



## Narcotics, Organized Crime and Security in Eurasia Weekly Digest: 20-27 March 2006

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.

### **Afghan counter-narcotics ministry upbeat despite rise in poppy cultivation**

Despite millions of dollars being spent by the government and international agencies, poppy cultivation flourished in some provinces during the previous year. A survey conducted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) two months back revealed poppy growing has increased in 13 provinces. The situation remained unchanged in 16 while three provinces have shown signs of bottoming out. The survey draws a gory picture of the situation vis-à-vis the government's efforts to root out the banned crop but officials at the Counter-Narcotics Ministry are hopeful about a positive outcome.

*BBC Monitoring South Asia (Source: Pajhwok news agency website) 22.3.2006*

### **Security Council extends Afghanistan mission for 12 months, unanimously adopting resolution 1662 (2006)**

The Security Council this morning extended for an additional 12 months the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), in order to provide political and strategic guidance to the Afghan leadership and its international partners as they embark on the ambitious and vital next phase of State-building. Unanimously adopting resolution 1662 (2006), the Council also called on all Afghan parties and groups to engage constructively in the peaceful political development of the country and avoid resorting to violence.

*M2 Presswire, 23.3.2006*

## **Seizures and Arrests**

### **Some 50 Afghan heroin labs operate along Tajik border - official**

Up to 50 heroin laboratories are operating along the Tajik border in Afghanistan, the head of the Tajik Drugs Control Agency (DCA) under the Tajik president, Police Lt-Gen Rustam Nazarov, told Russian journalists today, referring to international experts. Afghanistan's opium harvest in 2005 was about 4,000 tonnes, and over 400 t of heroin can be produced from this amount of opium, Nazarov said.

*BBC Monitoring Central Asia (Source: ITAR-TASS) 21.3.2006*

### **Siberian customs officers seize heroin, opium on Kazakh border**

In Novosibirsk Region customs officers have intercepted more than 25 kg of heroin and opium being imported from Kazakhstan to Russia.

*BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union (Source: RIA Novosti) 21.3.2006*

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### **Tonne of drugs seized on Russian-Kazakh border**

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A detail from one of the outposts of the border guard directorate of the Russian Federal Security Service [FSB] for Kurgan and Tyumen regions has detained a Kazakh national who intended to bring 1.1 tonnes of drugs into Russian territory. ITAR-TASS was told today at the Public Relations Centre [PRC] of the Russian Federal Security Service that the man was crossing the border away from checkpoints in a GAZ-66 motor vehicle without number plates. "There were 63 sacks and three boxes of marijuana and hashish in lorry. An inquiry has been launched into the incident," the PRC said.

*BBC Monitoring Newsfile, (Source: ITAR-TASS) 22.3.2006*

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### **Turkish security forces seize hashish, heroin**

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Security forces impounded 45.2 kg of hashish and 34.2 kg of heroin in three separate operations, sources told the AA [Anatolia] on Wednesday [22 March]. In southeastern city of Diyarbakir, security forces confiscated 40 kg of hashish which was brought in from Iran. Six people were detained in connection with the operation. In the neighbouring city of Van, security forces impounded 10.2 kg of heroin and 5.2 kg of hashish in a house with the help of a sniffer dog. A person was detained. Meanwhile, security forces seized 24 kg of heroin in a separate operation in eastern city of Amasya. Two people were taken into custody.

*BBC Monitoring European, (Source: Anatolia) 22.3.2006*

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### **Tajik border chief says situation on Afghan border stable but tense**

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The chairman of the Tajik State Committee for Protection of the State Border, Col-Gen Saidamir Zuhurov, rates the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border as stable but tense. During a visit to one of the Panj border posts, Zuhurov told a group of Russian journalists that since the start of the year to date, Tajik border guards have engaged in several shoot-outs with Afghan drug traffickers, and about 500 kg of drugs, just over the half of which was heroin, had been seized. In cooperation with Afghan special services, one drugs laboratory near the border with Tajikistan was destroyed.

*BBC Monitoring Central Asia (Source: ITAR-TASS) 22.3.2006*

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### **Police in Kazakh south thwart drug channel**

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[Presenter] One more drug trafficking channel has been thwarted in southern Kazakhstan. The couriers have been smuggling drugs by railway. Among those detained are two conductors and the group was headed by a former officer from the Tajik law-enforcement agencies. Here is a report by our correspondent in Shymkent.

*BBC Monitoring Central Asia (Source: Kazakh Channel 31 TV) 22.3.2006*

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### **Tajik agency destroys over 160 kg of drugs**

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Tajik police have seized over 6 kg of drugs, mainly heroin, in the course of separate operations carried out in the country over the past 48 hours, the Dushanbe-based independent news agency Avesta reported on 22 March. It said two Tajik nationals, in their 40s, had been detained in Dushanbe in possession of nearly 2.5 kg of heroin. A similar amount of heroin was seized from another 43-year-old man at the Pakhtaobod train station near the Uzbek border, the report said, adding that just over two kilos of cannabis were seized from two young men in the capital. The report went on to quote the State Statistics Committee as saying that drug-related crimes in the country increased by 11.6 per cent in the first two months of 2006 compared to the same period last year. In a separate development, a total of 24 kg of heroin and 140 kg of opium were incinerated at the Drug Control Agency on 20 March, the Asia-Plus news agency reported the same day. It quoted the spokesman for the agency, Avaz Yuldoshev, as saying that some 300 kg of drugs had been destroyed at his agency this year.

*BBC Monitoring Central Asia (Source: Avesta website; Asia-Plus news agency) 22.3.2006*

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### **Turkish security forces seize 142.6 kg heroin**

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Turkish security forces seized 142.6 kilograms of heroin in southeastern Turkey on Thursday, semi-official Anatolia news agency reported. Acting on a tip-off, the security forces raided an international transportation company's garage in Kilis city, said the report, adding they confiscated 142.6 kilograms of heroin stashed in 259 packages, according to the report.

*Xinhua News Agency, 23.3.2006*

### **Illicit drug operations in Diyarbakir**

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Turkish police impounded 55 kilograms of heroin and 127 kilograms of hashish in 50 operations carried out in southeastern city of Diyarbakir in three months, sources said on Thursday. Police sources said 67 people were detained during those operations and 21 of them were sent to prison.

*Anadolu Agency, 23.3.2006*

### **15 Foreigners were caught red-handed over drug-related crimes in Azerbaijan since the beginning of the year**

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The state committee against drug addiction and traffic uncovered 392 drug-related crimes in January-February. Azerpress learned this from the committee. Mainly the offences pertain to sales (118 cases) and storing (274 cases) of illegal drugs. As much as 14 kilograms 246.993 grams of narcotics, psychotropic compounds and precursors, including 1 kilogram 307.323 grams of heroin, 68 kilograms 767 grams of hashish, 12 kilograms 400.110 grams of marijuana, etc. were found and destroyed last year. The law enforcement authorities were involved mainly in finding the traffic sources and routes. 392 people were prosecuted including 15 foreigners (3 citizens of Iran, 10 citizens of Georgia, 1 citizen of Afghanistan and 1 citizen of Russia).

*Azer-Press (Azerbaijan), 24.3.2006*

### **Police seize 48 kg heroin in 50 operations in Istanbul**

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Turkish police have seized 48.4 kilograms of heroin in 50 different operations in Istanbul. Istanbul Deputy Police Chief Sammaz Demirtas said that narcotic teams confiscated 48.4 kilograms of heroin and 11.9 kilograms of hashish in 50 different operations staged last week. 94 people were detained in operations, Demirtas added.

*Anadolu Agency, 25.3.2006*

### **Russian police seize heroin in Moscow, St Petersburg**

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Four kilograms of heroin has been seized from a Tajik national in St Petersburg, RIA-Novosti reported today, quoting the city's police. Another Tajik national was arrested in Moscow with over 800 g of heroin on him, Interfax reported today. The man is a student of the Zhukovskiy Air Force Academy, the agency added.

*BBC Monitoring Former Soviet Union (Sources: RIA Novosti; Interfax news agency) 26.3.2006*

### **Tajik officers net Russia-bound heroin - agency**

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Officers of the Tajik Drug Control Agency (DCA) have carried out two operations to seize drugs over the past 24 hours. Avaz Yuldoshev, head of the agency's public relations department, told Avesta that DCA officers, jointly with servicemen from the State Border Protection Committee, stopped a GAZ-2410 car driven by a 53-year-old Vahdat resident - who was heading from Qala-i Khumb to Vahdat - at a checkpoint in Shuroobod District (220 km southeast of Dushanbe). A total of 10 cellophane packages containing a white substance were found in the car during a search. The DCA forensic laboratory has established that the substance is a high-grade heroin weighing 9.3 kg. DCA investigators have launched a criminal case into the incident. It is believed that the drugs were meant to be flown to St Petersburg inside one's stomach.

The other operation was carried out in the north of the country last Sunday [26 March]. As a result of a search conducted in a house in Oktyabr Street in the Unji village of Bobojon Ghafurov District in Sughd Region [northern Tajikistan], a bag containing a carton box with 11 packages of heroin weighing more than 10.3 kg was found and seized from the basement of a summer house. The 30-year-old owner of the house, father of three, has been detained on

suspicion of committing the crime. A criminal case has been instituted. It is believed that the drugs were intended for further transportation to Kyrgyzstan.

*BBC Monitoring Central Asia (Source: Avesta website) 27.3.2006.*

### **Police seize 212kg of hashish [and 46kg of opium] in Baghlan**

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The highway police claimed Monday recovering over 258kg of drugs from a pick-up allegedly belonging to Afghan National Army (ANA) in the northern Baghlan province. Deputy chief of the North Highway police, Muhammad Naser Asadi told Pajhwok Afghan News his men signalled a pick-up bearing signs of the Kandahar 205 Attal Army Corps. Three people travelling in pick-up opened fire on the police, on retaliation by the forces the outlaws left the four-wheeler packed with 212kg of hashish and 46kg of opium. Zalmay Khan, operations chief of the Highway police, said he was present at the time and stopped the fleeing outlaws by flattening the tyres of their vehicle with shots. Three soldiers wearing military uniform fled the scene, he said, adding it was quite a strange case that they dealt with. Approached for comment, defence ministry in Kabul showed ignorance about the incident.

*Pajhwok Afghan News, 27.3. 2006*