium in 2000. However drug abuse escalated after the introduction of heroin in 1980, (Soviet invasion of Afghanistan). Since, it has affected every class, every age group and every income bracket all over Pakistan. According to a rough survey there are about 4 million addicts half of whom are heroin addicts as against only 5000 in 1981. The social impact is of course immeasurable.

Presently, Drug law enforcement is done by a number of agencies. These include the Anti-Narcotics Force, Pakistan customs, Pak. Rangers, Frontier constabulary, Pakistan Coast Guard,

Frontier corps NWFP and Balochistan, Provincial Police Forces, and the Airport Security Force (ASF). However the principal agency is the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), whose only mandate is to coordinate and control drug trafficking.

Acetic Anhydride, the essential chemical required for conversion of opium into heroin, was previously on the "free list" for purpose of import in the licit industry. But it has been placed on the "Restricted list" and its import is allowed to legitimate industrial consumers, after due verification.

Pakistan is a signatory to the major instruments on international drug control of 1961, 1972 and 1988, and to the UN convention on TOC, December 2000.

Pakistan is a victim state in that it has become a transit and a consumer country for Afghan opiates and cannabis. GOP's cooperation with the world is viewed as excellent by the U.S.A. and other developed countries. Intensive law enforcement efforts by the ANF have forced the narcotic traffickers to adopt a low profile. Interdiction of heroin increased to 85% and several major traffickers have been arrested. The GOP has prevented the re-emergence of large heroin processing laboratories. As apparent from the above, the main drugs of abuse in Pakistan are heroin, hashish (chars) and opium. Other countries involved in the region are Afghanistan, India, Iran, China, Central Asean States and Myanmar.

(ii) *Organized Groups*

As per the latest reports released there are no well known organized groups in Pakistan involved in drug trafficking. In Pakistan the scenario is a bit different, being not a producing country, but being

used mainly as a transit country and to some extent a market country.

In Pakistan transit is being helped to reach its destination by individuals who are called Narco-barons. They usually belong to the tribal areas of the NWFP province. The infrastructure of their activities does not fit into the definition of an organized group. Groups have equal partners, a hierarchy, specializations assigned and even research being done. Then they have alliances with each other, globally known organized groups like the Boryokudan, Colombian cartels, Nigerian criminal organization, Turkish drug trafficking organization, Ukrainian criminal syndicates, Polish criminal groups, Dominican criminal organizations, etc. while individual drug or Narco-barons in Pakistan, e.g. Rehmat Shah Afridi, has his own chain of employees who act as his agents or subordinates and carry out orders of the boss through managers. It is not known, neither could it be proved till now that these Narco-barons of Pakistan have very strong bonds, partnerships, linkages, etc. to the known organized groups in other countries.

(iii) *Modus Operandi*

The common modes to transport drugs used in Pakistan are through airports and shipping camouflaged containers. They use different airlines operating in Pakistan. PIA has often been suspected of being involved but it has never been proved according to reports.

Other common methods used include body wraps, use of false bottoms of luggage, concealment in imported equipment, concealment in hidden compartments of vehicles, ships and containers as mentioned above, delivery by courier services, installing it in human body by operations or human babies.

(iv) *Due to usage of these Modes—the Arrests, Extradition and Freezing of Assets etc. carried out to date*

So far, by using one or more of the *modus operandi* 21 Narco-barons or drug traffickers (transit helpers) of Pakistan have been extradited to the U.S.A. from 1991–2000. Seven are yet to be arrested, four cases are pending in court and two are out of the country. The total amount of frozen assets of drug traffickers from 1999 to April 2001 is Rs.4718.76 million, and the total value of assets forfeited is Rs.305.75 million and the total number of cases registered during the above period is 141. In addition, to foil any designs of traffickers to take advantage of refuge in another country by manipulating its laws or due to an absence of specific laws there, Pakistan has extradition treaties with 27 countries to date and is a party to several regional and bilateral agreements pertaining to drug traffic controls.³

6. Peru

In Peru, the most frequently abused drugs are cocaine and marijuana. However lately, heroin and ecstasy appear in the drug scenario.

In South America, producers of cocaine are from Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. Peru produces marijuana for domestic consumption.

The principal routes of exporting drugs are Colombia, Panama, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, the U.S.A., Europe and Asia. Another route is Chile to Europe and Brazil to Europe.

The *modus operandi* most used is air mail. Also drugs are transferred to the U.S.A from Peru through Colombia and Mexico. By sea, drugs are hidden inside

³ Saad Imtiaz ALI, UNAFEI Individual Presentation, 21 September 2001

119TH INTERNATIONAL TRAINING COURSE
REPORTS OF THE COURSE

containers on the ships sailing to the U.S.A., Europe, Spain, Italy and Mexico.

Organized groups of drug trafficking are Mexican cartels, Colombian cartels, Peruvian groups and Bolivian groups. The activities of the Mexican cartels and the Colombian cartels extend throughout the world. These cartels run plantations, process the drugs, package them, put their original logos on the product and deliver to many countries, just like running big companies. The activities of the Peruvian groups and Bolivian groups are domestic.

III. CONCLUSION

After analyzing the current situation with special reference to our respective countries, we can say that drug trafficking is a gigantic concern, specially when we have such well organized groups that really threaten the internal security of the countries and the world.

The analysis further shows that formerly transit countries are progressively becoming consuming countries. The *modus operandi* of transporting these drugs is changing day by day both in scope and complexity and it often requires devising new methods of detection and adequate controls.

1999 seizures show that about one third of all drugs were seized in North America, a quarter in West Europe, a fifth in Asia and a tenth in South America. 1999 interception rates (quantities seized/quantities produced) were 39% for cocaine and 15% for opiates.

UNDCP estimates 180 million people consume illicit drugs (annual prevalence in the late 1990s) this includes 144 million for cannabis, 29 million for ATS, 14 million for opiates (of which 9 million

for heroin). These numbers are not cumulative because of poly-drug use. The strongest increases recorded in 1999 were for cannabis and ATS consumption. At the regional level, cocaine consumption remained stable in North America (though significantly down compared to the mid-1980s), but increased in West Europe, as in a number of countries in South America in 1999.⁴

To reduce or eliminate drug abuse, Governments and UNDCP need up-to-date statistics on who is taking drugs and why. Drug abuse cuts across age, class, ethnic and gender lines. People with drug abuse problems have different needs. Women, the young, the poor, refugees and ethnic and religious minorities need easier access to early intervention and services. Once in treatment, drug abusers may need job training and referral, assistance in finding housing and reintegrating into society. Drug abusers who commit crimes require alternative treatment in order to break the cycle of drug abuse and crime.

⁴ Global Illicit Drug Trends 2001, UNODDCCP