



## Narcotics, Organized Crime and Security in Eurasia Weekly Digest: 10 – 17 July 2005

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

### **Costa stresses link between terrorism and drug trafficking**

Executive Director of the UNODC Antonio Maria Costa stressed the link between terrorism and drug trafficking in a statement released by the U.N. Information Service (UNIS) in Vienna. Costa said there was evidence of a direct correlation between terrorism, terrorist funding and revenues from the cultivation and production of illicit drugs. Afghan heroin had funded operations by the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Hizb-e-Islami. Heroin had also provided money for terrorist operations in the Balkans/ Kosovo (KLA offshoots), Myanmar (United Wa State Army), Philippines (Abu Sayyaf), Somalia (Warlords), Sri Lanka (LTTE), Turkey (PKK) and Uzbekistan (IMU). In terms of gross domestic product, the drug economy represented the eighteenth-largest in the world, and was equivalent to the size of the whole economy of Sweden. In 2005 so far, world retail revenue from drugs had amounted to 322 billion U.S. dollars.

*APA News Service, 10/07/05*

### **HIV rates rise in Chinese women**

In the 1990s the male to female ratio of HIV/Aids infection was 5:1, but the figure is now closer to 2:1. Most of the recent infections in women have been sexually transmitted. Some of them belong to the high-risk group of prostitutes, while others are just ordinary housewives or career women, infected by their husbands. Many women also became infected from selling blood in the 1990s. China estimates that 840,000 of its citizens are infected with HIV, including 80,000 with Aids. But international groups believe the real figure is much higher.

*BBCNews, 11/07/05*

### **Senate body apprised of insufficient staff to check menace at Port Qasim**

With a total of only 10 sniffer dogs available in the country, just two allocated to Karachi with three anti-narcotic personnel, stationed at Port Qasim, it is almost impossible to check the flourishing narcotics trade from this point. This pathetic state of affairs was highlighted by the Anti-Narcotics Department's representatives before the Senate Standing Committee on Narcotics Control, headed by Chairperson Senator Kulsoom Perveen, during the committee's visit to Port Qasim on Wednesday morning. Brigadier Farooq Shaukat, Director and Force Commander of the ANF Sindh office, gave a detailed briefing about the seizure of drugs and people arrested in the last three years. He stated that 147.054 kg of heroin, 680.500 kg of hashish and 16.500 kg of opium were recovered and 184 people were arrested in 2003, while 464.657 kg of heroin, 7,261.605 kg of hashish and 48.775 kg of opium were recovered in 2004, while 284 drug traffickers were arrested. In 2005, he said that 135.840 kg of heroin, 6726.605 kg of hashish and 10 kg of opium were recovered and 80 people were arrested so far. According to Shaukat, the total addicts in Pakistan were estimated at 4 million in which 97 percent were men and 2 percent women.

*Business Recorder, 13/07/05 and 15/07/05*

### **Abuses over HIV 'rife' in Russia**

Children born to HIV-positive women are often segregated in Russia for no medical reason, Human Rights Watch reports. According to official figures cited, nearly 10,000 HIV-positive Russian women have given birth since 1997. Up

to 20 percent abandoned their babies. HIV-positive women reported being verbally abused by doctors and nurses, or even being denied treatment altogether. Russia has some 300,000 HIV-positive people, according to government data, but the true number to be closer to one million.

*BBCNews*, 15/07/05

### **Khokhrapar rail link could be used for drug trafficking**

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The Anti-Narcotics Division on Friday expressed serious concerns over opening of the Khokhrapar-Munabao rail link, saying that it would make the region more vulnerable to drug trafficking. At a joint meeting of the Standing Committees of the National Assembly on Narcotics Control and Interior, the 'AND' officials proposed to launch co-ordinated monitoring mechanism for India and Pakistan border forces, if the link is re-established. They said the two countries would have to take prompt actions by adopting a joint monitoring system at both sides of the border.

*Business Recorder*, 16/07/05

### **Coordinated efforts urged to eradicate drug menace**

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The Narcotics Control Division under the Interior Ministry has decided to co-ordinate with other law enforcement agencies for concerted efforts to effectively eradicate drugs menace. The Interior Ministry has decided to set up Provincial Narcotics Interdiction Committee in each province to review, monitor and evaluate the performance of law-enforcement agencies in drug interdiction. These committees will co-ordinate with various law-enforcement and intelligence agencies and the tasks of these committees include collection of data on seizure of narcotics on monthly basis. The task of these committees also includes collection of particulars of drug dealers, barons and street peddlers, identification of drug smuggling routes and prosecution of drug cases in various courts.

*Business Recorder*, 17/07/05

## **Seizures and Arrests**

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### **Customs: SCC reveals over 250 violations in 2005**

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In January to June of 2005 the State Customs Committee (SCC) /Azerbaijan/ has revealed 2527 violations, or 1227 facts more than 2004, and 81 people in this respect. The contraband detained in the border costs 1,482,3bn mantas (\$315,181). As a result of measures taken under 'the Program on combat of drug addiction and drug and psychotropic substances' the SCC revealed 33 facts of drug trafficking and detained 15,722 kg of drugs, including 5,563 kg of teryek, 4,872 kg of marihuana, 5 kg of hashish, 284g of heroin, 110 psychotropic substances (in the form of ampoules, capsules and tablets).

*Trend News Agency (Azerbaijan)*, 11/07/05

### **Large lot of heroin confiscated from two Tajik smugglers**

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More than 1.5 kilograms of heroin were confiscated from two citizens of Tajikistan in the Krasnoyarsk Territory of Russia. "The white powder was accurately stuffed into walnut shells. This is the first time the Narcotics Control Department witnesses such a method of concealing narcotics. This smuggling channel had presumably existed in the Territory for several years running," Police Lieutenant-Colonel Kulik of the Territorial Narcotics Control Department stressed. The confiscated heroin is worth about \$17,400.

*ITAR-TASS*, 11/07/05; and *Ria Novosti*, 12/07/05

### **£3m of heroin seized**

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A total of 61kg (134lbs) of the drug was seized by the Matrix team after police officers targeted houses and vehicles in Huyton, UK. A 29-year-old local man was arrested when police searched his vehicle and found 10kg of drugs inside. Later on, Police found two holdalls packed with 51kg of heroin in the boot of a Renault Scenic people-carrier parked on the driveway of one of the targeted addresses. Officers believe the drugs found have a street value of as much as £3m.

*Liverpool Echo*, 12/07/05

## **Iranian media reports of drugs seizures and related arrests 28 Jun -14 Jul 2005**

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**Esfahan** province: Anti-drugs police seized over 90 kg of opium in the province on 14 July. Two people were arrested.

**Fars** province: The Fars province deputy police commander said on 9 June that over the past two days 16.5 kg of opium had been seized from one car in the Darab area and 10 kg of opium and 5 kg of hashish from another. Two people were arrested. Two kilos of narcotics were seized in the Mamasani and Lar areas.

**Hormozgan** province: In the first quarter of this Iranian year, 35 drug gangs were broken up in the province and 3,599 kg of drugs confiscated from them, an anti-drugs police official announced. Seventy per cent of the gangs were operating in Bandar Abbas. The official said 667 traffickers were arrested, a ten per cent increase on the same period last year.

**Kerman** province: An official from the Abuzar drug campaign base said on 2 July that 459 kg of various drugs had been seized over the past week. Fifteen people had been arrested and eight vehicles confiscated. In a report on 7 July he was quoted as saying that 148 kg of opium had been seized over the previous week and two smugglers captured. On 4 July a provincial police official said that over the previous week, 312 kg of opium and 132 kg of hashish had been found in a tanker; 44 kg of opium and 16 kg of hashish had been confiscated from a smuggler and 88 kg of drugs had been found in a car on the Jiroft-Kerman road. The provincial police chief announced on 11 July that over 2.5 tons of drugs had been confiscated in the province since 22 June. Of this, 1,252 kg of opium 53 kg of heroin, one kilo of morphine and 137 kg of hashish were seized between 5-8 July within the framework of a nationwide anti-drug operation codenamed Val'adiat.

**South Khorasan** province: Anti-drugs police seized 31.4 kg of opium from a car on the Sahlabad- Nahbandan road on 6 July. In a separate operation over nine kilos of opium was taken from two vehicles.

**Sistan and Baluchestan** province: The province's deputy police commander said on 6 July that over two tons of drugs had been seized by Mirjaveh border guards in separate operations.

*BBC Monitoring Middle East* (a compilation of reports from IRNA), 14/07/05

## **A citizen of Hungary was arrested with 65 kg of heroin**

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A citizen of Hungary was arrested by the Hungarian police on the border with Ukraine with 65 kg of heroin that he attempted to smuggle out of Ukraine.

*Cry.ru*, 15/07/05

## **Spanish crackdown nets 'violent British drug ring': 5 allegedly linked to killings among 13 arrested**

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Spanish police have arrested 13 Britons believed to be members of a drug-smuggling ring based on the Costa del Sol that is accused of laundering up to euros 50m (pounds 35m). The gang smuggled cocaine and cannabis to Liverpool and Yorkshire, where the drugs were sold and the cash laundered through clothing sales and other businesses, the Spanish interior ministry said in a press statement yesterday. Roughly euros 3m in drug profits were used to buy stock in a British airline and various businesses in India, officials said. The leader of the drug ring is alleged to be a British citizen of Pakistani origin who was based in Marbella and orchestrated a "wide network of middlemen and couriers" in Spain, the Netherlands, Britain and Dubai, the ministry added. This network made "continual pickups and deliveries of cash", to avoid transferring money through a bank. The swoop is the latest in Spain's crackdown on organized crime on the Costa del Sol. In the first half of 2005, police arrested 300 people in connection with money laundering rings and froze euros 390m in cash and assets. A further 500 people were arrested in connection with international drug smuggling, and 418 tonnes of cocaine, heroin and cannabis confiscated, according to the tally released yesterday by the interior ministry. Last month a team of 400 officers dealt a blow to dozens of mafia bosses from a former Soviet republic who were carving up zones of influence on the coast. In another June swoop, police confiscated 50 apartments and a 400-room hotel after the break-up of a money laundering ring.

*The Guardian*, 15/07/05