



Narcotics, Organized Crime and Security in Eurasia Weekly Digest: 2– 8 May 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.

U.N. expert who reported U.S. abuses in Afghanistan loses job

M. Cherif Bassiouni, the UN Human Rights Commission's independent expert on Afghanistan, said on April 29 that he had received an email from a commission official in Geneva telling him his contract had expired. The news came one day after Bassiouni released a 21-page report saying Americans running prisons in Afghanistan had acted outside the law "by engaging in illegal arrests and detentions and committing abusive acts, including torture".

IWPR, Afghan press monitor No 62, 03/05/05

Traffickers hand out arms in Northern province of Afghanistan

Local drug traffickers have started distributing weapons to young men in Badakhshan, officials in this northwestern province say. The move follows an armed clash between police and drug barons in Shahr-e-Buzurg, and is intended to strengthen the traffickers' position against the police. According to a high-level official, 300 young men have been armed so far.

IWPR, Afghan press monitor No 62, 03/05/05

Pakistan to open new border trade routes

In order to increase its economic influence in Afghanistan, Pakistan has announced that it is opening ten new routes into the country. A senior official from Pakistan's central revenue board, M.D. Tahi, said that the opening of these ten routes across the Afghan border would raise the total to 12, and help businessmen win easy access to Afghan markets. Pakistan also wants to use the trade routes to reach the Central Asian republics to the north.

IWPR, Afghan press monitor No 62, 03/05/05

Mahmadruzi Iskandarov is rearrested and brought back to Tajikistan

After nearly two weeks, the mystery of the whereabouts of the leader of the Tajikistan Democratic Party, Mahmadrusi Iskandarov, was solved on 26 April as Dushanbe announced he has been brought back to Tajikistan under arrest. The future location of another well-known figure in Tajikistan, former Interior Minister Yakub Salimov, also became clear on 26 April: He will likely be in a Tajik prison for the next 15 years. The mystery of Iskandarov's whereabouts began in early April when he was freed from jail in Moscow. He was arrested on charges of committing terrorist acts and illegal possession of weapons.

Bruce Pannier, RFE/RL Central Asia Report, 04/05/05

Uzbekistan and Italy will cooperate in combat against organized crime

The chief prosecutor of Uzbekistan and head of the Italian National Bureau to Combat Mafia signed MoU on cooperation against organized crime and legalizing of criminal proceeds.

Asia – Plus, 04/05/05

Yushenko awarded father of Turkmenbashi with the order of Yaroslav the Wise

The president of Ukraine Viktor Yushenko awarded the father of Turkmenbashi – Atamurat Niyazov - with the order of Yaroslav the Wise (posthumous and posthumorous). The order was handed in by the CEO of “NefteGaz Ukraina” Aleksei Ivchenko. According to the official legend father of Turkmenbashi died in December 1942 on the battlefield in Ossetia.

Ngv.ru, 04/05/05

The military trainings took place in neutral Turkmenistan

Massive tactical trainings involving heavy artillery and tanks took place in, allegedly, neutral Turkmenistan.

Turkmenistan: the Golden Century, 05/05/05

Communist party wants Turkmenbashi to step down

The unofficial communist party of Turkmenistan called to hold the march on the 9th of May and was going to ask Turkmenbashi to step down. It is unknown which communist party is that, since the leader of the Turkmen communist party Serdar Rakhimov was jailed along with Boris Shihmuradov in 2003, for participation in a coup d’etat against Turkmenbashi.

Email from Vladimir Ponamarev, 06/05/05

Is drug trade on Tajik-Afghan border set to expand?

As some of the last Russian troops stationed on the southern border of Tajikistan begin pulling out, there are concerns that heroin smuggling from Afghanistan could rocket. They inherited the infrastructure and even the weapons of the departing Russian units. A former soldier in a Russian border unit who asked to remain anonymous, told IWPR, “I have lost my job, but I don’t intend to join the Committee for State Border Protection of Tajikistan - and not just because of the low salary. Our poorly-off officers will probably not be averse to cooperating with the drug traffickers, so the war on drugs will be nothing but words. The U.S. will provide over \$9 million this year for border protection and anti-narcotics programmes. The EU has also offered help, including a six-million-dollar Central Asian Border Guards Academy to train senior officers in the Tajik capital Dushanbe.

Turko Dikaev, IWPR, 07/05/05

Seizures and Arrests

Pakistan foils smuggling of 1 ton of morphine!!!

Chagai Militia foiled smuggling huge quantity of morphine and seized one ton of drug in Mayan area of Dalbandin. FC sources said here Sunday that they were tipped narcotics smugglers were planning smuggle of huge quantity of narcotics. A raiding party was sent to the area which in a successful raid seized 1000 kg of morphine however no arrest was reported.

Pakistan Press International Information Services, 01/05/05

A citizen of Ghana arrested in Pakistan

According to details, on a tip off, ANF team raided Dubai bound flight at Quetta airport. They caught hold of Ms Juliana, a national of Ghana. Her check up revealed that she had swallowed capsules of drugs. She was admitted to the hospital for recovery of these capsules.

Pakistan Press International Information Services, 03/05/05

Belarusian police confiscated large drug haul

The agents of the department to combat drugs along with border guards apprehended two persons from Minsk on the Belarusian – Polish border. They were trying to transport 10 kg of amphetamine and 2 kg of heroin from Poland. According to the preliminary information the drugs were destined for Russia and one of the Scandinavian countries. Seemingly heroin was from the South-East Asia.

CRY.ru, 05/05/05

Police confiscate 2 kilos of heroin from a citizen of Tajikistan

Customs officers in Russia's constituent territory of Udmurtiya have confiscated at least two kilos of heroin from a Tajik citizen. The drugs made in Afghanistan were packed in plastic bags and hidden in a cache. The department's investigation service has opened a criminal case under an article of the Criminal Code envisaging punishment of eight to twenty years in jail.

Roza Magasumova, Itar-Tass, 05/05/05

Former policemen selling confiscated heroin imprisoned in Russia

Two former policemen who were selling confiscated heroin are sentenced to six years in prison in Irkutsk. Operatives of the regional Federal Security Service department and the internal security department of the regional police department caught red-handed Nikolai Kim and Sergei Shevchenko in an attempt to sell another batch of heroin last October. The prosecutor's office instituted criminal proceedings. Investigators found out that policemen have confiscated heroin from wholesale drug dealers and drug addicts without processing proper documents and sold drugs later.

Oksana Zapolskaya, Itar-Tass, 06/05/05

Over 2 kg of heroin seized in Russia's Ingushetia

Law-enforcement operatives have closed a large drugs smuggling channel into Ingushetia. "A local resident, who sold 720 grams of heroin to an employee of the law-enforcement agencies in a sting operation, has been detained in the village of Ekazhevo in Ingushetia's Nazranovskiy District," a headquarters spokesman said. During a search of the house, more than 2 kg of heroin, as well as items used in the storage and sale of drugs, such as scales, packaging, packages and money obtained from the sale of drugs, were seized from the drugs dealer.

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 09/05/05