



## Narcotics, Organized Crime & Security in Eurasia

Weekly Digest: November 15-21 2004

The following are summaries of articles related to narcotics and security in the Central Asian 5 and Afghanistan. Where possible, web addresses for the entire article are provided...

**Quote of the week:** "More and more people join us. They are desperate. They want justice. They have little left to lose and they are starting to lose their fear" - a representative of Hizb ut-Tahrir in Uzbekistan, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav111604.shtml>, 16/11/04.

### **Your required reading**

---

As you might imagine, the news on our favorite region has been dominated by the release (finally) of UNODC's Afghanistan Opium Survey 2004. I suppose it is compulsory reading for all of us and it is available at [www.unodc.org](http://www.unodc.org)

### **A well-timed announcement**

---

Timed to coincide with the UNODC report, the US government announced that it plans to increase its spending on counter-narcotics in Afghanistan by \$780 million next financial year. The money will go towards forced eradication and the provision of alternatives for opium farmers, among other things. Although some point out that the planned aggressive eradication campaign cannot work when security remains weak, the Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Robert Charles said he did not see a "radical new need for security".

BBC, "US to tackle Afghan drugs trade", [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/4021323.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/4021323.stm), 18/11/04

### **Policing the police**

---

While analysts often argue that economic development leads to a reduction in the power of the drug trade, in Kazakhstan there are still regular examples of gross police corruption. The Chief of the Department of Drug Control in East Kazakhstan was arrested for heroin. Similarly, two officers from the Criminal Police Service of the Sairam region were arrested for holding onto 5 kg of heroin. There are also numerous allegations that Kazakhstan's customs service is universally corrupt, one example being 140kg of heroin seized within the country which had apparently entered Western Kazakhstan unhindered.

Izvestia-Kazakhstan, "Heroin 'stars': More and more Kazakh police get involve in the drug business"; <http://www.CentrAsia.Ru/newsA.php4?st=1100850900>, 19/11/04

### **Uzbek stress**

---

Recent protests in Uzbekistan, some violent, undermine the government's claim that social disharmony is a result of the activities of international terrorists. It is likely, however, that the country's economic stagnation is enhancing the appeal of those offering solutions based on Islam. There is also anecdotal evidence that Uzbekistan's suicide rate is increasing. Although some protesters have been appeased, the government appears to be preparing for firmer responses to any future unrest.

Eurasianet.org "Signs show Uzbek stability buckling under economic stress", <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav111604.shtml>, 16/11/04

## Russia out, US in

---

Citing the withdrawal of Russia's border guard troops, the US announced that it would provide Tajikistan with more counter-narcotics assistance. Concurrently, a US diplomat said they planned to boost bilateral cooperation with Kyrgyzstan on counter-terrorism, amongst other issues.

IRIN, "Central Asia Weekly News Wrap",  
[http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=44229&SelectRegion=Central Asia&SelectCountry=CENTRAL ASIA](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=44229&SelectRegion=Central%20Asia&SelectCountry=CENTRAL%20ASIA), 19/11/04

## The Taliban Ban

---

Brigadier General Walter Spindler, commander of Germany's contribution to ISAF in Afghanistan, has claimed that the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan have been completely defeated. Democratization, he said, is irreversible and ISAF has "drained the water in which the evil fish can swim". Not to talk himself out of a job, however, he said that ISAF would probably need to remain in the country for ten years.

Eurasianet.org, "ISAF commander claims Taliban, al-Qaeda defeated in Afghanistan",  
<http://www.eurasianet.org/resource/afghanistan/hypermail/news/0025.shtml>, 17/11/04

## ...but Gulbuddin Disagrees

---

A 22-minute videotaped speech by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar has been distributed around southern Afghanistan. Consisting of footage of violence against Muslims around the world, the video pleads for holy war, suggesting that the US has taken over from Italy in leading the crusades.

"Afghan Warlord calls for 'jihad' against US", <http://www.afgha.com/?af=article&sid=47007>, 21/11/04

## German-Kyrgyz Police Cooperation

---

Kyrgyz President Askar Akaev visited Berlin last Wednesday and among other matters discussed he announced an agreement on training cooperation between the Kyrgyz Interior Ministry and the German police academy in Munster.

RFE/RL "Kyrgyz president visits Germany", 19/11/04

## Closed Trial

---

Former Tajik Interior Minister Yoqub Salimov, accused of treason and abuse of office, will be tried in secret. Mahmatali Vatanov, deputy chief of the Supreme Court, said that opening the trial would be unwise because it would reveal state secrets.

Eurasianet.org, "Former Tajik Interior Minister to have closed trial",  
<http://www.eurasianet.org/resource/tajikistan/hypermail/news/0021.shtml>, 17/11/04

## Canada the Generous

---

Close to 1,000 Afghan refugees who have been living in Tajikistan have been accepted by Canada for resettlement, continuing a generous pattern on that country's behalf. Earlier this year Canada cooperated with UNHCR in accepting around 500 Afghans from Kyrgyzstan and announced it would take 140 refugees registered in Turkmenistan. This article contains a few of the many interesting stories experienced by those who have fled Afghanistan for the 'security' to their north.

"Hundreds of Afghans in Tajikistan accepted for resettlement in Canada",  
<http://www.afghannews.net/index.php?action=show&type=news&id=1216>, 19/11/04

## Seizures and Arrests

---

### Fruity drugs

---

19.8kg of heroin and 68.4 kg of opium were seized in Kazakhstan's Kostanaiska'ja oblast from a truck carrying fruit. Somehow, the owner, a Kazakh citizen, managed to flee.

<http://www.cry.ru/text.shtml?200411/20041118104220.inc>, 18/11/04

### A quick start to Kanal

---

Less than 24 hours after the start of the second stage of 'Kanal 2004', 225 kg of drugs were reported seized in Kazakhstan and Russia alone.

Kyrgyz Info, <http://www.kyrgyzinfo.kg/?art=1100681267>, 17/11/04