



## Narcotics, Organized Crime and Security in Eurasia Weekly Digest: 11 – 17 April 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.

### **Germany, Turkey clamp down on drug traffickers**

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In the course of investigations carried out in 15 European countries, police have broken up a drugs ring, confiscating 110 kg of heroin in the process. According to information released by the Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (BKA) Wiesbaden on 12 April, 23 suspects have been arrested in Germany and Turkey over the past six months. Among them are drug suppliers, organizers of the smuggling operation, heroin couriers, and recipients who were to distribute the drugs in Germany. The BKA was able to track down the dealers by analysing narcotics confiscated on what has become known as the "Balkans route".

*BBC Monitoring European, 12/04/05*

### **Afghanistan suspends poppy eradication in province after clash**

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Afghanistan has suspended an operation to eradicate opium poppies in one district after at least four people were wounded in clashes between farmers and anti-drugs police. The central eradication and planning police launched the drive in the Maiwand district of southern Kandahar province on Tuesday but clashes broke out amid a protest by angry growers. The provincial governor is negotiating with elders now to make them voluntarily eradicate the poppy fields.

*www.afghannews.net, 13/04/05*

### **Rumsfeld paid surprise visits to Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan**

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U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld paid a surprise visit to Afghanistan and from flew to Kyrgyzstan to meet with Kurmanbek Bakiev. Mostly likely topics of discussion included the future of the U.S. military presence in both Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan.

*BBC News, 13/04/05*

### **Slovakia agrees to upgrade its border crossings with Ukraine**

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Four Slovak-Ukrainian border crossings fail to meet the requirements of control authorities, the traveling public, and international cargo transport from the viewpoint of equipment and infrastructure. The Finance Ministry proposes their reconstruction of two road border crossings at Vysne Nemecke-Uzhorod and Ubla-Malyj Bereznyj up to the end of 2007. There are also two railway border crossings on the Slovak-Ukrainian state border: Cierna nad Tisou-Cop and Matovske Vojkovce-Pavlovo. Railway company ZSR is currently reconstructing the Cierna nad Tisou-Cop border crossing. In the future an X-ray scanner to control cargo transport should be bought for EUR 4.5 million with PHARE funding. The ministry perceives it as a risky area from the viewpoint of illegal immigration, as well as other cross-border criminal activities, including smuggling of narcotics and other dangerous substances.

*SITA Slovenska Tlacova Agentura, 13/04/05*

### **Russian people smugglers stopped**

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Russian police and secret services have smashed a people-trafficking network believed to have smuggled "terrorists" to the West. The group sent illegal immigrants to France, Spain and the U.S., the Federal Security Service (FSB) said. Up to 10 people a week were trafficked and the smugglers charged at least \$1,000 per head. Two Russians ran the ring, set

up in 2001, which smuggled more than 1,000 people abroad. The two were named as Karen Gevorkyan and Dmitri Krylov. The migrants were mainly from Moldova, the Caucasus, Asia and some Chechens.

*BBC News, 14/04/05*

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### **Turkmenistan - Afghanistan – Pakistan gas pipeline will be built**

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Mohammad Siddiqi, minister of mines and production of Afghanistan announced that the construction of TAP pipeline will start in winter 2005. Under the agreements reached in Islamabad last week, Afghanistan will ensure the security of pipes transcending its territory. The Afghan government promised to buy out lands lying on the way of the pipeline from landowners and to clear areas from mines.

*Iran.ru, 15/04/05*

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### **Mahmadsaid Ubaidulloev is re-elected as a speaker of the Tajik Parliament**

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Mahmadsaid Ubaidulloev, the Mayor of Dushanbe was univocally elected as a speaker of the new Majilisi Milli (upper chamber). He occupied the same position in the previous parliament.

*Tajikistan Telecom Technology, 15/04/05*

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### **Drugs come to Moscow to stay for long**

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About 1.5 million people in Moscow used drugs at least once said Valery Sorokin, deputy chief of the Moscow directorate of the Federal Drug Control Service. About 29,000 people are registered at drug dispensaries. But this figure, in fact, should be seven times as big, according to Russia's Health Ministry. "The total number of people who used narcotic or psychotropic drugs at least once in life is 1 to 1.5 million people," Sorokin said. According to him, in clubs young people use synthetic drugs of the amphetamine series, including MDMA (ecstasy) and LSD. "Synthetic drugs come to Moscow via St. Petersburg from the Netherlands and the Baltic states," Sorokin said.

*RIA Novosti, 15/04/05*

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## **Seizures and Arrests**

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### **Russian and Tajik forces seize 1,500 kg of drugs on Tajik-Afghan border**

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Avaz Yuldoshev, a spokesman for Tajikistan's DCA, announced on 13 April that Russian and Tajik forces have confiscated 1,500 kilograms of narcotics in 2005. He said that heroin accounted for two thirds of the drug seizures. Yuldoshev stressed that drug production in Afghanistan continues to increase, adding that 50 laboratories for processing opium into heroin are constantly functioning in Afghanistan near the Tajik border. Yuldoshev also pointed to cooperation with law-enforcement authorities in Afghanistan, noting that one joint operation with Afghan police led to the seizure of 80 kilograms of heroin.

*Itar-Tass, 13/04/05*

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### **123 kg of drugs were intercepted in 2005 by Soghd enforcement agencies**

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By April 2005, more than 123 kg of drugs (32 kg of heroin, 78 kg of opium and others) were intercepted by the Soghd regional DCA. These seizures are twice lower than for the same period in the last year.

*AKIpress.kg, 15/04/05*

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### **Drug haul in Bosnia**

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Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) authorities, supported by EUFOR troops, stopped a car containing a large quantity of drugs at a vehicle check point near Pavlovica Most. This was part of their ongoing cooperation against organised crime. The car contained packages of heroin weighing altogether some 27 kgs worth £7 mill.

*www.euforbih.org, 14/04/05*

## **18kg heroin recovered, two held near Kambar, Sindh**

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Excise police on a tip-off intercepted a Karachi-bound car near Wagan and recovered 18 kilogram of heroin, concealed in hidden compartments. The police also arrested two accused, and lodged cases against them. The car was coming from Quetta.

*Pakistan Press International Information Services, 11/04/05*