



Narcotics, Organized Crime and Security in Eurasia Weekly Digest: 23– 29 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.

Another bumper opium crop is expected in 2005

Thanks to plentiful rains earlier this year and late efforts at poppy eradication, farmers in northern Afghanistan say they're enjoying a bumper crop of the opium-producing plant this season. Some senior government officials acknowledge that most eradication efforts have come too late and achieved too little. While no official estimates were available, reports suggest that this year's crop will surpass last year's harvest. The harvest began here in late April. Shortly after May 15, the interior ministry dispatched an eradication team of 100 men to Balkh province. Such tardiness irritated Balkh governor Atta Mohammad Nur, who said the authorities should have acted sooner. General Muhammad Daoud, deputy interior minister, cited a lack of money and bad weather as reasons for the delay. According to Daoud, the provinces of Balkh, Kandahar and Farah in the far west have been the main centres of cultivation this year.

Sayed Yaqub Ibrahim, *IWPR, Afghan press monitor*, No. 174, 28/05/05

Iran paying heavily for west's drug use - official

The President's Deputy in the Anti-Narcotics Headquarters stated that the presence of 140,000 IDUs in the country, is the price for the transit of narcotics. During the last year, nearly 300 tons of various kinds of drugs were found, which included 11 tons of morphine--which has no domestic consumption, but was in transit--5 tons of heroin, 182 tons of opium, 82 tons of hashish, and nearly 16 tons of miscellaneous kinds of drugs. 50% of these discoveries were made during the transit of these drugs to Europe. He said that at least 40 to 50 % of the expenditure has been incurred by Iran on the borders, in order to ensure the health of the European countries. This is while Iran has repeatedly voiced its needs to the EU for the requisite equipment, such as helicopters fitted with infra-red night vision, in order to identify, and track the drug-trafficking bands; electronic eavesdropping devices, which are used by international drug smugglers, as well as X-ray containers, and so forth. However, so far, it has not succeeded in obtaining the required equipment, probably due to political reasons.

BBC Monitoring Middle East, 28/05/05

China, Uzbekistan sign U.S.\$600 mill. oil agreement

President Hu Jintao and Islam Karimov signed more than 14 agreements on cooperation in trade, customs, high technology and energy. Among the agreements signed is the establishment of a joint venture by China National Petroleum Corp and its Uzbekistani counterpart. Regarding the Andijan events, the Chinese Foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan said that China firmly supports Uzbekistan's moves to crack down the three forces and to maintain domestic and regional stability.

China Daily, 27/05/05

Uzbek massacre soldiers used Land Rovers in defiance of arms control promise

British military equipment was used by troops who massacred hundreds of protesters in Uzbekistan this month despite government promises that it would block arms exports to tyrannical regimes. The disclosure threatens to cause deep embarrassment for the Government ahead of a G8 summit next month when Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, will table Britain's plans for an international arms trade treaty banning the sale of any weapons which might be used against civilians. The Defender, classified by the Government as a weapon, is very different from the Land Rovers sold to

farmers and four-wheel-drive vehicle enthusiasts. Military specifications include reinforced body panels, bomb-proofed chassis, armoured plating offering high ballistic protection, bulletproof combat tyres, as well as specialist command, control and communications equipment. They can also be fitted with rotating hatches for a range of weapons including 7.62mm to .50in calibre heavy machineguns.

The Times, 26/05/05

France is ready to assist Kyrgyzstan in fight against terrorism and drugs

Felix Kulov met with the French delegation headed by the Director of the Continental Europe Department of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs Jean-Francois Terral on May 26. Mr. Terral expressed readiness to render assistance to Kyrgyzstan on issues to combat terrorism and drug trade. They planned to discuss the concrete mechanism of that cooperation

AKIpress.org, 26/05/05

Major operation against drug trafficking in Afghanistan

A press release by the interior ministry says the anti-narcotics department has seized 18.5 kg of heroin, four tons of opium and some chemicals essential for processing narcotics from Lashkargah and Sangin districts of Helmand province during an operation carried out by the interior ministry. They have also carried out another operation in Nimroz province, in which they succeeded in destroying some narcotics in Delaram district and seizing others. Likewise, the anti-narcotics department has destroyed 240 kg of heroin, over two tonnes of opium, 20 laboratories and some chemicals used in the process of drug production in the Achin district of Nangarhar province. The operation was carried out by the interior ministry, and there were no coalition forces in the operation.

IWPR, Afghan press monitor, No. 78, 25/05/05

Seizures and Arrests

Drug peddlers sentenced to prison terms in Krasnoyarsk, Russia

A court in the Krasnoyarsk Territory sentenced drug peddlers, one is the citizen of Tajikistan Vadzhidin Dzhumayev was sentenced to a nine-year term in a maximum security prison and the other to three years. Dzhumayev lived in Krasnoyarsk two and half years and sold goods on the local market together with his girl-friend. Incidentally, he sold not only fruit and vegetables, but also various drugs. He was apprehended at a bus stop not far from the municipal market after selling a large batch of heroin. He had money on him whose bills were pre-recorded by drug policemen.

Itar-Tass, 23/05/05

Drug trafficking channel from Kyrgyzstan sealed off in Kaliningrad, Russia

During a special operation in the Kaliningrad region officers of the Federal Drug Control Service department and the Western transport police department detained a 37-year-old drug courier with 400 grams of heroin bought in Kyrgyzstan. During a personal check a package was found with smelling herbs placed between the layers of the fabric to eliminate the specific smell. Expertise showed that heroin was of a very low quality.

Itar-Tass, 23/05/05

Court in Russia's Tatarstan sentences 12 members of international drugs ring

The Supreme Court of Tatarstan handed down a guilty verdict against six residents of Tatarstan and six residents of Kyrgyzstan, according to a number of articles of the Russian Federation's Criminal Code, including the organization of a criminal ring. Ten men, four of whom are citizens of Kyrgyzstan, were sentenced to prison terms ranging between 3.5 and 12 years in a harsh-regime prison. Two female citizens of Kyrgyzstan were sentenced to 2.5 and 3.5 years in a general-regime prison. The narcotics organization to which the convicted persons belonged comprised several groups - at least three in Kazan and one in the town of Osh (Kyrgyzstan). The elimination of the narcotics network began in October 2003 when two drug couriers were detained in the railway station of Kazan.

BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union, 24/05/05

Senior Polish police officer alleged to have collaborated with gangsters

Senior officers at the Police Main Command [KGP] collaborate with gangs that rob TIR lorries. Protected by policemen, the criminals trade in goods stolen from trucks as well as in firearms. One of the dealers in stolen goods is the police headquarters - stolen air-conditioners have made their way to the offices of KGP bosses. On 21 May, the KGP was working to uncover illegal activity at the Central Offices of Investigations [CBS] branch in Lodz. Local functionaries sold cocaine and heroin seized from gangsters. What has been established so far indicates that the functionaries supplied forged documents, as well as - probably - firearms to the gangsters.

BBC Monitoring European, 24/05/05

Shuttle taxi driver dies en route of heroin overdose in Russia

Shuttle taxis seem to be the most dangerous means of transportation in Chelyabinsk. A shuttle taxi driver died of a heroin overdose right en route, luckily, there were no passengers on the shuttle taxi at the moment. Several hours earlier another shuttle taxi driver lost consciousness and rammed into traffic lights. Seven passengers were frightened but not hurt. The driver regained consciousness in an ambulance car. It is possible that he is a drug addict. Police detained several stoned drivers, and some of them were driving shuttle taxis full of passengers.

Itar-Tass, 24/05/05

Turkish police seize 20 kg of heroin in Adapazari

Police arrested five drug dealers and seized 20 kg of heroin in northwestern Adapazari city. Acting on a tip-off, Sakarya anti-narcotics teams caught red-handed those five dealers who wanted to sell the heroin to undercover police officers.

Anadolu Agency, 25/05/05

Pakistani police siezed 2.5 kg of heroin

Larkana Police raided various drug dens in the city and seized 2.5 kg heroin and 20 kg of marijuana and arrested seven drug pushers including a woman.

Pakistan Press International Information Services, 25/05/05

China cracks 24,000 drug cases in first four months, 2005

China cracked 24,000 drug related criminal cases and arrested 19,000 relevant suspects in the first four months this year, said a senior official with the office of the National Narcotics Control Commission. Police seized a total of 3,859 kilograms of heroin, 1,005 kilograms of "ice" and 198,000 pieces of "Ecstasy" in the four months, Yang Fengrui, deputy director of the office of the National Narcotics Control Commission, told press. Guangdong police authorities dismantled a transnational drug syndicate headed by Chinese-French Chen Sen on March 26, arresting 12 criminal suspects from home and abroad, seizing 400 kilograms of Ketamine, over 300 kilograms of liquid Ice and two guns.

Xinhua News Agency, 26/05/05

Iranian media reports of drugs seizures, arrests 12-25 May 05

Nearly 300 tons of drugs have been seized in Iran over the past year, Vice-President Ali Hashemi said on 22 May. He said twelve and a half thousand traffickers, 131,000 people involved in distribution and 4,566 foreign nationals involved in the drugs trade were arrested during the same period. There were 1,390 clashes with traffickers, in which 292 traffickers and 55 members of the police and security forces were killed. Hashemi added that there were approximately 140,000 heroin addicts in Iran. Fars province: On 22 May the provincial deputy police commander reported that over 38 kg of opium had been seized from a bus traveling between Larb and Hormud. On 23 May 3 kg of heroin and 10 kg of opium had been seized from a vehicle travelling from Bandar Abbas top Shiraz the previous day. Kerman province: on 22 May 671 kg of opium were confiscated from cars during stop and search operations on the Kerman-Bam road and in the city of Kahnuj over the past two days. South Khorasan province: 205 kg of morphine found in a truck during stop-and search operations in Qa'en. Yazd province: 498 kg of morphine and 120 kg of opium had been seized from a car and four smugglers arrested.

BBC Monitoring Middle East, 26/05/05

China reports 33,975 deaths for drug addiction

The total number of deaths due to drug addiction reached 33,975 across the country, said an official with China's Public Security Ministry. About 41 % of the country's reported 89,067 HIV carriers contracted the disease through drug injection. Drug addicts have been registered in 2,102 counties, accounting for 73.5 percent of the estimated total. By the end of 2004, there has been 791,000 drug addicts across the country, up 6.8 percent on a year-on-year basis, sources with the ministry said.

Xinhua News Agency, 26/05/05

5.15 kilos of Afghan heroin confiscated in Moscow

Russian police have caught a member of an international criminal group that was smuggling hard drugs from Afghanistan in northern Moscow. The 24-year-old Perm resident was carrying 5.15 kilograms of heroin. Experts said the high-quality drugs have a street value of over \$200,000.

Interfax Central Asia News, 26/05/05

Big batch of heroin seized in Yamal, Russia

Officers of the Noyabrsk interregional department of the Federal Drug Control Department detained two natives of Dagestan who tried to sell 5 kg of heroin. According to experts, this high-quality heroin was most likely to be produced in Afghanistan. Noyabrsk is a railway gate to Yamal. As of beginning of this year, over 10 kilograms of drugs, including 7.5 kilograms of heroin, have been seized here.

Vladimir Zuiko, Itar-Tass, 26/05/05

Over 1 kg of heroin confiscated in Tver region, Russia

Drug policemen confiscated more than one kilogram of heroin and over 40 grams of methadone from a local resident in the Tver region. Operatives have tracked down a drug trafficking group for a month in the region.

Itar – Tass, 26/05/05

Drugs often smuggled to Czech Republic from Netherlands

Ecstasy, marijuana and hashish have been smuggled to the Czech Republic mainly from the Netherlands, while the most popular drug exported from the country is pervitine (meta-amphetamine). Pervitine has been distributed all around the world because of its low price and strong effects. Two kg of ecstasy and a quarter of a kg of heroin were uncovered in a bus from Amsterdam to Brno.

CTK (Ceska Tiskova Kancelar), 27/05/05