



## Narcotics, Organized Crime and Security in Eurasia Weekly Digest: 21 – 27 March 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.

### **Paris pact meeting**

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The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) will organized a "Paris Pact Expert Roundtable Conference" from March 21 to 22 to discuss the current situation prevailing in the world. Federal Narcotics Control Minister Ghaus Bux Khan Maher inaugurated a two-day conference. Representative from Afghanistan, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iran, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, and USA will attend the conference.

*Business Recorder, 20/03/05*

### **70,000 Russians died of drug overdose in 2004**

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A total of 70,000 people died of drug overdose in Russia last year and the number of drug addicts has increased nine times in over the past 10 years. This was stated by Chief of the Federal Drug Control Service's Public Relations Department, Lt Gen Alexander Mikhailov. "Unofficial reports indicate that from two million to four million people use drugs for non-medical purposes in this country," while conceding that many police and other law enforcement officials were involved in illicit narcotics trade. There were reports that about 100 representatives of law enforcement agencies were arrested in Russia in 2004 on charges of involvement in illicit drug trade.

*The Press Trust of India Limited, 22/03/05*

### **Decree declares opium and other narcotics business un-Islamic**

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ANF's Commander, Brigadier Hassan Jameel Monday informed that around 51 leading ulemas from NWFP and FATA issued a decree declaring the cultivation of poppy and bhang and the trade of hashish, opium and other narcotics as un-Islamic. The declaration said that safeguarding natural and moral traits of human beings gifted by God was the responsibility of the whole society.

*Pakistan Press International Information Services, 22/03/05*

### **Concern over alarming rise in drug addiction in Pakistan**

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The rise in drug addicts in Pakistan is alarming and at present there are more than four million drug addicts prevailing in the country. If the trend was not stopped by taking appropriate measures, the number would be double in the coming few years.

*Business Recorder, 24/03/05*

### **Number of young female drug addicts grows in Azerbaijan**

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This year number of young female drug addicts in Women Crisis Centre has increased, told Matanat Azizova head of the Centre. She said age of these young women varies between 15 and 22 years. Growing number of drug addicts among schoolgirls is very alarming. She said that use of drugs in some secondary schools has become especially "prestigious." Schoolgirls start from smoking hashish and then use cocaine and heroin. Very often these are children from well-to-do families.

*Turan Information Agency (Azerbaijan), 25/03/05*

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## **Russia mafia 'runs key businesses'**

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Organized crime has penetrated several key sectors of Russian economy and taken control over some 500 key businesses, the nation's top police official said. Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliyev said that 116 criminal groups with some 4,000 members were now active in Russia, and they had developed strong international links. "To various extents, criminal groups have penetrated most of the nation's key industries," said Nurgaliyev. In particular, he said that the confiscation of property should be reinstated in the nation's criminal code to toughen punishment for organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism. The confiscation of property was abolished several years ago, and liberal politicians oppose bringing it back, saying that it could be turned into a weapon against political and business rivals.

*AP, 24/03/05*

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## **Seizures and Arrests**

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### **About 7,800 kg heroin seized in Pakistan in 2004**

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Pakistani anti-drug department seized 7,783 kg of heroin during the year 2004 and there are four million drug addicts in the country. ANF also seized 1,478 kg of opium, 4,453 kg of heroin and 3,936 kg of hashish from Jan. 1 to March 15 this year. In 2004 the total area under poppy cultivation in Pakistan was 6,694 hectares, out of which 78 percent had been eradicated. On the same occasion, Pakistani Minister for Narcotics Control Ghaus Bux Maher said that there were four million drug addicts in the country, out of which 500,000 were chronic heroin users while 60,000 to 100,000 were using drugs through injections.

*Xinhua News Agency, 22/03/05*

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### **Krasnoyarsk police seized over 1 kg of heroin from the citizens of Kyrgyzstan**

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Krasnoyarsk drug police agents seized at least 1.5 kilos of heroin, chief of the regional drug police headquarters' press service Alexander Blokhin told Itar-Tass. The heroin was confiscated from three detained nationals of Kyrgyzstan. According to police information, the detainees were involved in smuggling drugs into the Krasnoyarsk Territory. They are accused of drugs contraband, illegal keeping and trafficking.

*Itar-Tass, 22/03/05*

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### **Russian police seize about thirteen kilograms of drugs**

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The Russian police have seized about thirteen kilograms of drugs in the course of the past twenty-four hours (25 March). They include more than eleven kilograms of marijuana, more than nine hundred grams of heroin, and almost seven hundred and fifty grams of hashish.

*Itar-Tass, 25/03/05*

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### **Joint operation of the Ministry of National Security and the MFA of Azerbaijan**

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After the joint investigation conducted by the Ministry of National Security and Interior Ministry a drug trafficking ring acting through Iran-Azerbaijan route was exposed. On March 1 two residents of the Beylagan district were detained by investigators. A subsequent search resulted in the seizure of 0.5 kg of heroin. On March 22, other members of a criminal ring from the Beylagan district were arrested with 1 kg of heroin, 0.5 kg of opium and 4 kg of marijuana. On the same day MNS and MFA investigators arrested resident of Saatli district and officer of the criminal investigation department of the Saatli district major of police. According to received information, a criminal ring was led by Akif Mammadov and Umud Hasanov.

*Organization of Asia-Pacific News Agencies, 26/03/05*

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### **Over 38 kg of drugs were seized for the last two months in Azerbaijan**

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38 kg 480 gr of various drugs (heroin, opium, hashish, marijuana and psychotropic substances) have been seized by March 2005. As a result 430 people were arrested on charges of trafficking, keeping and cultivation of narcotic substances. Of them, 13 are from Georgia, 4 - from Iran, 2 - from the Russian Federation.

*Organisation of Asia-Pacific News Agencies, 26/03/05*